

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PRE-PLANNING APPLICATION

Proposed Change of use from Publisher Agent's Office to a
Residential Property at,
Carrington Kirk, Carrington

Applicant: Hilary Turnbull / @SIPP



1 Introduction

This statement has been prepared on behalf of Hilary Turnbull in support of her application for pre-planning advice. The application is for a change of use from Publishers Agents office to a residential unit at Carrington Kirk.

The, currently vacant, property is under her ownership and the application seeks to look at whether proposals to convert the B listed Church into a family home would be likely to be supported by the council.

While there are various ways in which this could be achieved, the scheme put forwards proposes a sustainable and sensitive re-use of the existing building which will allow the property to remain in occupation.

2 Background & History

For nearly forty years Carrington Kirk has been used for office purposes. Prior to that it was unused and in a poor state of repair. The Kirk remains at the heart of the village, a listed building at the centre of the Conservation Area. It continues to look like a church, has undergone no discernible changes of appearance and passers-by might be wholly unaware that it is not used for worship and has not been so used for around 50 years. It has been exceptionally well-maintained by the current owner, the applicant.

The grade B listed Carrington Kirk was built in 1710. It replaced another more ancient church consecrated by the Bishop of St Andrews in 1243. A date is tooled into the lintel above the bell tower door. It was finished the following year and replaced the old church located about half a mile to the north-east.

Historically there were strong links between the Presbyterian church and education. Parish records show that to be the case in Carrington where the school roll is said to have been around 80 children throughout the 18th and 19th centuries.

In the 18th century Carrington was known as Primrose on account of its association with the Primrose family who held large landholdings locally, the Rosebery Estates, and elsewhere including the Dalmeny Estates near South Queensferry. After 1817, the name of the village reverted to Carrington.

The Kirk is of a good, plain design which is simple and elegant. As a country church it would originally have had a simple earth floor which the congregation would have placed stools to sit upon. There may have been a raised seating area, or loft, for the laird



Existing Church Entrance



Existing Church Rear Elevation



Existing Church Interior

from the start or one may have been later added. At Newbattle a loft was built by 1739 and pews introduced with narrow paved corridors between around 1750. It is thought likely that such features were introduced at Carrington Kirk around the same time. It is not known who designed or built the church. It seems likely that it was a local stonemason, possibly James Kay Snr. and his son. Interestingly, the Hill Kirk at Blairgowrie is almost exactly the same.

In the middle of the 18th century the minister commented that the roof of the church was decayed, the walls rough, windows shattered, and described its internal appearance as the reverse of the simple elegance needed for a place of worship. It must be assumed that maintenance was not high within the concerns of the Session in this small rural parish. Fiscal worries were well documented in Session minutes.

Though the arrival of the 20th century saw great change, not least because of the death of Queen Victoria and the notably more liberal views and actions of King Edward VII, the church remained important for the first half of the century with a Sunday attendance of around 100 worshippers. It is recorded by Reverend John Gow Green (minister between the years 1931 and 1956) that the Kirk was restored in 1928, having previously been refurbished by Brown and Wardrop in 1858. Later works were undertaken in 1938.

Remarkably, the manse was still not provided with mains water or electricity in the 1950s. There had been two shops in the village in the late 1930s, but both had closed by the 1950s. Only one craft workshop remained in the village into the 1950s and that was the joiner and wheelwright's workshop. The blacksmiths had closed in the 1930s. Travelling shops took over from permanent stores and a library van began to visit. Midlothian County Council built new houses of a high standard and a village hall was constructed in 1928, proving popular in hosting classes and activities at the same time as church membership waned.

