



## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300017840		
<b>File Reference</b>	HGH/B/LB/155		
<b>Name of Site</b>	Prestonkirk Parish Church and Graveyard, East Linton		
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Lothian Council		
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NT 59247 77811		
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	LB14530		
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building	<b>Current Category of Listing</b>	A
<b>Case Type</b>	Amendment		
<b>Received/Start Date</b>	14 March 2016		
<b>Decision Date</b>	17/01/2017		

## 1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, the Prestonkirk Parish Church continues to meet the criteria for listing. The south graveyard and other associated structures, not previously included in the statutory listing address, have been assessed and found to meet the criteria for listing. The northern part of the graveyard and the church hall have are not considered to meet the listing criteria. The statutory listing address and the listed building record have been amended to include the graveyard and associated structures. The category of listing will remain at A.

<b>Previous Statutory Address</b>	Prestonkirk Parish Church (Church of Scotland)
<b>Amended Statutory Address</b>	Prestonkirk Parish Church, including southern part of graveyard, former watch house, boundary walls and two pairs of entrance gatepiers and excluding northern part of graveyard and church hall, Preston Road, East Linton

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

### 2.1 Designation Background

The church was listed at category A on 05/02/1971 and it is located within the East Linton Conservation Area.

## 2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

## 3. Assessment

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### 3.1 Assessment information

This listing review was carried out following the proposal to list individual gravestones within the graveyard. Prestonkirk Parish Church graveyard (north and south) was visited on 09/06/2016.

The exterior of the church, the watch house and church hall was seen at the visit and the interiors of these buildings were not accessed.

### 3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The southern half of the churchyard including the boundary walls, two sets of gate piers, the gravestones and the former mort house were found to meet the criteria for listing. It is proposed to add these to the listing of Prestonkirk Parish Church.

The northern part of the graveyard and the church hall (known as The Stables) was found not to meet the criteria for listing.

An assessment against the listing criteria was carried out for the graveyard. See **Annex A**. Prestonkirk Parish Church, which was found to continue to meet the criteria for listing, was not assessed as part of this review.

*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\***

Prestonkirk Parish Church, including southern part of graveyard, former watch house, boundary walls and two pairs of entrance gatepiers and excluding northern part of graveyard and church hall, Preston Road, East Linton

### **1. Description**

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Prestonkirk Parish Church dedicated to St Baldred is a multi-period church, that comprises a 1770 nave, a 13<sup>th</sup> century chancel at the east end and a 17<sup>th</sup> century 2-stage bell tower at the west end. There are further alterations in 1824 and further rebuilding 1891-2 by the architect James Jerdan. It is built of squared and coursed sandstone with ashlar dressings and has an eaves course. The roofs have grey slates and straight stone skews. There are round arched openings and those to the nave have keystones. Surrounding the church is an 18<sup>th</sup> century graveyard which has a retaining wall and two sets of entrance gates at the west side. Adjacent to the gatepiers at the northwest of the graveyard is a small, single storey flat roofed former watch house.

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 church hall to the northwest and the northern half of the graveyard.

The chancel has three tall lancet windows separated by narrow chamfered buttresses at the east wall and there are shorter single lancets in the south wall. The north wall was built in 1818 has a doorway and memorial plaques. There is a single polygonal corniced wallhead chimney stack to the north. There is a redundant gateway adjoined to the east.

The tower is built in roughly squared sandstone with ashlar dressings, and has a rubble base course, string course and eaves course. There are single round-headed window in the three sides. There is an ogee domed roof and an ashlar chimneystack intruding to the north.

The church has a south elevation of 6 bays, comprising two doorways flanked by tall windows. The window to the far right has a door in the lower half. The north elevation has 3 windows replacing an earlier arrangement. To the outer left is an 1891-2 ashlar gabled stair tower that has a pend. The roof has a finial at the east end and three ventilation cans to the ridge. Attached to the west gable is a single storey vestry, which has gables of 1891-2.

The interior was refurbishment to designs by James Jerdan in 1891-2 when the galleries were removed apart from that to the east linking with the Smeaton-Hepburn loft. The interest was re-orientated to the west end with an arcaded Renaissance screen housing the organ. There is some stained glass in the south wall by William Wilson and this dates to 1959.

The former watch house building has a central door and two round arched windows with margined diamond leaded glazing. There is a single window to the graveyard side. It is built of random rubble with chamfered corners and has a crenulated parapet. The timber boarded door is agricultural in style on a metal side sliding system.

