



Case information

Case ID	300018139 and 300018694
File Reference	AMH/90237/2/1 and HGH/B/BD/51
Name of Site	Peebles, Crosskirk

Local Authority	Scottish Borders Council
National Grid Reference	NT 25062 40725
Designation No. (if any)	SM90237 and LB39155
Case Type	Amendment

Received/Start Date	26/08/2014
Decision Date	09/02/2017

1. Decision

The decision is to remove the dual designation of this site.

The monument's designation as a listed building has been removed.

The monument is considered to be of national importance and remains scheduled. The entry in the Schedule has been amended as **Crosskirk, church and friary, Peebles**.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Peebles, Crosskirk is a guardianship property in the care of Scottish Ministers and is scheduled under section 1(2) of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The entry in the schedule is dated 31/03/1928. This has not been previously amended and the documentation does not conform to current standards.

Crosskirk was listed at Category A on 23/02/1971.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals affecting Cross Kirk.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

The site was first considered for amendment in 2011 and was visited on 19 April 2011.

A subsequent visit was carried out on 02/10/2014 as part of the Dual Designation project. This is a nationwide project to review structures which are both listed as buildings of special architectural or historic interest and scheduled as monuments of national importance. Where appropriate the 'dual designation' of structures is being removed and they are being listed or scheduled depending on their individual circumstances.

3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

An assessment against the Scheduling criteria has been carried out. The monument was found to continue to meet the criteria for scheduling (see Annex A).

The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016 - <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

3.3 Other considerations

As part of the Dual Designation project, we have reviewed the structures at this site and concluded that scheduling is the most appropriate mechanism to secure the preservation of this structure as a monument of national importance.

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ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Scheduling Criteria

Cross Kirk, church and friary, Peebles

1 Description

The monument comprises the remains of a medieval church and friary. The church was founded by Alexander III following the discovery of a cross on the site in 1261. A Trinitarian Friary was established in 1474. The visible remains comprise the nave of the 13th-century church, 15th-century additions of a west tower and footings of the friary's cloister buildings, and later burial vaults. In addition, extensive buried archaeological remains of the church and friary are expected to survive below the present ground surface including those of a pre-13th-century shrine located under the south wall. The site lies north of the historic core of Peebles, outside the medieval burgh, 400m north of the Tweed and 150m west of the Eddleston Water. It stands on a slight rise, at about 165m above sea level.

The upstanding church building represents the nave of the original 13th-century church. It measures about 23m east-north-east by west-south-west by 10m transversely, and is constructed of whinstone rubble with yellow sandstone dressings. Parts of the north wall survive almost to its original height, together with the east end of the south wall. The west end of the south wall is a modern rebuild forming the northern boundary of the burial place of the Hays of Haystoun. The 15th-century west tower, rises over 15m high and has 5 storeys; the upper 5m lack sandstone quoins and may reflect rebuilding. The west gable stands to the level of the first floor of the tower, rising to full height at its junction with the north wall of the nave, and preserves the main entrance door to the church. The nave is now closed at the east end by a 17th-century wall with central doorway and large pointed window above, apparently a re-used late medieval window. The lintel of the doorway bears the inscription FEIRE GOD 1656. Low footings of the chancel remain visible to the east of the nave. On the north side of the church, lie the cloistral buildings that accommodated the friars. They survive as low footings comprising the north, east and west ranges, arranged around a cloister area measuring 21m by 19m. It is believed that the cloister is located on the north side of the church to avoid a shrine located under the south wall. Burial aisles adjoin the north and south walls of the nave (the March and Erskine Aisles respectively). They are predominantly of 18th or 19th-century fabric, though the Erskine Aisle incorporates part of a 17th-century window.

The scheduled area is irregular on 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 specifically excludes the above-ground elements of the boundary walls and fences that lie at the boundaries of the scheduled area. The scheduling specifically excludes the above ground elements of all other fences, boundary walls that post-date 1950, and memorials that post-date 1800. The

monument was first scheduled in 1928, but the documentation did not meet current standards: 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 is a church and friary of the medieval period. The monument is in a stable condition and parts survive to original wall head height. The most significant architectural feature to survive is the fine west doorway, dating from the second half of the 13th century. In addition to the above ground structural remains, there is potential also for the survival of archaeological deposits, artefacts and ecofacts within, beneath and around the upstanding structures. Archaeological excavations by the Ministry of Works in 1923 uncovered well-preserved remains, notably the shrine under the south wall of the nave and revealed cremated human remains which may have been a bronze-age short cist burial. .

The remains of the church and friary and associated buried archaeological deposits have the potential to provide information about how the site was used, potentially from prehistory, through to the founding of the church by Alexander III, the establishment of the Trinitarian Friary in 1474, and to its use as the parish church from 1581 to 1786. Scientific study of the construction and character of the surviving structures has the potential to inform understanding of their character and function and add to how medieval churches and friaries were built. In particular it can help us to understand the precise form of the shrine around which the church was built. Artefacts and ecofacts would enhance understanding of the economy, diet and social status of the occupants, as well as provide information about land use and environment.

2.2 Contextual Characteristics

The monument is located to the north of the core of the medieval burgh of Peebles. It would have held a prominent location on approaches to the medieval burgh from the north and the west. The monument is now located within a residential area of Peebles, forming part of the public open space of the town.

The Cross Kirk is one of the few Trinitarian houses with surviving remains in the British Isles, Adare (Ireland) and Ingham (Norfolk) being other substantial examples. It is the only medieval monastic settlement in Peeblesshire (now the western Scottish Borders) and represents one of the best preserved urban friaries surviving in Scotland.

2.3 Associative Characteristics

Cross Kirk shares its form and influences with other Trinitarian houses within Scotland, the UK and more widely throughout Europe. In plan it compares with other monastic houses such as Melrose and Iona where the usual cloistral layout is reversed and the cloister was located to the north side of the church.

The church was dedicated to St Nicholas and the Holy Rood and takes its name from an early Christian carved cross discovered in 1261 said to bear the inscription

“*locus sancti Nicolai episcopi*” – the place of St Nicholas the bishop. The Cross Kirk is associated also with various Scottish kings, notably Alexander III, who founded the original church and James IV who provided gold for the Holy Cross of Peebles and is mentioned in a contemporary medieval document, John of Fordun’s Chronicle of the Scottish Nation. The Crosskirk was a well-known and popular place of pilgrimage until the 17th century.

3 Purpose and implications of scheduling

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. Crosskirk is to be delisted in tandem with the amended scheduling.

4 Assessment of national importance

The monument has an inherent potential to make a significant addition to our understanding of medieval churches and friaries. The nave and tower retain their structural characteristics to a marked degree. The surviving masonry incorporates architectural features that can support study of the construction and development of the buildings. Remains of the 13th-century shrine may survive, potentially incorporating elements of a Bronze Age burial. The monument is also particularly important as the site of a medieval friary that has not been subject to redevelopment and retains very high potential for buried archaeological remains. The church, tower and friary buildings would have been very significant features in the medieval landscape, sited on a low rise just north of the burgh. The church and tower continue to be an important component of the contemporary landscape, occupying an island of green open space. Significant documentary material enhances the understanding of the monument. This includes Fordun’s 14th-century account of the founding of the shrine and church and Dalgleish’s 18th-century description of the shrine and church. The loss of the monument would significantly diminish our future ability to appreciate and understand medieval ecclesiastical buildings and their role in medieval society.

5 References

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