



Case information

Case ID	300038067
File Reference	HGH/B/GA/135
Name of Site	Former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital, Craigton Road, Cults, Aberdeen
Postcode (if any)	AB15 9QD

Local Authority	Aberdeen City Council
National Grid Reference	NJ 89108 03881
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	N/A
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	10/06/2019
Decision Date	13/01/2020

1. Decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	Former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital including terrace, and excluding exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery building, Craigton Road, Cults, Aberdeen (LB52535)	New category of listing	C

An assessment using the selection guidance shows that the former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. The decision is to list the building at category C.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital has not previously been designated.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals. The site is currently for sale.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

A proposal to designate the former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital was received on 10/06/2019.

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital was visited on 12/08/2019. The site comprises the following buildings:

- Former convalescent hospital and terrace at NJ 89108 03881
- Former classroom block at NJ 89043 03861
- Former sports hall at NJ 89113 03940
- Former nursery building at NJ 89133 03909

The exterior and interior of the main hospital building was seen. The exterior only of the separate nursery (or Kindergarten), classroom and sports hall buildings were seen.

3.2 Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital and terrace was found to meet the criteria for listing.

The exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery building were found to not meet the criteria for listing and are to be excluded from the listing.

An assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether a site or place is of special architectural or historic interest was carried out. See **Annex A**.

The listing criteria and selection guidance for listed buildings are published in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (2019), Annex 2, pp. 11-13, <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 06/11/2019 to 06/12/2019.

We have consulted with the owner and the planning authority.

The consultation report of handling is published on our portal for comment from interested parties.

4.2 Consultation summary

We received two responses to the consultation.

We received one 'no comment'. The other response supported the proposed listing in principle. It suggested the following components should be considered for exclusion:

- the detailing on the building's exterior (including the half-timbering, bargeboards and hoodmoulds)
- the single-storey L-plan outshot on the rear (north) elevation
- the enclosed veranda on the south elevation
- the interior

We consider the survival of these features are indicative of the building's former use as a convalescent hospital and they are an integral part of its 19th century design. These comments did not raise any issues that put into question the special architectural or historic interest of the building.

The response also included comments regarding the redevelopment of the property. The Designation Policy and Selection Guidance Annex 2 (Section 15) states that factors such as financial issues, proposed future use, or a building no longer being in its original use will not be taken into account.

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ANNEX A

Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

1. Building or site name

Former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital including terrace, and excluding exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery building, Craigton Road, Cults, Aberdeen

2. Description, exclusions and historical development

2.1 Description

Dating from 1895-97, the former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital was designed by William and John Smith and Kelly. It is a two-storey and attic, nine-bay, roughly T-plan building constructed in squared and snecked pink granite. The gables have Arts and Crafts style half-timbering and moulded bargeboards. The hospital is on an elevated rubble terrace bounded by later railings, within formerly landscaped grounds and is to the northwest of the suburb of Cults on the edge of Aberdeen.

The principal (south) elevation is largely symmetrical. The advanced end bays each have a tripartite ground floor window and a bipartite first floor window. There are moulded and straight hoodmoulds above the ground floor windows. There is a timber veranda (with later glazing) running the full width of the ground floor between the projecting end bays. There are two central gablets, one breaking the roof eaves and one on the roof ridge.

The side elevation of the rear section of the building has two rectangular dormer windows and a projecting bay at the ground floor. Adjoining the rear gable is a single-storey L-plan outshot with piended roof and a lantern.

The windows are a mixture of glazing patterns, predominantly 15-pane in timber sash and case frames. The roofs are pitched, gabled and slated. Below the overhanging eaves are painted timber rafter ends. There are several tall chimneystacks of varying sizes and with clay pots. The chimneystacks are predominantly along the ridge. The building has later external metal staircases to the side and rear elevations which are excluded from the listing.

The interior, seen in 2019, retains some late-19th century timber and plasterwork fixtures. These include wainscoting, dado rails, deep skirting and moulded cornicing. There is a central staircase with moulded timber balusters and a timber handrail. The glazed inner entrance door has a fanlight and there are panelled timber and glazed doors leading out to the veranda. There are some tiled fireplaces in the ground floor rooms. The attic is a self-contained warden's flat.

2.2 Legal exclusions

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery building.

The single-storey and harled classroom block was built in the 1970s to provide additional teaching space when the site was in use as the Aberdeen American School. The sports hall was built around 1980. The two-storey nursery building, including a later extension, to the north of the former convalescent hospital was built around 2010 for the Aberdeen Waldorf School. These buildings are not part of the site's former hospital function and are not of interest in listing terms.

2.3 Historical development

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital was built between 1895-97 for recovering post-operative patients of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. It replaced the Lochhead convalescent home (built in 1874), which was in the centre of Aberdeen.

