



Case information

Case ID	300046468
Name of Site	St Kane's Hall, Main Street, New Deer, Turriff, Aberdeenshire
Postcode (if any)	AB53 6WD

Local Authority	Aberdeenshire Council
National Grid Reference	NJ 88494 47034
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	LB52638 Category C
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	10/09/2020
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	St Kane's Hall, Main Street, New Deer, Turriff	New category of listing	C

Our assessment using the selection guidance shows that the building meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest. The proposed decision is to list the building at category C.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

St. Kane's Hall has not previously been assessed for listing.

2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate St. Kane's Hall on 10/09/2020.

The applicant provided the following information and views in their application:

- Over many decades, a lack of maintenance has resulted in the hall becoming unfit for use due to numerous leaks in the roof.
- We are hoping to see a preservation order applied to the hall as a community asset and a piece of history before it is condemned to demolition.

We informed the planning authority at Aberdeenshire Council about the proposal to remove the listing. The council confirmed that they own the building and informed the property team about the listing proposal. They also provided us with recent photographs of the building.

We have not visited St. Kane's Hall. The present assessment is desk-based, using available information and has included reference to recent photographs.

3.2 Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

We have found that the building meets the criteria for listing.

We carried out an assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether a site or place is of special architectural or historic interest. 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: 22/05/2024 to 12/06/2024.

We have consulted directly with the: owner(s) and the planning authority.

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

4.2 Designation consultations

Comments we consider

We will consider comments and representations which are material to our decision-making, such as:

- Your understanding of the cultural significance of the site or place and whether it meets the criteria for designation.
- The purpose and implications of designating the site or place. We consider whether these are relevant to the case.
- Development proposals related to the site or place. Where there are development proposals, we consider whether to proceed with designation in line with our designation policy.
- The accuracy of our information.

Comments we don't consider

We do not consider comments and representations on non-relevant/non-material issues, such as:

- Economic considerations
- Abusive or offensive remarks
- Whether you personally like, or do not like, a proposal

Our video about consultations explains how you can comment on our designations decisions, and what we can and can't take into account when considering your views. <https://youtu.be/ZlqU51tRA6g>.

Dara Parsons

Head of Designations
Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

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ANNEX A

Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

1. Building or site name

St Kane's Hall, Main Street, New Deer, Turriff

2. Description and historical development

2.1 Description

St Kane's Hall is a rectangular plan former Free Church (now in use as a school hall/gymnasium) in the Early Gothic style designed by Ellis & Wilson of Aberdeenshire and built between 1884 and 1885. Built of New Pitsligo granite of a light colour, the side and rear walls being of square hammered rubble, while the front is close-jointed hammer-blocked ashlar. There is a former hall and vestry at rear. The openings are predominantly pointed-arched plate tracery, some with hoodmouldings. Many of the windows are now modern uPVC replacements. The church is prominently sited on Main Street in New Deer.

The west (front) elevation is three bays wide. The central recessed section has a buttressed gabled front with a large, three-light stone mullioned perpendicular window with modern uPVC window replacements. The rectangular-plan three-stage tower at the southwest corner has angled buttresses and topped by an octagonal spire with a simple decorative metal finial. The third stage has single cusped lancet openings on four sides, which are louvered. The advanced bay to the right is topped by a stone-columned belfry. These flanking bays both have pointed and arched lancet windows. The central entrance doorway has two-leaf timber door. The building has cast iron rainwater goods throughout.

The south elevation has gable fronted end bays breaking through the eaves.

The east (rear) elevation is plainer and largely symmetrical. It has one large central, pointed arch blind window, flanked by smaller pointed arched windows. There is a chimney stack at the apex of the rear gable. The rear is abutted by a single storey ancillary building with pitched roofs (the former hall and presbytery/vestry).

The roof is pitched and slated with ashlar stone skewers with pedimented skew putts. The window openings are largely tall, narrow lancets with angled ashlar cills, continuous moulded cill courses, simple hoodmouldings. The door openings are recessed pointed-arched openings with moulded surrounds, plain transoms and timber-boarded doors with decorative hinges.

The interior has been converted to use as a gym hall. The roof has exposed timber beams and there is late 19th century decorative painted paper surviving to some walls.

