

Case Name: Harrogate Police Station, North Park Road, Harrogate

Case Number: 473039

Background

English Heritage have been asked to assess the former Harrogate Police Station for listing.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	EH Recommendation
1	1409826	Former Police Station	Listing	Add to List

Visits

Date	Visit Type
23 May 2012	Full inspection

Context

In spring 2012, Harrogate Police moved to a new purpose built police station, leaving the North Park Road buildings redundant. There is a proposal for Harrogate Council to buy the site and to completely redevelop it for new council offices. The police station is included within the Harrogate Conservation Area, but is not identified within the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a building of any note. However the council's Local Development Framework (Sept 2011) does identify the police station as being of interest and identifies it as being suitable for conversion into housing.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

Information and comments were received from the applicant, the Local Authority and the agent for the owner:

The applicant responded briefly, supportive of the report but making five comments which have been taken into consideration with this final report.

The Local Authority provided copies of the original architect's plans which were more legible than those received with the application, as well as plans relating to alterations made in circa 1973. Their detailed response highlighted a number of minor errors in the report (mainly arising from the illegibility of the copies of architects plans submitted by the applicant) and expressed the opinion that the report did not give sufficient consideration to the later alterations and extensions. These comments have been taken into consideration with this final report with the description modified accordingly.

The response from the owner's agent was very full, taking the form of a 53 page report which can be summarised into the following points:

1. That the Police Station is not identified by the Conservation Area Character Appraisal as a "landmark building" or a "building of local interest and merit" and that this made it difficult to see how the building could be deemed to be listable.

2. The extent of various alterations and extensions to the police station, challenging some of the wording in the consultation report. The agent suggested that internal alterations make it impossible to understand how the building was originally designed to function, particularly as regards to the processing of prisoners and the reception of visitors making enquiries. Also that the scale of the extensions to the rear are overpowering, particularly when viewed from the north and east.

3. Questioning the architectural interest of the exterior of the building, mainly by providing photographic comparisons with C20 police stations nationally that are already listed as well as a number of interwar Queen Anne Revival style military buildings both listed and unlisted.

4. A consideration of the economic benefits of redevelopment of the site.

In response:

1. Listing and conservation area assessments are conducted using different criteria and from different perspectives, so it is not unusual for apparent contradictions to occur. A building's setting within its local area is a consideration within listing, but not an overriding one. National perspectives are often different to more locally derived ones.

2. The impact of the later alterations to the building is considered in the assessment below. Most of the challenges to the wording of the consultation report concern matters of detail, mainly as a result of the generalised nature of the description. The description has been amended, but it is still written to maintain a balance between generalisation and detail where appropriate. Listing descriptions are not designed to be detailed building records.

3. Architectural interest is considered below. The comparisons with other police stations and military buildings were helpful to the final assessment.

4. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that buildings are assessed for listing on the basis of their special architectural and historical interest. Matters of economics and proposed future uses of the site are not valid considerations for listing assessments under the terms of the legislation.

ASSESSMENT

The DCMS's Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (March 2010) sets out how the Secretary of State determines whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and therefore merits listing. This sets out that most buildings pre-dating 1840 are listed, with selection required for post-1840 buildings because of the greatly increased number of buildings erected and the much larger numbers that have survived. The English Heritage Selection Guide for Law and Government Buildings (April 2011) further highlights the need for selectivity when assessing police stations for listing because of their large numbers and because so many were designed to standardised formulas. The guide notes that architectural quality is the primary consideration: strong compositional qualities, considered details and good quality materials and craftsmanship being important factors. Another consideration is the legibility of plan form, but that a degree of later alteration is to be expected.

The former Harrogate Police Station was certainly not designed to a standardised formula. It is unusual because it was not squeezed into a town centre location and given an imposing architectural treatment designed as a stamp of authority. Instead it was built on a green-field site allowing the architect to accommodate generous domestic provision in addition to the core functions of the police station in a similar way to a small college campus. The buildings are all very human in scale, further helped by the use of Queen Anne Revival architecture, with even the tall first floor parade room being carefully hidden to the rear. The quality of the detailing, materials and craftsmanship (for example the thin brick brickwork) is all of a good order and the architectural composition is assured, with the main range with forecourt and flanking houses forming a strong layout when viewed from the principal approach. Architectural detailing is subtly varied according to the status of original use so that, for instance, although houses 1 and 2 are at first sight identical, house 1 is clearly the more important building, originally occupied by the Superintendent. The main block is given additional gravitas to set it apart from the houses by the addition of the rusticated ashlar stonework and other good quality details such as the carved head keystones of Justice, Prudence and Wisdom. The result is a complex of buildings which is very genteel in appearance yet still displaying quiet authority.