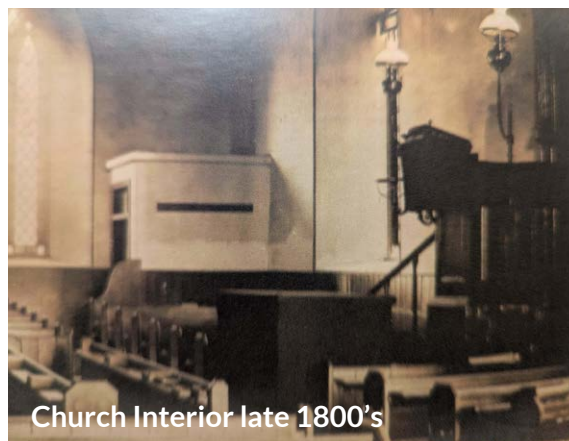
Carrington Church joined with Temple in 1956 and with Cockpen in 1975 whereupon the link with Temple was broken. Carrington Kirk closed in 1975 and lay empty for several years. It was not maintained, and its condition declined.

It was sold and then bought by Ian Woodyer and James Gardiner, partners in the design business Gardiner Russell in 1983. They sold to the current owner, Hilary Turnbull in 2003. Hilary has successfully run her business imPRESS International Media Ltd from the church since then. imPRESS International Media is the international arm of many of the world's leading specialist medical, life sciences and technology information platforms, spanning science and engineering disciplines from aerospace to vaccine research.

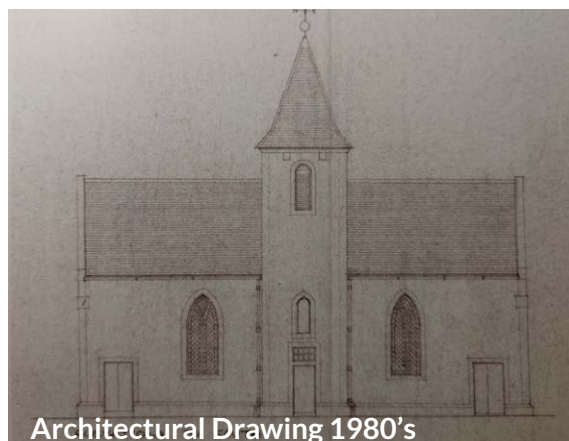
Hilary retired in 2019 and although imPRESS International Media is still trading they moved on to alternative premises in 2024.



Historic photo from Temple Road



Church Interior late 1800's



Architectural Drawing 1980's



Derelict Door late 1970's

3 Planning History

Carrington Kirk was listed at Category B on 22 January 1971. (Description listed in appendix 1) The description has been updated since that time (possibly 1990s), being very detailed and it refers to the alterations made around 1984. The Session House, is separately listed also at Category B. It was listed on 22 January 1971. (Description listed in appendix 2)

The Kirk and the Session House are situated in the Carrington Conservation Area. There is no Conservation Area Character Appraisal nor a Management Plan though designation was undertaken in 1972.

In November 1983 planning permission was granted for the change of use from a church to a commercial design studio. (Midlothian reference 513/83). The last known use then may have been a church, but the building had gone out of use in 1975. No alterations were included nor advertisements. The condition regarding the use is unnecessarily restrictive and does not appear to pass the test for conditions. No file is available.

Application reference 220/84 sought planning permission and listed building consent for alterations to the building to support the change of use to a graphic design studio, which was approved. Condition 1 requires the external walls of the building to be finished with an off-white wet dash harling. This part of the permissions was not implemented. It appears the condition was added to provide clarification about a drawing note that appears insufficiently precise.

Application reference 607/86 sought and secured planning permission and listed building consent for reinstatement of original windows and the addition of a new gallery floor. Permission was granted subject to conditions. The stained glass that was removed in the 1980s was restored for the tercentenary of the kirk in 2010 and remains on display.

Application reference 03/00388/FUL sought and was approved to amend the restrictions of use imposed under reference 220/84. The application was submitted by the present owner and the variation of Condition 3 of consent 220/84 allowed her to use the property as a publishers' agents office Applications reference 03/00573/LBC and 03/00578/FUL provided temporary consent listed building consent and planning permission for a satellite dish.