The first patients were admitted in October 1897 and the building had provision for 29 patients and live-in nursing staff (3rd Statistical Account, p.128). The building was financed by the proceeds from the sale of the earlier convalescent home and a £5000 gift from the trustees of the late Mr John Gray Chalmers of Banchory (Aberdeen Press and Journal, 1895).

The building is first shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1899, published 1901) as largely T-plan with advanced ends bays. The current footprint remains largely as that shown on this map. A photograph from 1897 (SCRAN) shows the building as having an open veranda with a glazed roof leading onto the south-facing terrace. This still survives largely and has been enclosed.

In 1948 the convalescent hospital became part of the National Health Service and was managed by the Aberdeen General Hospitals Board of Management. In 1964 the convalescent hospital closed, and the building was sold in 1969.

From 1972 until 1996, the site became the campus of the Aberdeen American School, and after 1996 the Aberdeen Waldorf School. During this period additional teaching buildings were built, including a single-storey classroom block to the southwest of the main building, and a sports hall and a nursery to the north. These buildings are excluded from the listing (see above).

The site closed as a school in 2014 and has been unoccupied since that time.

3. Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

To be listed a building must be of 'special architectural or historic interest' as set out in the [Planning \(Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas\) \(Scotland\) Act 1997](#). To

decide if a building is of special interest for listing we assess its cultural significance using selection guidance which has two main headings – architectural interest and historic interest (see Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, 2019, Annex 2, pp. 11-13).

The selection guidance provides a framework within which judgement is exercised in reaching individual decisions. The special architectural or historic interest of a building can be demonstrated in one or more of the following ways.

3.1 Architectural interest

The architectural interest of a building may include its design, designer, interior, plan form, materials, regional traditions, and setting and the extent to which these characteristics survive. These factors are grouped under two headings:

3.1.1 Design

Convalescence hospitals were designed to maximise fresh air, sunlight, and have relaxing surroundings (Building up Our Health, p.74). The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital is south-facing and has design features such as a veranda, tall windows and is on an elevated terrace.

It has distinctive Arts and Crafts ‘chalet style’ features such as overhanging eaves and decorative half-timbering. The use of the Arts and Crafts style makes the building appear more like a country house or hotel, a building type which was conducive to rest and convalescence. The style was also particularly favoured on Deeside used at other nearby late-19th century convalescent hospitals and sanatoria, including Nordrach-on-Dee sanitorium (later Glen O’Dee convalescent hospital, which is now gone). Furthermore, the Continental alpine ‘chalet’ style, combined with the use of granite is locally distinctive to the area as seen in a number of country houses and shooting lodges of the same period.

A photograph from 1897 (SCRAN) shows the veranda along the south elevation was originally open with a glazed roof. The veranda has now been enclosed by later glazing but its earlier fabric is retained and, with exception of this change, the exterior of the building has not been significantly altered and largely retains its late 19th century design.

The footprint of this building is largely unaltered from that shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (revised 1899, published 1901). The T-plan is a typical plan form for convalescent homes and has been used on a larger scale at the Corstorphine Convalescent Hospital of 1866 in Edinburgh (listed at C, LB52367) and the Schaw Convalescent Hospital of 1895 in Glasgow (listed at B, LB22134).

The layout of earlier convalescent hospitals, such as the Corstorphine Hospital, was characterised by large, open Nightingale-style wards. The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital is a typical example of the later phase of this building type combining home comforts with convalescent care, particularly with the use of small

day rooms with lower ceilings (Cronin, p.1). The interior of the building has been remodelled for use as a school, and this has included some later subdivision to the rear parts of the building. Some typical late-19th century timber and plasterwork fixtures survive and the building's plan form continues to show its former hospital use.

The architectural firm, William and John Smith and Kelly of Aberdeen, designed the new convalescent hospital while they were working on the ward block extension of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary at Woolmanhill. This firm worked on a variety of projects including private houses, asylums, schools and hospitals, predominantly in and around Aberdeen and Angus. This building is a later example of their hospital work (Dictionary of Scottish Architects).

3.1.2 Setting

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital is a distinctive building in the landscape because of its scale and Arts and Crafts style detailing. Its rural setting is typical of later 19th century convalescent homes. Early convalescent hospitals were built immediately adjacent to hospitals, but as relaxing surroundings aided recovery the later 19th century examples are in more rural locations and resemble a country house.

The former hospital remains on an elevated site within its own formerly landscaped and wooded grounds and overlooking the suburb of Cults to the south. The immediate setting of the building has been altered by the addition of later school related buildings, however these buildings have not adversely affected the interest of the setting of the former hospital.

Aerial images show the wider setting has changed with the general expansion of Cults, particularly by the addition of 21st century housing at Friarsfield to the south of the former convalescent hospital which has engulfed the former Craigton Farm. This housing is visible but has not had a significant impact on the immediate setting of the building.

