



Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 26/03/2026

Give us your comments

Historic Environment Scotland consult with those who are directly affected by designation proposals – including owners, occupiers and tenants – and with the planning authority.

We also welcome comments from interested persons or groups.

When we consult about a designation case we will have carried out research and set this out in a **report of handling**. This report is an assessment produced for consultation and it sets out our view, including a proposed decision. The assessment is not intended to be a definitive account or description of the site or place. We consider the comments received before we take a final decision.

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

- Your understanding of the cultural significance of the site or place.
- Whether sites or places meet 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.

You can find more guidance on providing comments and how we handle your information on our [website](#).

Information on how we treat your personal data is available on our [Privacy Notice](#).

How to make a comment

Please send your comments to designationconsultations@hes.scot and provide us with the case reference. You can also make comments through our [portal](#) by clicking on the link 'email your comments about this case'.

If you are the owner, occupier or tenant or the planning authority please email us at: designations@hes.scot.

If you are unable to email your comments please phone us on 0131 668 8914.



Case information

Case ID	300074517
Name of Site	Cranhill Water Tower, Skerryvore Road, Glasgow
Postcode (if any)	G33 3LA

Local Authority	Glasgow City Council
National Grid Reference	NS 65162 65778
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	N/A
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	23/07/2024
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	Cranhill Water Tower, Skerryvore Road, Glasgow	New category of listing	B

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

2. Designation and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

Cranhill water tower was previously proposed for listing in 2011. At that time, the assessment concluded the structure did not meet the criteria for listing.

Given the time elapsed we have carried out a fresh assessment, taking new information and our designation selection guidance (published in 2019) into account.



2.2 Development Proposals

There are no known development proposals.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate Cranhill water tower on 23/07/2024. (Designations application forms are published on our portal and will be available to view during the lifetime of the case and until 3 months after the case is closed.)

The proposer was Paul Sweeney MSP. They provided the following information and views in their application form:

- The history of the building
- Information about the architect/designer
- Information about the construction of the building

We informed the planning department at Glasgow City Council about the request to assess the site for designation on 13/08/2024. They informed local councillors for East Centre Ward 18 about the assessment. On 13/09/2024 the councillors provided the following comments about the proposal:

- Opposition to the proposal to list
- Information about the socio-economic context of the area
- That the area of Cranhill is included within the Greater Easterhouse Strategic Development Framework
- Views on the current state and condition of the building
- The community has not been consulted with on this matter

Our policy states that ‘our assessments may involve a site visit, and will aim to make use of the best available evidence.’ (See [Designation Policy and Selection Guidance](#), p.7.) We decide on a case by case basis whether a site visit is required to inform our assessments.

In this case we considered that a site visit was required to inform our assessment of the building’s special architectural or historic interest. We visited the water tower on 09/04/2025. We saw the exterior only from the public road.

3.2 Assessment of special architectural or historic interest



We have found that Cranhill water tower meets the criteria for listing.

We carried out an assessment using the selection guidance to decide whether the 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>.

3.3 Policy considerations

Further information about ‘how we list’ is found in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, p. 12. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>. Our policy states:

“The extent to which a building or structure survives is a consideration when assessing it for listing. However, the present condition of the surviving fabric is not a factor when deciding whether it is of special architectural or historic interest.

“Factors such as financial issues, proposed future use, or a building no longer being in its original use will not be taken into account.”

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 05/03/2026 to 26/03/2026.

We have consulted directly with the owners and the planning authority. We have also consulted with the Ward 18 councillors and Cranhill Community Council.

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>.

4.3 Consultation summary

N/A

Designations Service

Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact	designations@hes.scot , 0131 668 8914
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ANNEX A

Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

1. Building or site name

Cranhill Water Tower, Skerryvore Road, Glasgow

2. Description and historical development

2.1 Description

A 25-metre high, reinforced concrete water tower built in 1951 and designed by Frank A Macdonald and Partners for Glasgow Corporation. The water tower sits on a concrete base and comprises 16 cylindrical steel columns with mushroom shaped capitals supporting a ribbed, square concrete water tank with a 500,000 gallon capacity. At the top of the tank, there is a glazed lantern with access openings and a telecommunications mast. The tower has a central, square-plan access column with an internal stair and long rectangular window openings in the upper section of each elevation. The tower is prominently located at the eastern edge of Cranhill housing scheme, a short distance south of junction 11 of the M8 motorway, to the east side of Glasgow.