The layout of the graves in the southern part of the graveyard, surrounding the church, is largely random, as is usual for a graveyard development from the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are approximately 300 gravestones in this part, with the oldest recorded erected in memory of Margaret Millie who died in 1685. Many of the stones with an early date have fine symbolic carving and are of a fine quality. There are some gravestones relating to local historical figures. An 1812 stone to Andrew Meikle records that he “invented and brought to perfection a machine for separating corn from straw”. This headstone is plain and is unusual in the graveyard as it is one of only a few that face west. An 1829 stone for George Rennie is a plain round arched headstone set within an enclosure to the east boundary of the graveyard. A stone to Robert Brown dated 1839 is a prominent design within the graveyard and is a squared obelisk type with a stone carved wreath that appears to be in a form of wheat crop. An 1851 stone for James Kirk is a large tall square section stone with a two handled urn to the top, and again, a carving detail that appears to be a wheat crop. There are also two examples of cast iron inscribed memorials, dating to 1796 and 1837, in the shape of standard headstones with decorative heads.

The boundary wall to the south roadside is retaining and is rubble built with squared and stepped copes. The wall to the east is a plain rubble wall and that to the west is also part retaining with some integral memorials. Both sets of gate piers are squared ashlar, the pair to the south corner is more detailed with decorative iron former lampstands.

## **2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria** (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 51-52

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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**

Prestonkirk Parish Church is a nationally important example of a multi-phase church which largely dates to 1770 but retains a 13<sup>th</sup> century chancel and a prominent 17<sup>th</sup> century tower. There are further alterations in 1824 and further rebuilding 1891-2 which all add to the historic interest of the church. The overall piece has a strong interest because the nature of its multi-phase construction demonstrating the history of ecclesiastical architecture in Scotland.

The churchyard around Prestonkirk Church contains some fine 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century memorials some of which are associated with historically important individuals. The earliest recorded stone was erected in memory of Margaret Millie who died in 1685. It is decorated in symbols and others of a similar date have fine symbolic carving and are of a fine quality. There are also stones in memoriam of local men who died in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and who all made important contributions to farming in East Lothian, an area that was at the forefront of farming improvements in Scotland and the United Kingdom in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

One of these dates to around 1812 and is for the important Scottish agricultural and civil engineer Andrew Meikle. Meikle is credited with inventing the threshing machine, a development which resulted in major changes in farming in East Lothian and beyond. An 1829 stone for George Rennie recognises him as an important agricultural improver who experimented with farming development methods locally at Phantassie Farm. At one point he commissioned Meikle to install one of his early design threshing machines.

A stone dated 1839 is dedicated to the local farmer Robert Brown, who was the editor of "Farmer" magazine from 1800. Along with Rennie, Brown was an associate of Sir John Sinclair who was president of the board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement. There is a stone for James Kirk, who was the head gardener at Smeaton House, the neighbouring estate which was built in 1793 by Sir George Buchan Hepburn. Kirk was one of the first corresponding members of the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society in 1809 and he died in 1850.

There are also two cast iron inscribed memorials with decorative heads that date to 1796 and 1837. Cast iron memorials are typically in the style of leaping boards or smaller crosses and the design of these memorials at Prestonkirk in the shape of standard gravestones are therefore relatively unusual.

A 1917 stone is dedicated to the artist Robert Noble who moved to East Linton from Edinburgh and lived there for the latter part of his life. He was a significant artist of pastoral scenes who exhibited in both London and Edinburgh and it is thought his work inspired other artists to move to and paint in the area.

Graveyards are not rare and can be found in every significant settlement in Scotland. When considering such a prolific building type the earlier the date and the quality of memorials adds interest to the graveyard in listing terms as well as its contribute to the setting of churches. The graveyard at Prestonkirk has a number of fine memorials of an early date, rare cast-iron examples and stones that relate to important local figures. These memorials all add significant interest to Prestonkirk Church. The graveyard also has a distinctive earlier 19<sup>th</sup> century watch house, most examples of which are of a plain design.

The enclosing walls of the northern part of the graveyard are evident on the 1853 map although not marked as part of the graveyard at that time. The memorials in this part of the graveyard are generally of a later date and not unusual in their design.

The former L-plan stables block has been altered by its conversion to a church hall. The northern part of the graveyard and the church hall are not considered to be of special interest in listing terms and are proposed to be excluded from the listing.

## **2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest**

### ***Interior***

N/A

### ***Plan form***

The graveyard is divided into two parts. The section surrounding the church on raised ground has the earliest memorials which are laid out in an irregular pattern with meandering pathways between the stones. This layout is characteristic of the earlier 18<sup>th</sup> century form of graveyards. The section of the graveyard to the north is enclosed by various straight field walls and it has straight pathways between the gravestones.

Both parts of the graveyards plan layout appear on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1853, published 1854) although the northern part is not marked as a graveyard. The contrasting pairing of the older irregular part around the church and the more linear planned section to the north has some interest as it demonstrates the change in graveyard forms at this time.