3.2 Historic interest

Historic interest is in such things as a building's age, rarity, social historical interest and associations with people or events that have had a significant impact on Scotland's cultural heritage. Historic interest is assessed under three headings:

3.2.1 Age and rarity

The older a building is, and the fewer of its type that survive, the more likely it is to be of special interest. Convalescent hospitals are now a relatively rare building type in Scotland. There were around 60 convalescent homes established in Scotland between 1860 and 1939, of which 22 were linked to hospitals (Cronin, p.278). Corstorphine Convalescent Home was the first to be opened in 1866 and was

directly linked to an infirmary. Others quickly followed, including Paisley in 1868, Aberdeen in 1873-74 and Dundee in 1876.

In 1946 a survey of Scottish hospitals showed there were four convalescent hospitals in the northeast region: Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital, Newhills Home (1874), Linn Moor (children) (1905) and Thorngrove Babies Home (1935) (Cronin, pp.136-37). There were other, smaller convalescent homes on Deeside, such as Eidda Home (1880) and Dyke Neuk (1886), catering specifically for children. These were usually cottages converted for convalescent use, such as Eidda Home in Peterculter, and are not comparable in scale and function to the Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital.

The Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital is a later example of its building type. By the late 19th century, hospital building design was increasingly specialised and this example was designed specifically for adult convalescence. It is now a rare surviving example of its building type which is largely unaltered.

3.2.2 Social historical interest

Social historical interest is the way a building contributes to our understanding of how people lived in the past, and how our social and economic history is shown in a building and/or in its setting.

Convalescent hospitals have social historical interest because they reflect the changing attitudes to healthcare and patient provision. Convalescent homes were first built in the mid-19th century as the pressure on hospital beds steadily rose and were a common aspect of health care for about a century. They were designed to provide patients with the means of recovering from illness in a period of two to three weeks.

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital dates from 1895-97 and shows how the design, plan form and setting of a building played an important role in healthcare. The building continues to reflect its former functional use, to create an open, well-ventilated and well-lit place to aid post-operative recovery.

3.2.3 Association with people or events of national importance

There is no association with a person or event of national importance.

4. Summary of assessment

The former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- It is a representative example of its building type, in plan form and design, and in particular its surviving south-facing veranda.
- Its architectural design in the Arts and Crafts chalet or lodge style is regionally distinctive and also typical of the late 19th century.
- The building is largely unaltered to the exterior and retains some interior features typical of the hospital building type.
- Its immediate setting is also intact, in particular its raised position within a wooded landscape which was specifically chosen and built for the building's former use.
- In its current form, the building directly illustrates its former function which tells us about the history of 19th century healthcare in Scotland and the northeast.

In our current state of knowledge the exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery block are not considered to meet the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. These buildings date from the late-20th and early-21st century and are not part of the site's former hospital function.

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: exterior metal stairs, former classroom block, sports hall and nursery building.

5. Category of listing

Once a building is found to be of special architectural or historic interest, it is then classified under one of three categories (A, B or C) according to its relative importance. While the listing itself has legal weight and gives statutory protection, the categories have no legal status and are advisory. They affect how a building is managed in the planning system.

Category definitions are found at Annex 2 of Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (2019) <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

5.1 Level of importance

The level of importance of the former Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital is category C.

Buildings listed at category C are defined as buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are representative examples of a period, style or type.

The interest of this building is as a representative example of a late-19th century purpose-built, former convalescent hospital in the northeast of Scotland.

6. Other Information

The first convalescent hospital associated with Aberdeen Royal Infirmary opened in 1873-74 at Lochhead House (now demolished), located on a part of what is now

Westburn Park. By the early 1890s it was decided that a new hospital outside of Aberdeen should be built and in 1895 the site of the new convalescent hospital in Cults was chosen.

In 1962 convalescent services were moved from Aberdeen Convalescent Hospital in Cults to Glen O'Dee Hospital in Banchory (former tuberculosis sanatorium).

7. References

Maps

Ordnance Survey (revised 1899, published 1901) Aberdeenshire LXXXVI.1 (Aberdeen; Banchory-Devenick; Peterculter). 2nd Edition. 25 inches to the mile. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

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Cronin, J. (2003) *The Origins and Development of Scottish Convalescent Homes, 1860-1939*. PhD Thesis. University of Glasgow.

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The International School Aberdeen. History of ISA, at <https://www.isa.aberdeen.sch.uk/pages/about/isa-overview/history-of-isa> [accessed 30/09/2019].

SCRAN. Photograph of Convalescent Hospital, Cults, near Aberdeen, 1897, at <https://www.scran.ac.uk/database/record.php?usi=000-000-126-864-C> [accessed 30/09/2019].

Other Information

N/A