



## Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 29/08/2024

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:designations@hes.scot).**

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



## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300065120
<b>Name of Site</b>	Denny Town House, 23 Glasgow Road, Denny
<b>Postcode (if any)</b>	FK6 5DW

<b>Local Authority</b>	Falkirk Council
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NS 81240 82530
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building
<b>Designation No. and category of listing (if any)</b>	N/A
<b>Case Type</b>	Designation

<b>Received/Start Date</b>	14/04/2023
<b>Decision Date</b>	Pending

## 1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	Former Denny Town House including low boundary walls and piers, 23 Glasgow Road, Denny	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

Denny Town House has not previously been assessed for listing.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

[www.historicenvironment.scot](http://www.historicenvironment.scot)

Historic Environment Scotland, Longmore House,  
Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH

Historic Environment Scotland  
Scottish Charity No. **SC045925**  
VAT Number: **GB 221 8680 15**



There are no known development proposals.

We are aware that the building is no longer in use and was previously marketed for sale in 2023.

## 3. Assessment

---

### 3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate Denny Town House on 14/04/2023. (Designations applications 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 applicant provided the following information and views in their application:

- The building is surplus to Council requirements.
- It has been in Council and community use for about 120 years and used as the Municipal Chambers, a cinema and Falkirk Council's social work offices.
- A listed building designation would help protect the building.
- Information about the history and design of the building.

We informed the planning authority at Falkirk Council about the proposal to list the building. They responded on 09/05/2024 to say that they would not proceed further with the possible sale or transfer of ownership of the building until the designation review was completed.

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 Denny Town House on 20/07/2023. We saw the exterior and interior of the building.

### 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: 08/08/2024 to 29/08/2024.

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

[www.historicenvironment.scot](http://www.historicenvironment.scot)

Historic Environment Scotland, Longmore House,  
Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH

Historic Environment Scotland  
Scottish Charity No. SC045925  
VAT Number: GB 221 8680 15

# Designation consultation



HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT  
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD  
EACHDRAIDHEIL  
ALBA

Heritage Directorate  
Historic Environment Scotland

<b>Contact</b>	Niamh Crimmins, Designations Officer Niamh.crimmins@hes.scot, 0131 668 8914
----------------	--



## ANNEX A

### Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

---

#### 1. Building name

Denny Town House, 23 Glasgow Road, Denny

---

#### 2. Description and historical development

##### 2.1 Description

A two-storey former town house by burgh architect Robert Wilson of Strang and Wilson, opened in 1932. Designed in an asymmetrical Scots Baronial style, the town house was designed to house a court, council chambers, burgh offices and public library. It is largely L-shaped on plan with a single-storey projection to the rear. It is constructed of rock-faced masonry with crowstepped gables and long and short ashlar margins and mullioned windows. There is an off-centre square-plan tower extending above the roofline, rising above the principal entrance to the front elevation. Currently no longer in use (2024), the building is located on one of the principal thoroughfares in Denny. It fronts the street with matching low boundary walls and piers.

The principal (west) elevation is seven bays with an advanced gabled bay to left and a projecting oriel bay window to upper right bay. The outer bays and the tower have crowstepped gables. There is a round-arched entrance opening to the tower with moulded surrounds, a two-leaf, timber panelled door and a metal sign above that reads 'THE TOWN HOUSE'. A later entrance ramp has been added. The south elevation is multi-bay and has an advanced crowstepped gable to the centre with a large decorative stained-glass window with stone mullions and transoms (now covered over with a clear plastic protective panel). The rear (east) elevation is rendered and has irregular openings. To the left is a single-bay, single-storey block with a pyramidal slate roof and a later flat-roofed porch addition to the centre. The north elevation is single bay.

The roofs are hipped and slated with crenelated parapets or skewputts to the crowstepped gables. There are ashlar chimneystacks with moulded caps and clay cans, and cast iron rainwater goods throughout. The windows are a mix of single, bipartite and tripartite openings, largely with double-glazed uPVC sash and case replacements, with the traditional glazing patterns replicated.