2.3 Historical development

The new Free Church was opened in 1885 at a cost of £2,300. It was designed by Aberdeen-based architects Ellis & Wilson. The foundation stone was laid by Mrs Dingwall Fordyce of Brucklay Castle in June 1884. The Peterhead Sentinel and General Advertiser for Buchan District on 1 July 1885 described the church as "...one of the most handsomest buildings for Presbyterian worship to be found in any rural district in the north of Scotland", with seating for 500 people in the "...modern open style with a platform pulpit." It was built of New Pitsligo granite and the mason was William Davidson of New Pitsligo. A memorial window in memory of the late Captain and Mrs Dingwall Fordyce was installed above the pulpit, having been removed from the old church. A spacious hall and 'session house', or presbytery, were built behind the church.

The church is shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (surveyed 1900, published 1901) as a rectangular plan. New Deer United Presbyterian Church was opened in November 1894. By 1900 the United Presbyterian Church and Free Church merged. At this time East United Free Church (formerly UP Church) and West United Free Church (former Free Church, St Kane's Hall) remain. The East and West congregations merged in 1908, retaining the United Free Church (St Kane's Hall). The East church was eventually demolished. The United Free Church and Church of Scotland reunite in 1929 and there is no mention of the United Free Church in New Deer after this date. The pulpit was removed in 1936 and the church was eventually sold to the local authority in 1971-72.

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

St Kane's Hall is a well-proportioned, small gothic style former church with a variety of architectural interest found which is evident in the asymmetry of the main elevations, with a double tower arrangement and in the distinctive gothic features and decorative details throughout. St Kane's Hall demonstrates a high level of artistic skill and detailing for a building of this size.

The design of St Kane's Hall is in the Early English Gothic style, a Gothic Revival style that was popular in Scotland following a new interest in medieval architecture, especially in church building, which swept the architectural profession around 1840.

For church architecture in Scotland, the years 1840 to 1860 are dominated by a specific interest in the apparently plainer early Gothic styles, as this style was found to be less decorative – essentially not Episcopalian or Catholic in leaning. While the newly established Free Church sought to differentiate itself from the Established Church in Scotland in how it governed itself, its programme of church building conformed stylistically to prevailing architectural styles for Protestant denominations from the middle of the 19th century. The tall narrow lancet windows, which provide the principal decoration on the front gable and exterior of the main body of St Kane's Hall, are a good example of this plainer, Early English Gothic style, but with added variety here in the additions of small towers and turrets.

The architects, Ellis & Wilson (Alexander Ellis and Robert Gordon Wilson Senior) of Aberdeen City practiced extensively across the Aberdeenshire region in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and are known for their residential and church work. Ellis & Wilson designed and altered 32 churches for different denominations between 1870 and 1903, predominantly in the Gothic style. Eight of these were Free Churches, and examples of these include Park Free Church, Drumoak in 1879 and Bon Accord Free Church in Aberdeen (1894), which is the largest and one of the most elaborate of all the Free Churches that the practice designed.

As churches change use over time to provide a wider range of community functions, it is common that interior fixtures and fittings can be altered. The interior of St Kane's Hall has been altered for use as a gymnasium in the 20th century but some of the late 19th century interior features of interest remain, including the timber panelling to the lower walls, the decorative gallery timberwork and the exposed king post scissor truss roof in the main hall (now gymnasium). These features are simple and largely typical for a church of this date, but their survival adds to the special interest of the building under this heading.

The footprint and exterior fabric and design of the church has been largely unaltered

since its construction in the late 19th century. The main rectangular hall with the timber truss roof appears to relate to the footprint of the buildings shown on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed 1900, published 1901). The retention of the footprint of this space, which is likely to date from the 19th century, is of interest for what it can tell us about how the former church functioned during this period.

St Kane's Hall is a good example of a Gothic church in a small rural village built at a time of change in Scotland. It retains much of its late 19th century detailing and its footprint is unchanged. While the building has undergone some alteration in the later 20th century including some alterations to the interior and installation of uPVC window replacements, its design is of special interest. Whilst there have been some changes to the building and a change of use in the late 20th century, the building retains much of its historic character, and this authenticity is of special interest under this heading.

3.1.2 Setting

St Kane's Hall is prominently located on Main Street, New Deer's principal street, a short distance north of New Deer Parish Church (listed category B, ref: [LB16152](#)) and God's Acre Churchyard (listed category C, ref: [LB16153](#)). The church is set back slightly from the road; however, its tall spire is dominant in the streetscape and is visible from approaches to the town from the North and South.

