



Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 17/10/2023

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.

Designation consultation

Designation
Report of Handling



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Case information

Case ID	300053312
Name of Site	Tollcross Fire Station, West Tollcross and Ponton Street, Edinburgh
Postcode (if any)	EH3 9BP

Local Authority	City of Edinburgh Council
National Grid Reference	NT 24812 72940
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	N/A
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	09/08/2021
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	Tollcross Fire Station, including drill tower and boundary walls, gate piers and gates, 6 West Tollcross and Ponton Street, Tollcross, Edinburgh	New category of listing	B

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 B.

2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

This building is not listed and no previous listing review is known.

2.2 Development Proposals

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



The building is the subject of the following development proposals:

- Building Warrant application for the proposed insulating and overlaying of the main fire station roof, including the removal of two barrel vaulted rooflights and single glazed pitches (Ref. No: 23/00696/WARR), was validated on 14 March 2023. City of Edinburgh Council have confirmed that permission was granted on 5 April 2023 and do not anticipate that the extent of changes proposed will require full planning permission.

We began our assessment of the building before the building warrant application was submitted. In the course of our assessment, we have found that the building does meet the criteria for listing. However, we consider that the current development proposals would not affect the overall reasons for the proposed listing. We have therefore decided to proceed with the designation proposal.

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate Tollcross Fire Station on 09/08/2021.

We visited the building on 02/03/2022.

We saw the exterior and interior of the main building, as well as the drill tower and the boundary walls and gates.

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>.

3.3 Policy considerations

We consider the individual circumstances of each case. In deciding whether to designate a site or place or amend an existing designation while there are ongoing development proposals, we will consider:

- the implications of designation on development proposals;



- the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the site or place; and
- the extent to which plans have been developed for the site or place – where these are particularly advanced, we will not normally list or schedule.

Our view is that the current development proposals would not affect the overall reasons for the proposed listing. We have therefore decided to proceed with the designation proposal.

Further information about development proposals and designation is found in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, pp. 7-8.

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 12/09/2023 to 17/10/2023.

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 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

Designation consultation



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- 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

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Historic Environment Scotland

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ANNEX A

Assessment of special architectural or historic interest

1. Building name

Tollcross Fire Station, including drill tower and boundary walls, gate piers and gates, 6 West Tollcross and Ponton Street, Tollcross, Edinburgh

2. Description and historical development

2.1 Description

A purpose-built fire station in a Postmodern style with abstracted elements of monumental classicism and traditional Scottish architecture by the Department of Architectural Services at Lothian Regional Council. The main elevation includes a metal panel relief sculpture by David Roxburgh. The building was opened in 1986. It is L-shaped on plan and fronts directly onto the street, with a large training yard and drill tower to the side and rear. The main elevations are characterised by alternating volumes of projecting and recessed stonework and glazing. The structure is steel framed with polished ashlar sandstone walls, contrasted by glazed elements that have a strong grid pattern and are typically highlighted in lime green. The building is located on a restricted corner site at the junction between West Tollcross and Ponton Street, in Edinburgh city centre. It remains in use as an operational fire station (2023).

The building comprises three sections: a corner office block and two secondary wings that extend east on West Tollcross and north on Ponton Street. The corner block has a rectangular-plan tower with a chamfered edge to the corner and a large projecting drum/circular tower to the right, both of which have deep recessed windows in dark frames. Between these projections is a recessed (pedestrian) entrance with a glazed atrium above. A stone balconette with horizontal metal railings and a deep eaves course wrap around the block at first floor level. There is a three-panel relief sculpture mounted above the ground floor, depicting firemen manning the hoses on either side of a building in flames.

The remaining main (south) elevation to West Tollcross is set back, with four roller doors (for the fire tenders) separated by stone columns. The upper floor has two box-like projections flanking a recessed central section, which has two re-entrant projections of gridded glazing and a balconette. The remaining side (west) elevation to Ponton Street is largely blind on the ground floor with a stepped window and door to the north end and a narrow band of projecting windows to the south. The upper floor has a rounded projection and two 'box' projections, each with glazed projections and balconettes similar to those on the West Tollcross elevation. The rear elevations are plain with buff brick walls and simple brick detailing. The gabled ends of each wing have a central recessed bay with a gridded glazed projection and balconette.



There is large a glass and steel canopy over the tender openings, at the rear of the east wing.

The majority of the roof is pitched with a corrugated-metal covering. The corner tower and projecting elements to the main elevations are flat-roofed. There is a barrel-vaulted roof projection roughly positioned at the centre of each wing. These projections, and the surrounding roof, were originally glazed but have since been covered over. There are a number of decorative windows with red brick detailing, including oculi (round windows) to the circular tower and the east gable, and pairs of quarter-circle windows to the projecting blocks.