The interior was seen in 2023. It comprises a number of meeting rooms accessed via a central entrance hall with a stair to the rear (southeast) that leads to the former courtroom and burgh offices on the first floor. On the ground floor, the former caretaker's accommodation at the rear was subdivided in recent years to form



storage rooms and council offices. There is a secondary stair (decorative iron) to the tower, accessed from first floor. The layout has changed very little since its construction, with the exception of some modern room partitions.

The interior retains many of its earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century decorative features including oak timber panelling in the principal burgh and court rooms, moulded cornicing, timber doors and doorpieces with brass doorknobs and escutcheons and timber storage presses. Many rooms retain their original fireplaces with timber mantelpieces, but some of the fireplaces have been boarded over. The entrance vestibule is panelled with black and white marble and there is an engraved glass window over the vestibule door leading to the principal hallway. The principal staircase, located at the south entrance, has decorative cast iron balusters and a timber handrail. There is a large decorative glass window to the principal stairwell, at the south elevation. The seal depicts the Angel of Peace above the bridge over the River Carron which flows between Denny and Dunipace. She holds an olive branch in her right hand, with Mount Vesuvius, an anvil and a hammer in the background, which represent the iron foundries of the Burgh. Papyrus leaves represent the local paper-making industries, and the caduceus is a Roman symbol for truce and neutrality, (Falkirk Local History Society). The hallway flooring is of terrazzo and the majority of the other rooms are carpeted.

The Denny (and Dunipace) Burgh seal is also depicted in a small hand painted mural on the timber panelling above the fireplace in the former first floor Council Chamber. The artist was Miss H. Elsie Fraser of Startherie, Falkirk (Falkirk Herald, 20 February 1932). One of the two original safes (by Milners' Safe Co. Ltd.) survives in a room on the first floor.

There are low ashlar boundary walls to the front (west) and south, with a small section to the north, and matching piers with vertical carvings. The iron railings have been removed. There is a tall, rendered boundary wall to north and rear, and a section of timber fencing at the southeast corner, both of which are later additions.

## 2.2 Historical development

Denny Town House first appears on the Ordnance Survey National Grid map of 1958 (surveyed/revised: pre-1930 to 1957, published 1958) and is shown in greater detail in the 1960s map (revised 1961, published 1962). The building has changed very little since it was first built.

The laying of the foundation stone took place on 13 February 1931 and was presided over by Tom Johnston MP, who was Under-Secretary of State for Scotland at the time (Falkirk Herald, 14 February 1931). Photographs of the ceremony were published in the Falkirk Herald (18 February 1931) and, along with an architect's sketch and a detailed description of the proceedings.

Denny Town House was formally declared open on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1932 and it was opened for public inspection on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of February 1932 (Falkirk Herald, 13





February 1932). A photograph of the newly opened town house was featured in the Falkirk Herald (20 February 1932), and the accompanying articles described the building as being “*peculiarly Scottish*” in its style, stating that it served “...to illustrate how well the national architectural characteristics can be preserved and still satisfy the requirements of the modern idea in building.”

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Denny Town House served as a meeting place for the Burgh council. It ceased to be the seat of local government in 1975, when Falkirk District Council was formed. It was used by Falkirk Council as a base for the delivery of social services until May 2021 when the council announced the building would close.

---

### 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

Denny Town House is a good example of a purpose-built municipal building that has remained largely unaltered since it was built in the earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Designed in a historicist Scots Baronial style, Denny Town House displays features of definite architectural quality that reflect the importance of its civic function. Notable features of the style include the distinctive crowstepped gables, the entrance tower and the good quality stonework and simple detailing.

The Scots Baronial style continued to be used in public buildings in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and has a particular association with court and municipal buildings in Scotland. While court buildings from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards were designed in a variety of architectural styles, the use of Scots Baronial features, which referenced traditional fortified Scottish buildings, still featured as it was perceived as appropriate style for the functions held within the building.