4 Proposal

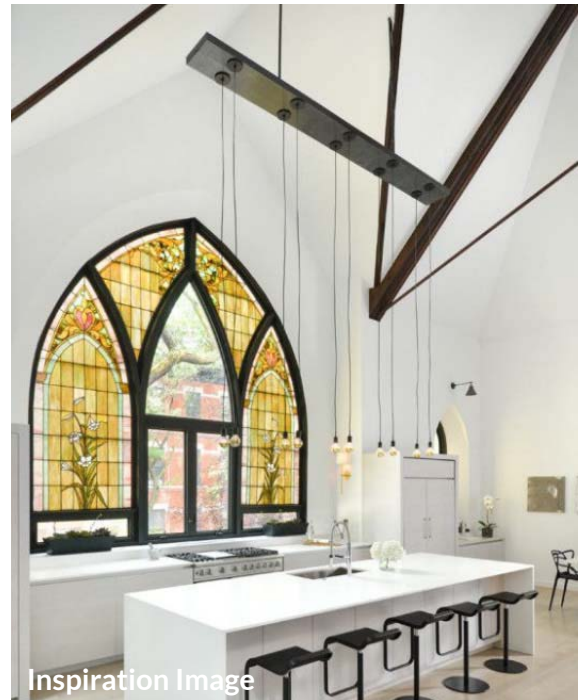
Over the ownership period the applicant has spent considerable time and money refurbishing the kirk and restoring the exterior, allowing the Kirk to remain in use.

Following the pandemic and recent changes to work patterns the viability of retaining the Kirk in its current use as a place of work is in doubt. Having sold on the business the applicant is in the process of selling the property however the narrow scope of the current permission and conditions is making this difficult to achieve.

The property has been offered to the market via property agents Strutt & Parker since June 2024 and, to date, there have been no enquiries from any party wishing to use the premises for commercial purposes. As anticipated, there have been several tentative enquiries from potential purchasers regarding the possibility of converting the building to residential use, as exemplified by many recent church conversions in the surrounding area. However, none of these enquiries have been pursued further, mainly due to the potential risk involved with a Planning Application and the likelihood of success.

Hence, the applicant wishes to look at whether changing the use to a residential home may be a viable alternative. As such, they have enclosed plans demonstrating a proposal for a 4 bedroom family home.

This has been designed to make best use of the space within the kirk whilst maintaining its external appearance. The floor levels proposed are similar to what is currently in place in the current



use and should therefore have minimal impact on the fabric of the building and its outward appearance

The plans seek to maximise the feel of the space, with a generous two storey entrance area which opens onto two levels of living accommodation. Two bedroom wings have been created with work/library spaces looking down to the floor below. The layout has been developed to make best use of the existing windows and keeps services in areas they already exist in.

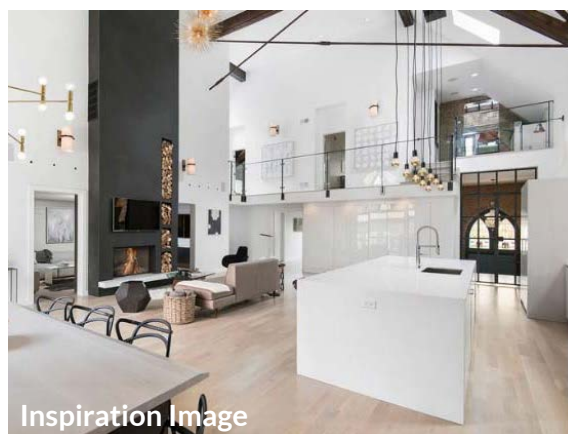
The proposals rationalise the levels within the space which will allow a raised, insulated floor to be accommodated and improve accessibility throughout as well as increasing thermal comfort and reducing energy expenditure.

The existing tower space would serve as an ideal location to house plant for renewable technology such as heat pumps, allowing the kirk to be brought up to a liveable standard in a sustainable way, whilst minimising impact on the exterior of the property.