While the principal streets of New Deer, the Main Street and the Brae, retain their mid-19th century layout, the town has expanded and the wider setting of the church, as depicted on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey Map (surveyed 1900, published 1901), has been altered.

The immediate surroundings of the church are predominantly one and two-storey mid-19th century domestic buildings. While many of these have been altered with the addition of dormers and replacement windows, the small, residential scale of these buildings has been retained, contrasting to the height of the church, which retains its presence in the streetscape.

The historic setting of St Kane's Hall has changed very little, and it remains a distinctive property within the area.

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

Churches dating to the later 19th century are not a rare building type and a great many from this date and earlier survive. St Kane's Hall is a notable example within its common building type.

There was a significant increase in church buildings after the Disruption of 1843 as the Free Church began fundraising to build hundreds of new churches across the country. Most of these new churches were to be accompanied by manses and schools. Following this, the Established Church also commenced a programme of church building to rival that of the Free Church, increasing its number of parishes between 1843 and 1909 by over half. As a result, the mid to late 19th century marked a significant period of church building in Scotland.

Surviving churches of the 19th century are not rare (particularly those built after the middle of the century). There are a large number of churches dating from this period, of which St. Kane's is not an early or rare example of its building type. The Gothic Revival style was popular in church design from the early half of the 19th century but matured to fruition during the latter part of the century and endured into the early 20th century.

As surviving churches of the 19th century are not rare – particularly those built after the middle of the century – authenticity, or closeness to its original fabric is an important consideration for listing, as what may have been added or taken away may be of benefit or of detriment to the building's character. St. Kane's Hall is a good surviving Gothic Revival style church of the period which is relatively little altered. It is of a coherent design, displaying some typical but well detailed decorative elements both to the interior and exterior and largely retains its late 19th century character.

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.

There is no special interest under this heading. Due to their key function within a community, church buildings inherently have socio-historical interest for the local area.

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

St Kane's Hall meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- It is a good representative example of a late 19th century church in the Gothic style.
- The building has a good level of quality architectural detailing, especially for a rural village. The exterior is little altered.
- Designed by the well-known and important local (Aberdeen-based) architects practice, who carried out numerous church commissions throughout the northeast and for various denominations.
- The building's immediate setting has changed very little, and it is prominently situated along the Main Street.

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

St Kane's Hall's level of importance 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.

Taking into account the prolific building type and level of alteration, category C is considered to be the most appropriate level of listing.

6. Other Information

Around the late 19th century, New Deer saw the increased engagement of a number of religious denominations in the life of the growing population. St Kane's Hall is one of three surviving 19th century churches in the village. The others being New Deer Parish Church (St Kane) (listed category B, ref: LB16152), designed by John Smith between 1839-41, and the Former Congregational Church, Main Street (not listed), designed by Matthews & Mackenzie 1880.

7. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 378437

Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1900, published 1901) Aberdeenshire XX.8. 25 Inches to the mile. 2nd Edition. Southampton. Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (surveyed 1900, published 1902) Aberdeenshire Sheet XXI.NW Six Inches to the mile. 2nd Edition. Southampton. Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey National Grid (surveyed/ revised Pre-1930 to 1958, published 1959) NJ84NE - A. 1:1,250 / 1:2,500. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Archives

Printed Sources

Glendinning, M., MacInnes, R. and MacKechnie, A. (1996) A History of Scottish Architecture: from the Renaissance to the present day, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press., p 293.

New Statistical Account (1834-45) New Deer, County of Aberdeen, NSA, Vol. XII, pp. 175-185.

Peterhead Sentinel and General Advertiser for Buchan District, (1 July 1885), New Free Church at New Deer, p. 5.

Smith, J. A. (2012) Robert Shanks of Buckie (1798 - 1884), Scottish Reformation Society Historical Journal, 2, pp. 167-195.

Walker, D. W. and Woodworth, M. (2015), The Buildings of Scotland: Aberdeenshire. North and Moray, New Haven: Yale University Press, pp 301-302.

Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects, entry for Ellis & Wilson at http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200676 [accessed 1/11/2022].

Dictionary of Scottish Architects, entry for New Deer Free Church at http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=205061 [accessed 1/11/2022].

8. Indicative Map

A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.