### ***Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality***

The design and craftsmanship of some of the headstones in the southern half of the graveyard are of high quality, such as the early examples that date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards which have decorative symbolic *momento mori*. There are two examples of cast iron memorials of the same design dating from the later 18<sup>th</sup> century which are unusual in Scotland because memorials of this date are typically made of stone. The later 1839 memorial design to Robert Brown, which is an obelisk style, and the 1851 stone to James Kirk, which has a carved stone urn, are good quality and commemorate men significant in the development of farming methods in the area. The multi period group of high quality memorials raises the interest of the graveyard as a whole.

The northern most pair of gatepiers are attached to what is believed to be the former mort house or watch house. Mort houses were designed as defensible structures to hold bodies for up to three months before burial in order to discourage the theft of the buried corpses for use in medical schools. Watch houses were a slightly later development created to house armed guards to watch the graveyards at night to deter the robbers. The Prestonkirk example is more likely to be a watch house rather than a mort house as it has windows for observation and is located next to an entrance. Most mort houses and watch houses in Scotland were built before 1832 when the Anatomy Act was passed allowing medical schools to carry out permitted dissections with permission. The Prestonkirk watch house is therefore likely to date to before 1832. It is unusual because it has crenulation and arched windows, as most were simple and plain constructions.

### ***Setting***

Churchyards and graveyards are often of historic interest because of the information they can show on the historical development and social history of an area. This is the case of the older part of the Prestonkirk graveyard which has examples of very early and unusual memorials as well as memorials specific to the agricultural history of the rural area and setting in which it sits.

The south part of the graveyard makes a significant contribution to the setting of the A listed church. It is on raised ground around the church and enclosed by a retaining wall to the roadside to the south with no upstanding part of this wall above the level of the graveyard turf. The church and the stones are clearly evident from the main historic road through the village of East Linton, and it makes a good contribution to the streetscape of the wider village. This road is also on the corner of the access drive to the former Smeaton House manor house and the graveyard contains memorials relating to the estate.

### ***Regional variations***

There are no known regional variations

## **2.3 Close Historical Associations**

As noted above there is historical association with the engineer Andrew Meikle who is recognised as inventing the threshing machine which was a nationally important event in the development of improvement farming in Scotland and Britain as a whole.

## **3. Working with the Principles of Listing** (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 53

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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 the Prestonkirk Graveyard, boundary walls, gatepiers and watch house have particular interest under b.

b. The 18th century graveyard, its memorials and associated ancillary structures make a significant contribution to the setting of Prestonkirk Parish Church which the graveyards surrounds. Some of the gravestones are early examples of symbolic stones, some relate to leading figures in the agricultural history of the area and as a whole they make an important historical contribution to the area.

## **4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\*\***

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Prestonkirk Parish Church is a nationally important multi-period church which largely dates to 1770 but retains a 13<sup>th</sup> century chancel and 17<sup>th</sup> century tower. There are further alterations in 1824 and further rebuilding 1891-2 which all add to the historic

interest of the church. The southern half of the graveyard forms a raised knoll which surrounds the church on all sides. This part of the graveyard, and its boundary walls with two sets of gatepiers makes a significant contribution to the setting of the church and has a wealth of fine memorials from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including stone in memoriam to local figures who were important in the development of improvement farming in Scotland. The former mort house is also a relatively decorative example of a building of its type for its age.

In our current state of knowledge the southern half of the graveyard is considered to meet the criteria for listing.

The northern half of the graveyard which contains later memorials is typical for a graveyard of this period and the former L-plan stables block has been altered by its conversion to a church hall. They are not considered to be of special interest in listing terms at the time of this review and it is proposed that these are excluded from the listing.

## 5. Category of Listing

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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. It is proposed to amend the existing listing for the A listed Prestonkirk Parish Church (LB14530) to include the southernmost part of the graveyard, boundary walls, two sets of gatepiers and the former mort house building to the north.

## 7. References

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Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 209968 and 56218.

### Maps

John Thompson (1822) Atlas of Scotland. Edinburgh: J. Thomson & Co.  
Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1853, published 1854) Haddingtonshire, Sheet 6 (includes: Dunbar; Whitekirk And Tynningame) 6 inches to the Mile. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

### Printed Source

McWilliam, C. (1978) *The Buildings of Scotland, Lothian, Except Edinburgh*. Penguin. p.197.

### Online Sources

Grace's Guide. *Andrew Meikle* at [http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Andrew Meikle](http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Andrew_Meikle) [accessed 17/11/2016].

Echoes of the Resurrection Men. *An introduction to grave robbing* at <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/bodysnatchers/background.php> [accessed 17/11/2016].

The Parish of Traprain Burial Ground Surveys. *Prestonkirk Burial Ground Survey* at <http://www.ejclark.force9.co.uk/survey/index.htm> [accessed 17/11/2016].

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\* 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/>