The hope would be to provide a modern, light and spacious home internally whilst maintaining the exterior of the property as it is today. A palette of modern materials is proposed to allow the new additions to be clearly distinct from the existing building fabric. The windows would be subdivided similar to the existing



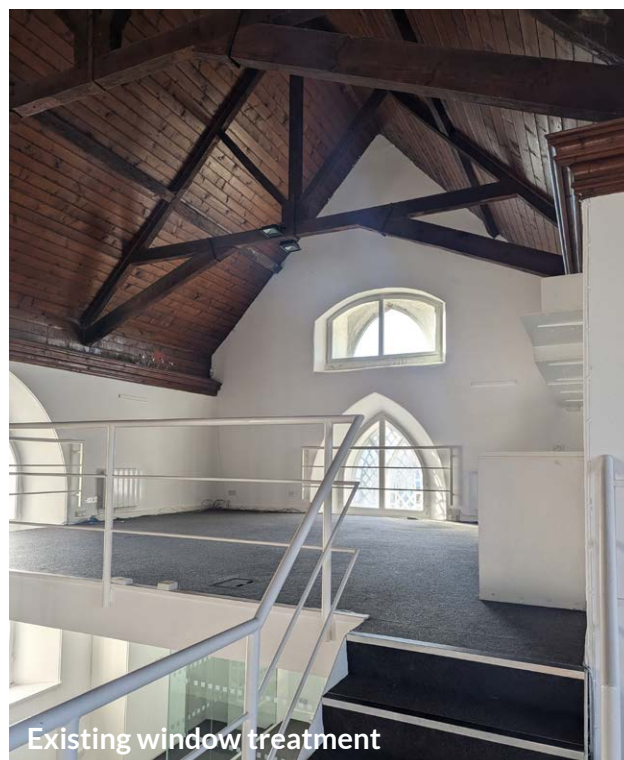
Inspiration Image



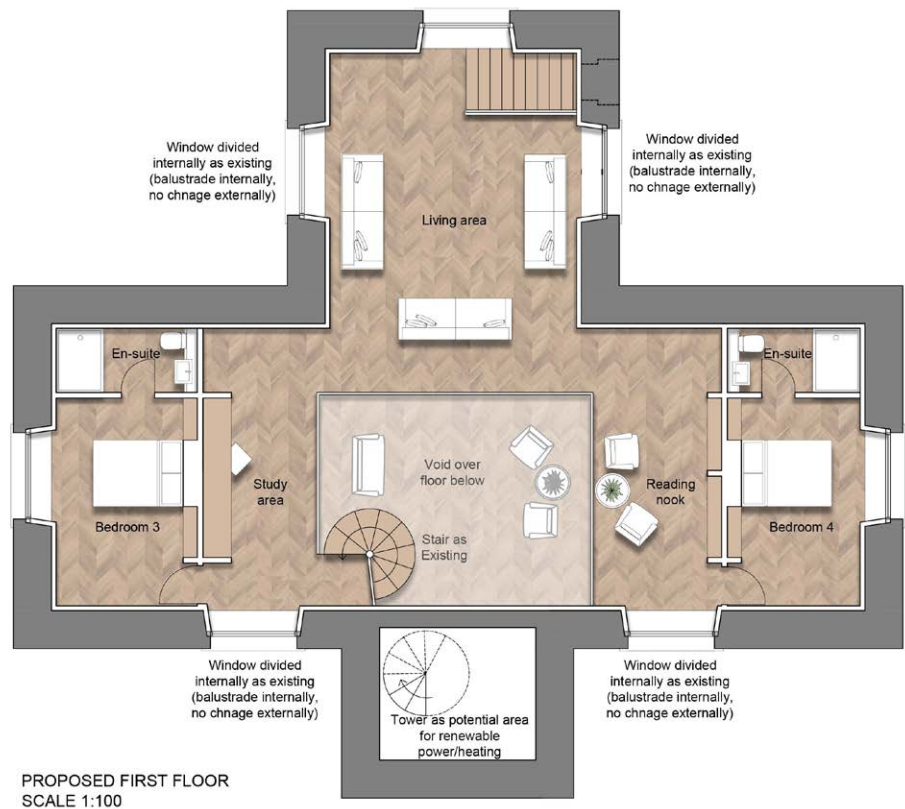
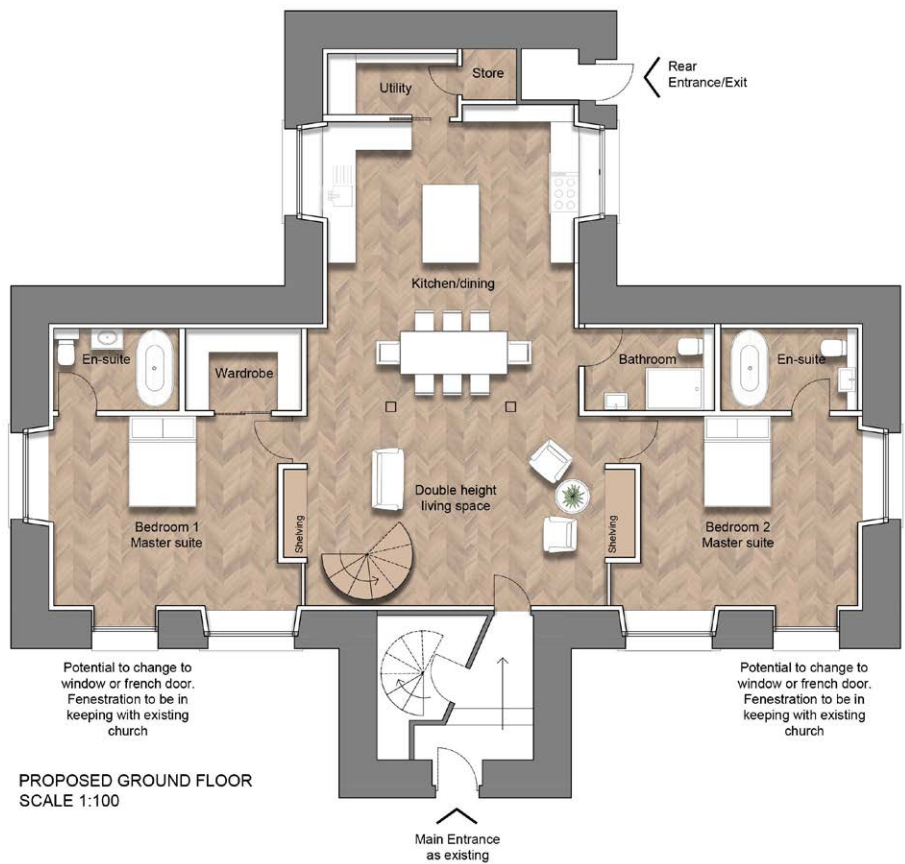
Inspiration Image



Existing window treatment



Existing window treatment



5 Response to Planning Policy

Local Plan

The Midlothian Local Development Plan was adopted in 2017. It sets out a vision for shaping the future of Midlothian and is based on the promotion and management of sustainable growth. A key strategic aim is to safeguard Midlothian's heritage, both built and natural. Another aim is to provide positively for development that secures long term social, economic, and environmental benefits.

The current proposal relates to matters of heritage, its protection and safeguarding, as well meeting both sustainability and housing objectives. It is believed that the change would secure the future of the building and allow it to continue to be occupied for many years to come

Change of Use

Carrington Kirk will never again be used for its original purpose. It has already become less attractive in time as an office space. Providing a more flexible approach to planning and allowing change of use to residential would secure options and choices for future occupants and would provide a valuable means of safeguarding an important local building in a country village. Nothing that is proposed would be detrimental to public interest.

Amenity space & Parking

While the building has no garden ground per se there is outdoor space, in fact a great deal more than many flats and small houses enjoy, and it is equally private. There is space around the building where occupants may sit out in good weather, as is done at present. In any event there are lots of walks and open spaces around the village, places and walks that can be enjoyed. There is parking in the village, two spaces are very close by, usually empty but others are available.

Policy ENV 6

While Carrington Kirk is near a Special Landscape Area, it is outside the boundary, therefore policy ENV 6 does not apply. In any event there is no intention to change the building.