The building was designed by the local Stirlingshire-based architect, Robert Wilson in 1931. During the period 1907 and 1915 Wilson took classes in architecture at Falkirk School of Art and Science, followed by the Glasgow School of Art and the Royal Technical College. He was admitted ARIBA under the war exemption scheme at the end of the war and was taken into partnership with his uncle James Strang in 1919. Strang retired in 1937 and Wilson formed a partnership with the unrelated Henry Wilson. Robert Wilson was Denny burgh architect and responsible for many of the buildings in the town and wider area. This includes a private villa, built opposite Denny Town House in the Art Deco style which still survives today. Wilson was responsible for the reconstruction of Grangemouth Town Hall in 1937 and designed Falkirk Ice Rink in 1938. He died in 1965.

Whilst the use of the internal spaces has changed over time, the internal plan form has remained relatively unchanged and continues to reflect the building's municipal functions. The internal decorative scheme retains much of its earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century features and character, including, the oak timber panelling to the first-floor former court rooms and burgh chamber rooms, and the stained-glass window to the east stairwell. The hand-painted mural in the Council Chamber room is a notable surviving element of the interior decorative scheme. The separation of the caretaker's rooms to the rear wing remains evident and contributes to our understanding of how the building would have functioned. While these features are typical for a building of this date and type, they are of a high quality and their survival adds to the special interest of the building.

Denny Town House has changed very little since it was first built. The external appearance of the building has remained largely unaltered, except for the insertion of replacement windows and an entrance ramp in recent years. A number of rooms were later subdivided when the building was adapted for use by Falkirk Council. These changes are minimal and do not detract from the overall character of the interior. The principal rooms, such as the court room and burgh offices have remained largely unchanged, with the exception of some modernisation and covering up of fireplaces.

The former Denny Town House been built in good quality materials and features good design details, particularly to its interior. Its scale and relative lack of later alteration all contribute to this building's interest as a good example of a purpose-built town house.

### 3.1.2 Setting

Denny Town House was designed to be an important focal point within the streetscape of Denny and is located on a corner site along one of the main thoroughfares. Due to its larger scale relative to other buildings in the town, which largely consists of 19<sup>th</sup> century two-storey villas and rows of residential tenements and shops, and with its tower and crowstepped gables, it is prominent within its setting.



The immediate setting of the hall has not changed significantly since that shown on the 1960s Ordnance Survey map (revised 1961, published 1962). The original building plot is largely unaltered. Originally sited next to the train station, only the station master's house survives to the north of the town house. A 21<sup>st</sup> century garage/petrol station has been built across the road to the west. These changes do not significantly detract from the overall historic setting of the building. The low boundary walls and stone piers to the street are simple and, although the railings have been removed, they contribute to the architectural interest of the building.

The wider setting has been partially changed by the addition of housing and commercial buildings throughout the town in the mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the town does retain some of its 19<sup>th</sup> century character. The connection between the former Denny Town House and the other historic buildings in the town contributes directly to our understanding of the building's function and its historical context.

## 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

Town houses are not a rare building type, but as they are an important part of Scotland's civic, judicial and social history, they are found in towns across Scotland.

Prior to developments of the early 19th century, burgh judicial functions were commonly housed in a single building: the tolbooth or town house. Town houses were the centre of local administration and they served as meeting places for councils and courts, a place to keep records and to collect taxes and customs, and for the imprisonment of suspected criminals.

By the 19th century there was an increase in the separation of civic, administrative and penal functions, and Town and County buildings were constructed in larger burghs. Such buildings provided a suite of rooms for judicial functions, including rooms for the judges, jury and witnesses, often with separate access to the courtroom as well as increased cell provision.