The interior was seen in 2022. The layout comprises the station offices, watch room and kitchen in the corner block. The east wing contains the appliance bays, with the dormitories, mess and recreation rooms above. The north wing contains wash and changing facilities, and storage rooms on the ground floor, whilst the upper floor has been substantially altered and refurbished in recent years to form a new Control Room. The internal treatment is functional throughout, generally comprising hard surfaces with timber joinery. There have been some areas of refurbishment, largely to the north wing, but much of the early fixtures, fittings and finishes remain.

The training yard is enclosed to the east and north by brick boundary walls, which have curved corners and a droved ashlar sandstone finish to West Tollcross. Vehicular access is via large black metal gates to the rear on Dunbar Street, which have a grid pattern and are hung on red brick piers, with one arm cantilevered. Five-storey drill (or practice) tower incorporated into curvature of boundary wall to northeast corner. Brick construction with curved elevation to rear and external metal ladder tower. Balconies, and window and door openings at each level, and a mock-maisonette on the upper floor with a mono-pitched slate roof.

2.2 Historical development

The Central Fire Station at Tollcross (now known as Tollcross Fire Station) was built as the central control unit for the Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service and was designed to accommodate four tenders. The building opened on 18 April 1986 costing around £2.2 million. It was designed by the Department of Architectural Services at Lothian Regional Council. Up until 1956 the site had housed a single-storey Italianate-style tram depot, after which it was used as a bus garage (Ordnance Survey Map, 1961). This was demolished in 1967 and the land subsequently used for parking.

The Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service (the South Eastern Area Fire Brigade prior to 1975) stemmed from the Edinburgh Municipal Fire Brigade that was founded in 1824 under James Braidwood (see *Other Information*). In 2013 it was amalgamated with the seven other regional fire and rescue services to form the single Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS). The new building at Tollcross replaced the previous Central Fire Station in Lauriston Place, which was built to the designs of Robert Morham in 1898 (listed category A, LB30123). This earlier building



remained as the Service's headquarters until 2013, and also housed The Museum of Fire until the building was sold in 2016.

The relief sculpture mounted on the front of Tollcross Fire Station was the result of a design competition arranged between the architects and the head of the Sculpture Department of Edinburgh College of Art. The theme was 'Firemen at Work' and the design brief stated that it was to be less than six feet by six feet in scale, and not exceed a budget of £2000. The winning design was by a third-year art student, David Roxburgh and the three-panel image has been in place since the building was constructed (Canmore, 156866).

Photographic evidence shows that the overall footprint and external appearance of Tollcross Fire Station has remained largely unchanged since it was first built (Prospect, 1986). One of the most notable changes has been the covering over of previously glazed sections of the roof. These were located on the first floor of each wing, over a general recreation area and originally featured a glazed roof and a barrel vaulted rooflight. The barrel vaulted rooflights remain but are proposed to be removed (2023). The east wing is still in recreational use, but the glazed roofs have all since been covered over.

In 2015-16 the eight Control Rooms across Scotland were rationalised and condensed down to three Regional Controls. The existing Control at Tollcross, located on the upper floor of the north wing of the building, was selected as a suitable location for one of these Regional Controls, and underwent alterations and refurbishment works around this time (Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, 2014 and 2016). Plans from before and after the changes (2013 and 2017) show that some internal partitions were removed to create a large open plan Control Room with a glazed training area (provided by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service). The former meeting room was subdivided into male and female locker rooms and the former fitness room, with sauna, showers and changing facilities, was altered to create a dining room, kitchenette and quiet/meeting rooms.

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

Tollcross is an exceptional example of a fire station for its late-20th century date. The striking design combines traditional materials and references to historical Scottish architecture in a playful and artistic way to create something new, setting it apart from the plainer stations of the later modern period. It is of special interest for its innovative design, material quality, plan form, interior, and high level of authenticity.

Fire stations are a specialised building type whose designs evolved over decades in response to changes in equipment and technology available, but also in how the fire service carry out their role. Their built form often reflects new technology and prevailing architectural trends. Larger stations or headquarters tend towards more elaborate designs.

This is particularly evident in the non-traditional design of Tollcross, which was intended to reflect the modern and highly functional service provided by the fire brigade in the later 20th century and beyond. The bold massing of the main elevations and the use of elements of classic monumentality, such as the column post arrangement of the tender bays, gives the building strong presence on the streetscape. Combined with the use of ashlar sandstone and minimal decoration, the building has a sense of dignity and austere grandeur that suitably conveys the importance of its civic function.

As a building type, fire stations are often easily identifiable, regardless of the age or location of the specific station. This is largely due to commonalities in their overall scale, general form and shared features, which were largely established in the mid 20th century when many new stations were built. The simple, functional nature of the building type lent itself to the principles of the prevailing Modern Movement, with simple geometric forms, honesty of materials and lack of decoration. It was at this time that the model of a typical fire station design emerged comprising a single, or sometimes two-storey building, with its separate component parts (tower, offices, appliance bay, offices and accommodation) clearly expressed on the exterior.