At the base of the tower are five galvanised steel figures and a small fish sculpture by artist Andy Scott, known as The Neptune Project. The sculptures were added to the base in 2001 and depict Neptune, a mermaid and three sirens.

2.2 Historical development

The Cranhill housing scheme developed from the early 1950s alongside other similar schemes in the 1950s and 1960s as part of Glasgow's suburban post-war expansion.

The tower is first shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1956 at the eastern extent of the Cranhill scheme. It was designed by F A Macdonald and Partners of Glasgow and it formed part of the major infrastructure required to provide sufficient pressure water for the residents of Cranhill (The Builder, p.675).

The water tower was refurbished and floodlighting installed in 1998 (Small, p.88). Cranhill Development Trust and local housing associations commissioned The Neptune Project by sculptor, Andy Scott in 2000 (Art UK; Small, p.88). The figures are based on the theme of water and include Neptune, the Roman god of freshwater and the sea (and the counterpart of the Greek god Poseidon).



The water tower was decommissioned around 2010. The structure is illuminated at night with an LED lighting scheme.

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

A number of reinforced concrete water towers were built as part of the post-war housing schemes built around Glasgow in the 1950s and 1960s. Cranhill water tower was one of the first to be constructed as part of this post-war housing expansion.

Water towers are elevated structures designed to support a tank that holds potable (drinkable) water. Their height is used to pressurise the water by using gravity to create enough water pressure when it comes out of the taps in homes. Water was pumped from Loch Katrine and the tower at Cranhill supplied the local housing with its drinking water.

The need to build on high ground and the awareness that these towers would be landmarks resulted in industrial designs that were also futuristic and aspirational. The water tower at Cranhill is a prominent structure in the landscape which has a distinctive, modern ‘space age’ appearance. Its construction materials of steel and concrete are exposed, creating a structure that is simple and functional, yet visually striking. The tower, in its dramatic scale and overtly modern design and use of materials, embraces both the engineering possibilities of the period and the idealism of much early post-war architecture (Historic Scotland, p.53). Its highly practical design is combined with stylistic flourishes to the narrow steel columns, for example the mushrooming heads, and the sectional 4x4 grid of the water tank itself.

The design of water towers for public supply varies widely across the United Kingdom during this period and most appear to be individually designed structures in terms of their shape and form however most are constructed in reinforced concrete.



Cylindrical or drum-shaped tanks are more commonly seen across Glasgow, for example those at Garthamlock and Craigend, Bishopbriggs, Drumchapel and Tannochside, and those at West Netherton and Whitecross in East Kilbride and Carrickstone in Cumbernauld. Square-shaped towers are less common with a small number built in Glasgow. The Cranhill water tower is the only surviving one of this shape. Regardless of its particular shape, both its scale and detail add to the interest of this example of a post-war water tower.

The interest of the designer in relation to the structure's design is of particular significance. F A Macdonald and Partners (now known as Fairhurst) established in Glasgow in 1902 are recognised among Scotland's foremost structural engineering practices. They specialised in reinforced concrete constructions and provided many major infrastructure projects including bridges, hydro schemes, motorways, housing schemes including numerous works for the Glasgow Corporation (Fairhurst). F A Macdonald and Partners also designed the nearby Garthamlock water tower in 1953-6 (Dictionary of Scottish Architects) and Bishopbriggs water tower in 1959.

The interior was not seen (2025).

3.1.2 Setting

The water tower is prominently located on rising ground and can be seen from various vantage points around the city. It is a landmark structure in the wider area which also forms a good grouping with the circular-plan Garthamlock and Craigend water towers nearby to the northeast (listed at category B, LB52097).

The suburban housing in the immediate context of the Cranhill water tower helps to illustrate its original purpose within the urban landscape and its place within Glasgow's suburban post-war expansion. While a significant proportion of the 1950s housing has now been demolished and in some areas replaced, the water tower survives in its original position at the eastern edge of the scheme, and this setting continues to show the tower's function.

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

Cranhill water tower is the earliest known post-war water tower to survive in Glasgow and is a major surviving example from the unrivalled programme of reinforced concrete water tower construction in the city and its environs during the 1950s and 60s.



Glasgow and its suburbs were notable for their coordinated programme of reinforced concrete water tower construction in the early post-war period. Water towers were an essential functional component of residential estates to adequately supply water pressure to all the homes. In Glasgow, at least 15 examples were built, 8 of which survive (2026). These are Cranhill, Garthamlock (designed 1953-6 and built 1956-8) and Craigend (built circa 1966, listed together at category B, LB52097) and the unlisted examples at Barloch (built 1959), Bishopbriggs (built 1959), Drumchapel (built 1954), Tannochside (1950s/early 1960s) and Auchinairn (built 1960s).