The former Harrogate police station's architectural design and quality of detailing compares favourably with a number of listed Edwardian police stations such as Deptford, Lewisham (NHLE 1080026), Lee High Road, Lewisham (NHLE 1079980), Sutton (NHLE 1244322) and Enfield (NHLE 1189172). All but the last of these

have clearly undergone significant extension in the late C20. Harrogate also compares well with a number of listed 1930s police stations such as Tunbridge Wells (NHLE 1227046) and Hammersmith (NHLE 1362076) both being Neo-Georgian of 1939, as well as the very differently styled Leicester Police Station built 1933 (NHLE 1387726) which has also clearly been significantly extended.

Combined with the tree planting, Harrogate police station was clearly influenced by the Garden City movement which was in its ascendancy in the interwar period. It has interesting historical parallels with the styling of many military buildings erected in the later 1930s such as those for the Royal Air Force, the designs for which were vetted by the Royal Fine Arts Commission. Indeed the architectural design and quality compares favourably with the Grade II listed Officers' Messes built 1938 at Bourlon (NHLE 13393299) and Gaza Barracks (NHLE 1393298) in Catterick Garrison.

This police station remained in active use until this year, and (especially given its generous grounds) it is unsurprising that the building has undergone extension and alteration to adapt it to the changing needs of the police force. However, when viewed from public rights of way (being the road to the south and the footpath to the west) the architectural integrity of the station is remarkably intact. The most recent additions (the infill buildings to the rears of houses 1 and 2) are sympathetically detailed in terms of scale, design and general materials with their hipped roofs blending in well with the roofscape of the principal elevations. The earlier extensions however, are not sympathetically designed and do detract from the original. They are flat roofed and show little attempt at integrating with the original building in terms of scale, materials and design, however they are all to the rear, and largely concealed by the original buildings when viewed from public rights of ways. Consequently, the negative impact is relatively minor as these later additions impinge on the more utilitarian rear elevations rather than the more architecturally considered elevations viewable from the south and west. The later extensions have resulted in the loss of the original garage block and the infilling of former yards. These losses do affect the design but too significantly given that all of the major buildings survive, along with such features as the boundary walls and fencing.

The original architect's plans suggest that the interiors were simply detailed. Later alterations have removed many original features including all fireplaces and most of the original doors have been replaced by fire doors. However, all of the staircases remain in situ (one with a minor alteration) clearly signalling the hierarchy of the different parts of the complex. The loss of the vaulted ceiling to the parade room is unfortunate, as is the extensive re-organisation of the original entrance hall, enquiry desks, custody suite and immediately surrounding area. However this level of internal alteration is typical, and indeed is less extensive than with some already listed police stations (such as the example at Victoria Street, Chadderton UID1402388). The original general internal arrangement of the Harrogate police station is still clearly discernable.

Overall, the extensive C20 additions and alterations are not considered to have significantly reduced the special interest of the original complex which, in general, is remarkably well preserved. Indeed the extent of later alteration is similar to that of a number of existing listed police stations to which Harrogate compares favourably architecturally. The former Harrogate police station has special architectural interest for its very assured composition and the quality of its detailing, materials and craftsmanship. The use of Queen Anne Revival styling to produce a genteel yet quietly authoritative impression is also of historical interest for its similarity to many military buildings built slightly later in the 1930s.

CONCLUSION

After examining all the records and other relevant information, and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are fulfilled and the former Harrogate Police Station, with its associated housing and boundaries, is recommended for listing Grade II.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION:

The former Harrogate Police Station is recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- * Architectural design: good example of the Queen Anne Revival to produce a genteel, yet quietly authoritative police station, prefiguring similar approaches taken with many military buildings constructed in the 1930s.
- * Composition: the main building facing the front forecourt flanked by police houses possesses an architectural formality which endows the ensemble with appropriate gravitas for the building type.
- * Materials: quality of materials exhibited by the brickwork and stone dressings, subtly varied to indicate the hierarchy of buildings.

Countersigning comments:

Agreed: Harrogate Police Station is a successful and distinctive architectural composition in Queen Anne style. It merits designation in the national context.
MTS 13-08-2012.