With a growing impetus for improved municipal buildings, town houses continued to be constructed or extended, particularly in smaller burghs, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Around one third of the surviving town houses were built or rebuilt in the first third of the 19th century. These town houses would have a shared chamber for civic and judicial functions, and many remained in use for burgh administration until the local government reorganisation of 1975.

Denny Town House is a good surviving example of a town house built for a smaller burgh in Scotland in the 1930s. It was built as part a small proliferation of new civic



buildings, and major extensions to existing ones, that followed the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1929.

Denny Town House is of special historic interest as a good surviving example of a purpose-built civic building that survives largely in its original form and with much of its earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century character still evident.

### 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.

Town houses, a typical building type found in burghs, performed many functions. Denny Town House remained in constant use by the local community since its construction in 1931 until its closure in 2021. It was a key municipal building for the burgh with administrative functions and remains a prominent feature in the town and streetscape.

During the Second World War, air raid precautions including anti-gas helmets for babies were being issued from Denny Town House (Falkirk Herald, 27 January 1940, p. 6). In addition to the building's municipal functions, it housed a public library and newspaper articles from the 1930s and 1940s describe dances and functions being held at the town house, demonstrating how it featured prominently in the social lives of the local population.

Although a later example of a its building type, Denny Town House illustrates how Scotland governed itself in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### 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

Denny Town House meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- It remains largely unaltered and retains much of its original earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century character, including its plan form and many internal detailing, fixtures and fittings.
- It is built with use of quality materials and good detailing and its use of the Scots Baronial style at this date is deliberate to represent its function as a municipal building.



- It is a prominent landmark within the town and makes an important contribution to the historic character of the local area.
- It is a good surviving example of a purpose-built civic building in a small town.
- It is notable for its social historic interest as it provided important civic facilities for the population of the local area.

## 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

Denny Town House'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 its relatively late date within its building type, category C is considered to be the most appropriate level of listing.

## 6. Other Information

---

N/A

## 7. References

---

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID 376355

### Maps

Ordnance Survey (surveyed/revised pre-1930 to 1957, published 1958) National Grid map NS88SW-A. 1:2500. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

Ordnance Survey (revised 1961, published 1962) National Grid map NS8082-NS8182 - AA. 1:2500. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.



## Printed Sources

Falkirk Herald (14 February 1931) *New Town House for Denny and Dunipace*, p. 7.

Falkirk Herald (18 February 1931) *Laying the Foundation Stone of New Town House for Denny and Dunipace*, p. 16.

Falkirk Herald (13 February 1932) *Town House Inspection*, p. 1.

Falkirk Herald (13 February 1932) *Denny Town House: Arrangements for Formal Opening*, p. 7.

Falkirk Herald (20 February 1932) *Denny Town House and Library: Official Opening of Handsome New Building*, p. 11.

Falkirk Herald (27 January 1940) *Air Raid Precautions*, p. 6.

Gifford, J. (2002) *Buildings of Scotland: Stirling and Central Scotland*. London: Penguin Books Ltd. p. 360.

McKean, C. (ed) (2000) *Falkirk and District: an illustrated architectural guide*. The Rutland Press. p. 74.

## Online Sources

Dictionary of Scottish Architects, *Town House* at [https://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building\\_full.php?id=219922](https://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/building_full.php?id=219922) [accessed on 18/07/2024].

Dictionary of Scottish Architects, *Robert Wilson* at [https://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=203105](https://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=203105) [accessed on 18/07/2024].

Falkirk History Society (2005), *Denny and Dunipace* at <https://falkirklocalhistory.club/around-the-area/places/denny-and-dunipace/> [accessed on 18/07/2024].

Falkirk History Society (2019), *Denny Town House Windows* at <https://falkirklocalhistory.club/around-the-area/churches/stained-glass/stained-glass-in-denny/denny-town-house/> [accessed on 18/07/2024].

## Other Information

Scans of original plans and drawings of Denny Town House from Falkirk Archives provided by member of the public.



## 8. Indicative Map

---

A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.