



Case information

Case ID	300009901
File Reference	AMH/870/2/1
Name of Site	Pittarathie Castle

Local Authority	Fife
National Grid Reference	NO 52129 09110
Designation No. (if any)	SM870
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	03/09/2014
Decision Date	21/09/2016

1. Decision

The monument was first scheduled in 1935 and amended in 2003, but an inadequate area was included to protect all of the archaeological remains. The assessment against criteria demonstrates that the monument continues to be of national importance. The decision is to update the entry in the Schedule as **Pittarathie Castle**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The monument was first scheduled in 1935 and amended in 2003.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was considered for amendment and visited on 19/02/2016.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria has been carried out (see Annex A).

The monument was found to meet the criteria for scheduling.

The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

3.3 Other considerations

N/A

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

Pittarhie Castle

1 Description

The monument is a late medieval/early modern tower house with the remains of a range of buildings about 30m to the north and a former walled garden and group of garden terraces to the south and southwest. The tower house is visible as a standing building with a modified L-plan, the ancillary buildings and walled garden as stone wall foundations, the terraces as earthworks. The monument is located on a gentle south-facing slope, about 150m above sea level.

The tower house probably dates to the late 16th century, but was remodelled in the mid-17th century. It is built of coursed rubble and is three storeys in height with further accommodation in the roof space which is set within crow-stepped gables. The main block is aligned east-west with a wing at the southwest corner. The entrance is on the south side, at the base of a stair tower in the angle between the main block and the wing. The barrel-vaulted ground floor contained a kitchen and storerooms, with a hall, which was later subdivided, on the first floor of the main block. Above ground floor level, the wing contains chambers, service accommodation and closets. A corbelled-out stair off the north wall of the hall gives access to the chambers in the second floor and roof space. The principal rooms are supplied with fireplaces and latrines. To the north of the castle are footings of a range of ancillary buildings, oriented north-south and aligned on the eastern side of the castle. To the south, the east side of the walled garden is aligned with the entrance to the house, and the terraces beyond are oriented east-west. The inner terrace turns north at its east end and extends north towards the house.

The scheduled area is irregular in plan, to include the remains described above and an area around them within which evidence relating to the monument's construction, use and abandonment is expected to survive, as shown in red on the accompanying map. The scheduling extends up to but does not include the post-and-wire fence to the north and west and excludes the above-ground elements of all other post-and-wire fences. The monument was first scheduled in 1935 and amended in 2003, but an inadequate area was included to protect all of the archaeological remains; the present amendment rectifies this.

2 Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria (Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 1, pp. 48-50)

2.1 Intrinsic Characteristics

The monument consists of the upstanding remains of a late 16th century modified L-plan tower house with associated ancillary range, walled garden and garden

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terraces. Although the building is missing internal floors and a roof, it retains its original scale and form and contains considerable architectural and structural detail, including window dressings, fireplaces, staircases, gun loops, traces of plaster-work and a complete iron window grill. The significance of the tower house is accentuated by the survival of associated garden features and a range of ancillary buildings. Although both the ancillary buildings and walled garden have been reduced to footings, their overall plan and relationship to the tower house are discernible. The monument has the potential to enhance our knowledge of the date of construction of the tower house and subsequent phases and its relationship to the garden features, considered to date to a mid-17th century remodelling of the castle. The monument can add to our knowledge of construction techniques and architectural preferences of the time, and the way in which the fashion and function of such buildings and gardens developed.

There is no record of an archaeological excavation or other disturbance, therefore there is high potential for the survival of archaeological deposits, artefacts and ecofacts within, beneath and around the upstanding remains. Such buried archaeological deposits have the potential to provide information about the economy, diet and social status of the occupants, and about land use and environment.

Construction of the tower house probably dates to the late 16th century, around the time of a royal grant of the lands to Andrew Logan of Easter Granton in 1598. It was acquired by the Bruce family in 1644 and remodelled in 1653, continuing in occupation into the eighteenth century. The walled garden and terraces are likely associated with the 17th century occupation of the site. The monument therefore has an extended development sequence. Scientific study of the monument would allow us to develop a better understanding of the overall chronology of the site, including its date of origin and development sequence.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

Tower houses are a widespread but diverse class of monument across Scotland. They became a popular form of residence with the Scottish nobility and lairdly class during the 14th century perhaps influenced by David II building a tower house at Edinburgh Castle. Tower houses continued to be the chosen architectural form for the residences of Scottish elites throughout the late medieval and early post-medieval periods. Tower houses provided a degree of security but were also a means of displaying wealth, social status and martial knowledge.

The example at Pittarhie is of particular significance because of its good preservation and surviving architectural and landscape features. It is one of a number of late medieval/early modern defensible houses in Fife, including Scotstarvit Tower (scheduled monument reference SM90274; Canmore ID 31509), Pitcruvie Castle (scheduled monument reference SM868; Canmore ID 32806), Newark Castle (scheduled monument reference SM866; Canmore ID 34203), and Aberdour Castle (scheduled monument reference SM90002; Canmore ID 221816). The proximity of these monuments can give important insights into the late medieval landscape and add to our understanding of social organisation, settlement hierarchy and land-use. Although most tower houses were originally provided with ancillary buildings,

courtyards and gardens, such associated features rarely survive. Pittarthie therefore represents an unusual survival of a late medieval/early modern defensible house with contemporary landscape features. The complex at Pittarthie has the potential to broaden our understanding of the nature and chronology of late medieval/early modern defensible houses and gardens, and their place within the landscape of eastern Scotland.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

Documentary sources suggest the house was built in the late 16th century by James Monypenny of Pitmelie, who held his estate from the Archbishop of St Andrews. The estate was granted by the crown to Andrew Logan of Easter Granton in 1598. By the early 17th century the property had been acquired by the Borthwicks, who sold it to the Bruces of Kinross in 1644. In the 18th century the Bruces were forfeited and the lands sold to the Cunninghams of Glencairn.

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

The site visit suggested the monument is in relatively stable condition and well preserved. Designation as a scheduled monument is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of the monument, and ensure the recognition of its national importance.

4 Assessment of national importance

This monument is of national importance because it can make a significant addition to our understanding of the past, in particular the date, construction, use and development of tower houses and their gardens. It is an impressive monument that retains its field characteristics and contains considerable architectural and structural detail, including window dressings, fireplaces, staircases, gun loops, traces of plaster-work and a complete iron window grill in its original location. The fabric of the house contains significant evidence of alterations which show the changing domestic requirements and preferences of the 17th century. The monument's importance is further accentuated by the visible evidence for ancillary buildings and gardens and additional evidence of such features is likely to survive as associated buried archaeological remains. The loss or damage of the monument would diminish our ability to appreciate and understand the character of tower houses and their landscapes, and the structure and organisation of society and economy during the late medieval and early post-medieval periods.

5 References

Historic Environment Scotland <http://www.canmore.org.uk> reference number CANMORE ID 34030 (accessed on 27/05/2016).

MacGibbon D. and Ross T. (1887) The castelleated and domestic architecture of Scotland, vol 2, Edinburgh, 562-3.

NSA. (1834-1845) The new statistical account of Scotland by the ministers of the respective parishes under the superintendence of a committee of the society for the benefit of the sons and daughters of the clergy, 15v. Edinburgh.

RCAHMS. (1933) The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions of Scotland. Eleventh report with inventory of monuments and constructions in the counties of Fife, Kinross, and Clackmannan. Edinburgh.