Barton notes in *Water Towers of Britain* that square or rectangular water towers were always less common, but regularly appeared until the 1950s, with a cluster of four in Glasgow (Barton, p.90). Cranhill now stands out as the only surviving example designed with a square plan. The other square plan examples at Priesthill, Pollock and Ruchazie have all been demolished. The water tower in Barloch is octagonal, but most of the other water towers in Glasgow and the wider suburbs have cylindrical-style tanks.

F A Macdonald and Partners (established 1902) completed at least four concrete water towers in Glasgow: Milton (built around 1949, now demolished), Cranhill (built 1951), Garthamlock (built 1956-8) and Bishopbriggs (built 1959). Cranhill is one of the earliest surviving postwar reinforced concrete water towers in Scotland designed in the Brutalist style. Others of a similar date are Gallow Hill water tower in Dundee (built around 1953) and Drumchapel in Glasgow (built 1954).

Other significant water towers in Scotland include: one of the earliest cast-iron water tanks in the world at the former Perth Water Works (built 1832, listed at category A, LB39341); the earliest surviving municipal water tower in the UK at Montrose (1841, listed at category B, LB37989); and the earliest known reinforced-concrete water tower in the UK at Garmouth (built 1899, listed at category B, LB14838).

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.

The Cranhill housing scheme was built in the early 1950s. Like the much larger housing schemes of Castlemilk, Drumchapel, Easterhouse and Pollock, Cranhill was comprised of tenement blocks, tower blocks and maisonettes.

The water tower was built to supply the Cranhill housing estate. The suburban housing context of the water tower illustrates its purpose within the urban landscape and its place within Glasgow's massive suburban post-war expansion. The intact water tower is a tangible reminder of the change from pre-war tenement living to the new suburbs, and the infrastructure needed to accommodate this change.

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

Cranhill Water Tower meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- It is a major example of a water tower built as part of Glasgow's suburban post-war expansion, designed by one of Scotland's most recognised structural engineering practices.
- Its striking design with sleek tapered steel columns supporting a ribbed, square concrete water tank reflects the idealism of much early post-war architecture and is substantially unaltered.
- It forms a functionally and visually related grouping with the circular-plan Garthamlock and Craigend water towers nearby. It is a prominent landmark in the local area.
- It is the earliest known post-war water tower to survive in Glasgow.
- It contributes to our understanding of the infrastructural changes that took place in the development of new suburbs in the post-war period.

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

Cranhill Water Tower's level of importance is category B.

Buildings listed at category B are defined as 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are major examples of a particular period, style or type.'

Taking into account its early 1950s date, we consider category B to be the most appropriate level of listing.

6. Other Information



N/A

7. References

National Record of the Historic Environment (NRHE) ID 284823:
<https://www.trove.scot/place/284823> (accessed on 27/01/2026)

Maps

Ordnance Survey (revised 1956, published 1957) National Grid maps: NS6565-A. 25 inches to the mile. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (revised 1966, published 1967) National Grid maps: NS6565NW-B. 25 inches to the mile. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Printed Sources

Barton, B (2003) *Water Towers of Britain*. London: The Newcomen Society – The Science Museum, p.90.

Historic Scotland (2009) *Scotland: Building For the Future – Essays on the Architecture of the Post-war Era*. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland, p.53.

Small, S. (2008) *Greater Glasgow: an illustrated architectural guide*. Edinburgh: RIAS, p.88.

The Builder (11/05/1951) *The Scottish Builder – New Buildings*, vol. 180, issue 5647, p.675.

Williamson, E., Riches, A., Higgs, M. (1990) *The Buildings of Scotland: Glasgow*. London: Penguin Books.

Online Sources

Art UK. The Neptune Project: Poseidon, Mermaid and Three Sirens, at <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-neptune-project-poseidon-mermaid-and-three-sirens-304406> [accessed 27/01/2026].

Dictionary of Scottish Architects. Water Tower, Cranhill, at https://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/apex/f?p=1999:9:8340449874838:::P9_ID:402550 [accessed 27/01/2026].

Fairhurst. Our History, at <https://www.fairhurst.co.uk/about-us/our-history/> [accessed 27/01/2026].

8. Indicative Map

www.historicenvironment.scot

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A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.