Policy ENV 19

Policy ENV 19 sets out to protect Conservation Areas. The application site lies within a Conservation Area. However, there is no assessment of its

character or appearance and no management plan. Nevertheless, as there is no intention to change the character or appearance of the building, no harm, visual or otherwise would arise.

Policy ENV 22

The two listed buildings within the site would be retained unaltered and safeguarded. Policy ENV 22 allows the change of use of listed buildings where there would be no harm to character, appearance or setting. As no external changes are proposed and the internal works are sensitive we believe the proposals comply with this policy.

Policy 1 (National Planning Framework 4)- Tackling the climate and nature crises

By their nature, renovation projects are inherently sustainable by both allowing existing building stock to be fully utilised and upgrading existing buildings to meet the changing demands of society and the environment.

Historic buildings like this are notoriously poor in terms of energy efficiency and take a lot of energy to heat. By allowing the building to be developed the onus would be on the applicant to ensure the building fabric is brought much closer to modern standards. Careful upgrading, following guidance published by Historic Environment Scotland should allow the building to be insulated internally with no impact to the exterior.

The existing bell tower has been identified as a possible location to house air source heat pumps or other sustainable technology to help heat and power the dwelling

Materials would chosen to tie in with the architectural character of the building and with sustainability in mind. Again working with the Historic Environment Scotland guidance it should be possible to upgrade with materials that are appropriate to the building and allow it to breath. This also means the materials would be natural, non-toxic and renewable.

The main way in which the development tackles sustainable objectives is by allowing the building to continue to be occupied. With changing work patterns and the location of the property it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract business use. Converting to a residential property will safeguard the buildings future and avoid it falling into disrepair.

5 Conclusion

Carrington Kirk lost its original use in 1975, and is unlikely to ever be reinstated as a place of worship. Commercial use has allowed the building to be retained and upgraded. It is now probably in the best physical condition it has ever been in since its construction in 1710.

The proposal set out here demonstrates a means of making the building a more attractive, and suitable use which reflects the changing times.

As outlined there is no policy reason why a residential property should not be embraced and welcomed in the village and continue the life of this beautiful building. For the last forty years, the use of the building for commercial activity without harm, illustrates that Carrington Kirk can be readily utilised for alternative purposes.

Commercial occupation has resulted in safeguarding the building and bringing it into a superb state of repair. The current application seeks to continue this and adapt it for the 21st century.

The architectural solution presented, is modern yet sympathetic to the existing building and proves that a dwelling could be made to work with minimal disruption to the existing building fabric. It has also been demonstrated that this could be done in a sustainable way, improving energy efficiency and maintaining an important historic property.

In summary we believe that the council should support the proposals and we look forward to discussing the proposals further with you.

Appendix 1 - HES Listing for Kirk

Summary

Category	B
Date Added	22/01/1971
Local Authority	Midlothian
Parish	Carrington

Description

1710. Single storey, 3-bay, traditional T-plan church with square-plan tower. Random pink sandstone rubble with droved and polished dressings. Base course; moulded eaves cornice. Chamfered reveals; pointed-arched, diamond-glazed, Y-traceried window inserted by Thomas Brown, 1838; long and short quoins; boarded timber doors.

S (ENTRANCE) ELEVATION: symmetrical. 3-stage entrance tower with spire advanced to centre; doorway (formerly leading to pulpit) to centre of ground floor with tooled lintel reading "1710"; 8-pane fanlight surmounted by ogee-arched louvred opening; small single pane window to left return. 3rd stage former dovecot, round-arched louvred opening to centre of each elevation; flightholes under eaves. Ironwork weathervane and cockerel to apex of spire. Windows to flanking bays to left and right; 2-leaf doorways flanking to outer left and right. 2 sundials symmetrically placed on left and right angles

E ELEVATION: symmetrical; window to centre, remains of former window above.

N ELEVATION: near-symmetrical; 3-bay; gabled bay to centre advanced with large pane, pointed-arched window to centre; infilled window below; window to right return; window to left return, flanked to right by 2-leaf door with 8-pane fanlight; flanking bay to right blank; bay to left infilled window to right of ground floor; infilled window with carved pediment to left of 1st floor.