Annex 1**List Entry****List Entry Summary**

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: Former Police Station

List Entry Number: 1409826

Location

Former police station, police houses with boundary walls, gates and fences, North Park Road, Harrogate, HG1 5PJ

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
North Yorkshire	Harrogate	District Authority	Non Civil Parish

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed:

Date of most recent amendment:

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy Number: Not applicable to this List entry.

Asset Groupings

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List Entry Description**Summary of Building**

Divisional police station including domestic accommodation, built circa 1930.

Reasons for Designation

Former Police Station, Harrogate is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

- Architectural design: good example of the Queen Anne Revival to produce a genteel, yet quietly authoritative police station, prefiguring similar approaches taken with many military buildings constructed in the 1930s.
- Composition: the main building facing the front forecourt flanked by police houses possesses an architectural formality which endows the ensemble with appropriate gravitas for the building type.

- Materials: quality of materials exhibited by the brickwork and stone dressings, subtly varied to indicate the hierarchy of buildings.

History

The former Harrogate Police Station, including five police houses, was designed by the West Riding County Architect, Percy Oats Platts, in 1927 as the Police Headquarters for the Claro Division. This was opened in 1931 and is shown on the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map published in 1932. Sometime in the 1960s a detached garage block on the east side to the rear was demolished and replaced with a two-storey, flat-roofed office block which extended northwards from the east end of the principal, central range. Probably at around the same time, the principal range was reordered internally, including the knocking through of a series of first floor rooms originally designed as bedrooms for single constables. In circa 1973 a further extension was added at the opposite end of the principal range, infilling former rear yards to Police Houses 3 and 4. These two police houses as well as parts of the principal range were also reconfigured internally. By 1990 further extensions and alterations had been made to the rear of the principal building. Sometime after this date, two infill blocks with hipped roofs were added to the rear of the two police houses flanking the police station forecourt (Houses 1 and 2), replacing earlier walled yards. The police station became redundant in May 2012.

Details

MATERIALS: narrow red brick laid in a variety of bonds. Red sandstone ashlar and dressings. Red, plain tile roofs with tile bonnets and ridges.

LAYOUT: the main building faces south and includes a two-storey office range with a taller block to the rear (north) incorporating the custody suite on the ground floor and parade hall above. The forecourt to the front of the main building is flanked by two police houses (number 1 to the east, number 2 to the west) which project forward, both being connected to the main office range via small, single storey link buildings. To the north of the western house there is a mirrored pair of semi-detached houses (numbers 3 and 4) which face west and which are now interconnected to the main building via later extensions to their south and east. Further to the north there is the fifth police house, number 5, which is detached, but linked to the rest via a garden wall.

There are several flat-roofed buildings and extensions to the rear and sides of the central office range, with the post 1990 infill buildings to the rear of houses 1 and 2 having hipped roofs. These later additions are not of special interest, although the infill buildings with hipped roofs are sympathetically detailed.

DESCRIPTION: the original buildings are of two-storeys, and generally have a simple stone plinth, a first floor storey band and a string course above at window sill level. Windows are generally horned sashes with narrow glazing bars (typically 6 over 6 pane), with gauged brick flat arch lintels, some with stone keystones or architraves, the domestic windows typically having stone cills. Low status doorways have gauged brick lintels, with higher status doors furnished with stone surrounds featuring eared architraves topped by a cornice, the doors being panelled, part glazed with decoratively leaded overlights. Chimney stacks all remain full height and are tall, brick built with plinths and cornices.

The interiors appear to have been generally simply finished. All fire places have been removed, but chimney breasts generally remain. Most internal doors have been replaced with modern fire doors (normally retaining the original architraves), although a number of original panel doors do remain in situ, mostly on the first floor of the main building. All of the police houses retain various built in cupboards usually complete with original panelled doors. All staircases survive with original balustrading, hard wood newel posts and handrails.

MAIN BUILDING

Exterior: symmetrical south elevation of thirteen bays, the ground floor being of rusticated ashlar, the first floor of brick with a stone cornice. The centre bay includes the main entrance which is inset behind a round arched opening. Above the double doors (which are modern replacements) there is a carved keystone in the form of a bearded man's head (considered to symbolise Wisdom). The entrance is flanked by ornate lanterns on wall brackets. Above there is a balcony which includes the heraldic insignia of the West Riding Police carved in stone and forming part of the balustrade. The first floor window above has an ornamented stone architrave. The three bays to either side of the centre have round arched ground floor windows and first floor windows with stone keystones but no architraves. Rain water down pipes are also made an architectural feature here by being rectangular in section with decorated hoppers. The three bays at either end of the elevation are broken slightly forward, with the centre bay of each emphasised with a architraved first floor window and a keystone ground floor window carved with a female head. The eastern carved head is blindfolded (a traditional representation of Justice) the western head including a pair of serpents (considered to symbolise the virtue of Prudence). The rusticated ashlar stonework is continued to project forward to form

the single storey link buildings to the flanking police houses. These single bay link buildings each include a side facing doorway and are topped by an ornamental stone urn. To the rear, set back from the main elevation, there is a two storey flat roofed projection with a circular window (these flat roofed sections being part of the original building).

Side and rear elevations are mainly covered by later extensions that are not of special interest, although what is exposed of the original building (generally on the first floor) is more simply detailed but generally unaltered.

Interior: the interior has been reordered, especially inside the central entrance and within the rear custody suite. However the two staircases remain: that at the east end of the rear block being an open well staircase with an ornate iron balustrade; that at the west end being much more utilitarian. The first floor corridor is largely intact, complete with two roof lights incorporating stained glass and a number of panelled doors. First floor rooms to the front, originally individual bedrooms for single constables, have been knocked through. The parade room to the rear has been partially subdivided with stud partitions.

POLICE HOUSE 1

Exterior: three bay front which faces south, with a central entrance with stone architrave that is flanked by ground floor canted bay windows. The west elevation (facing the forecourt) includes a ground floor round window. The house has a square footprint.

Interior: the front door opens into an internal wind lobby (missing its inner door). The generous staircase is to the rear left and has twisted balusters. The original room layout is effectively unaltered with the exception of inserted doorways through to the post 1990 infill building to the rear.

POLICE HOUSE 2

Exterior: similar to Number 1 but without the round window and with slightly different side elevations. The house was originally L-shaped, although this is concealed by the post 1990 infill building to the rear.

Interior: the front door opens onto the foot of the stairs which is relatively plain with stick balusters. Interior layout unaltered: no direct interconnection with the infill building to the rear.

POLICE HOUSES 3 and 4

Exterior: semi-detached symmetrical pair of double fronted houses: the front (west elevation) is more simply detailed than the other houses, lacking the storey band and the architraves around the front doors. Above the front doors are round windows which light the staircases. Sides are blind, the rear is obscured by later extensions that are not of special interest.

Interior: in each property, the front door opens up onto the rear of the staircase which is otherwise similar to that in number 2. Apart from the staircase, the layout is altered, especially on the first floor which has been reorganised with some removed walls (including the party wall) and inserted partitions. The interiors also interconnect with the later infill buildings to the south and east.

POLICE HOUSE 5

Exterior: unaltered, L-shaped house which faces west. The front door (complete with architrave) is set in the west face of the south projecting wing and has a round (bathroom) window above. The west projecting wing is of two bays with keystones emboldening the ground floor windows. The south elevation of the west wing is blind, the south elevation of the south wing is asymmetric, three bays wide but blind to upper left. The east elevation is also asymmetric and more utilitarian with a back door and access to an external store. The north elevation is blind except for the stair window.

Interior: the front door opens into a wind lobby with a part glazed inner door and partition embellished with stained glass. This leads through to the stair hall with its half landing staircase. The interior layout remains largely unaltered.

SUBSIDIARY ITEMS

Garden wall linking Police House 4 and 5: this high garden wall includes a gateway protected by a hipped roof retaining an ornamental iron gate.

Boundary wall, railings, gates and gate piers: the south and west sides of the whole plot are bounded by a low brick wall topped by ornamental railings. This is punctuated by ornamental pedestrian gates serving each front door as well as additional gates through the west boundary thought to have been garden entrances. To the centre of the south boundary, giving access to the forecourt, there is a vehicle access with ornamental

gates hung from piers topped by stone urns. To the east there is a driveway leading to the rear which is marked by a simple brick piers with stone caps.

MAPPING NOTE

The mapped depiction of the Listing does not attempt to exclude the later extensions that are not of special interest. The mapped depiction of boundary walls with gateways are shown diagrammatically to aid identification.

Selected Sources

None.

Map

National Grid Reference: SE3075455279



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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - 1409826_1.pdf