W ELEVATION: symmetrical; window to centre surmounted by large pane window.

Predominantly pointed-arched, diamond-pane windows. Graded grey slate roof and grey slate ridge. Stone skews. Cast-iron rainwater goods.

INTERIOR: mezzanined interior by Crighton Lang, Willis and Galloway, 1980's. Timber roof with kingpost trusses survives.

GATES, GATEPIERS AND BOUNDARY WALLS: 2-leaf timber gates, flanked by coursed yellow sandstone octagonal gatepiers with pyramidal caps. Sandstone rubble boundary wall with flat and rubble coping, incorporating Session House (see separate listing).

Statement of Special Interest

Carrington Kirk, which was originally harled, superseded a earlier structure which was near the present church. It belonged to the Abbey of Scone from the 12th century until 1374 which it was swapped for the more convenient Church of Blair. William Knox, nephew of John Knox was minister between 1567 and 1592. The present church is particularly important as the tower is in the long elevation, a distinctive Presbyterian arrangement. The exterior of the church survives in good condition, the only major alterations being the windows by Thomas Brown in 1838. The traces of both low and high windows suggest that there were originally galleries within the church, which would probably have been retained by Brown and Wardrop when they refurbished the interior in 1858. The church closed for worship in 1975, and has since been converted into an office. Thomas Brown also carried out work on Carrington Manse (now Carrington Hill, see separate listing).

References

Bibliography

J Adair, A MAP OF MID-LOTHIAN, (1735); THE STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF SCOTLAND, (1792), Vol 14, p441; SRO, ACCOUNTS FOR WORK ON THE BUILDINGS OF CARRINGTON CHURCH, MANSE ETC., (HR 460/4); 1st (1852) AND 2nd (1892) EDITION OS MAPS; F H Groome, ORDNANCE GAZETTEER OF SCOTLAND, (1885), Vol 1, p242; RCAHMS, INVENTORY OF MONUMENTS AND CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE COUNTIES OF MIDLOTHIAN AND WEST LOTHIAN, (1929), p11; G Hay, THE ARCHITECTURE OF POST-REFORMATION CHURCHES 1560-1843, (1957), p58-59; C McWilliam, THE BUILDINGS OF SCOTLAND: LOTHIAN EXCEPT EDINBURGH, (1978), p135, fig.29; H Kirkland (ed), THE THIRD STATISTICAL ACCOUNT OF SCOTLAND: THE COUNTY OF MIDLOTHIAN, (1985), p196; J Thomas, MIDLOTHIAN: AN ILLUSTRATED ARCHITECTURAL GUIDE, (RIAS), (1995), p100, ill p91 & 100; NRMS Photographs & Carrington Church leaflet.

Appendix 2 - HES Listing for Session House

Summary

Category	B
Date Added	22/01/1971
Local Authority	Midlothian
Parish	Carrington

6 Description

Earlier 19th century. Single storey, single bay, rectangular-plan session house. Tooled, coursed pink sandstone rubble with droved dressings. Eaves course; long and short quoins; chamfered reveals.

W (PRINCIPAL) ELEVATION: symmetrical; four-centred-arched doorway to centre; 2-leaf timber door.

S AND E ELEVATIONS: blank.

N ELEVATION: symmetrical; 2 pointed-arched diamond-pane windows.

Grey slate roof; coped stone skewers. Cement faced, coped gablehead stack to E with circular can.

Statement of Special Interest

The session house, which lies adjacent to the gates of Carrington Church (see separate listing), is suggested by Colin McWilliam to have been built at about the same time as Thomas Brown was carrying out alterations to the church (1838).

References

Bibliography

1st (1852) AND 2nd (1892) EDITION OS MAPS; C McWilliam, THE BUILDINGS OF SCOTLAND: LOTHIAN EXCEPT EDINBURGH, (1978), p135; J Thomas, MIDLOTHIAN: AN ILLUSTRATED ARCHITECTURAL GUIDE, (RIAS), (1995), p100.