Tollcross is unique amongst contemporary stations from the later 20th century, for its exceptional design quality and scale. Despite its unusual appearance, the building is highly functional and its purpose is still readable as it incorporates key aspects of archetypal fire station design. This includes specific features such as the large tender doors to the main elevation and the drill tower behind. This design quality extends to the public art on the main elevation and to the more functional elements of the building, including the interior and ancillary features such as the boundary walls, gates and drill tower. This level of attention to detail, particularly to secondary areas, distinguishes Tollcross within the building type as an example that is of exceptional architectural quality.



Tollcross is also of special architectural interest as a major example of Postmodern architecture in Scotland, and in the context of the wider UK. Postmodernism emerged around the mid-1970s out of a reaction against the rigid functionalism of 1950s and 60s Modernism. It is often defined by an eclectic revival and playful reinterpretation of historical building styles, and an increasing concern for craftsmanship and materiality. It placed a renewed emphasis on the visual aesthetics and decoration, but rather than adhering to a defined style, the eclectic approach resulted in individualistic buildings that were stylistically varied. The pioneering work of architectural practices such as those of Robert Venturi, Michael Graves and Charles Jencks would typify this movement.

Tollcross Fire Station displays key characteristics of Postmodernism and its application in the context of Scotland. These include the use of ashlar stonework and the playful reinterpretation of deconstructed elements of fortified Scottish architecture, such as the drum tower, oriel windows, cupolas and the gridded window motif (Taylor, p.5). These features as well as the use of sandstone ashlar serve to connect the building to its wider historic setting. The references to Edinburgh's past can also be interpreted as a nod to the city's pioneering role in the development of modern firefighting.

The movement was international but had very specific regional characteristics. In Scotland there was a preoccupation with classicism, but a renewed concern for the 'national' identity also led to a revival of Scottish architectural traditions, most notably the neo-baronial tower house, and the geometry of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's later work (Glendinning et al. p.482-485). As a result of the pioneering work of Gillespie Kidd and Coia at buildings such as Robinson College Cambridge (1977-80) and the extension to Newberry Tower in Glasgow (built 1981, demolished 2010), Mackintosh's influence became widespread across Scottish architecture during the 1980s, albeit on a largely aesthetic level, which gave rise to the term 'Mockintosh'.

The gridded windows and rear gates are an early reference to the later work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, such as at 78 Derngate, Northampton (1916), and the projecting windows to the Ponton Street elevation are an early direct reference to Mackintosh's 'hen-run' corridor at Glasgow School of Art (listed category A, LB33105). The building also makes a number of references to the contemporary work of Glasgow-born architect James Stirling, who at the time was one of the world's leading architects. The lime-green windows feature in a number of Stirling's designs, most notably the Neue Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart, (1979-83), which also uses buff ashlar sandstone, whilst the glazed barrel vaults to the roof of each elevation emulate those for his unbuilt design of the Derby Assembly Rooms, around 1973 (Designation Application, Supplementary Information).

The design quality of the exterior is carried through to the interior fixtures and fittings of the building, which largely survives. A notable functional feature includes the poles that lead directly to the appliance bay.

There have been some alterations to the interior but this is largely concentrated to control room and north wing. Changes include the loss of original gym and sauna



and of glazed roofs to recreation rooms. The building retains a significant amount of its original interior decorative scheme as well as its fixtures and fittings despite these changes. This level of authenticity of the interior contributes to the building's special interest.

The L-shaped plan form of the building was a direct response to the restrictions of the compact corner site and appears to be fairly unusual for a fire station from the later 20th century. However, the general arrangement of spaces largely follows the typical model of fire station design during this period. Constructed on a tight urban site, the plan form of the building is highly functional and represents the increased refinement of fire station design in the later 20th century to accommodate modern fire-fighting equipment. There have been some alterations to the layout but on balance much of the original plan form remains evident and contributes to the special interest of the building.

Tollcross Fire Station was designed by the in-house architects at Lothian Regional Council, under project architect Donald William Bain. During the 1980s and 1990s, more ambitious public-sector designers of this kind were becoming a rarity in the transition towards the private-sector funding of public services. The Department was responsible for other notable public works during this period, such as Bathgate Fire Station (1991) and several schools, including Balerno High School (1983) and Leith Academy (1991).

Tollcross Fire Station is a significant example of a landmark public building from the 1980s, which gained contemporary recognition for its innovative and artistic design. Its design is well considered with high quality detailing, including to secondary spaces and ancillary features, and its civic function is readily apparent in its current architectural form. Despite some alterations, the building survives with much of its early character intact and it has a dignified yet playful presence within its urban setting.

3.1.2 Setting

Tollcross was purpose-built for its compact urban site, which occupies a prominent corner setting within Edinburgh City-Centre. It is prominently sited at the convergence of a number of roads with a large open area directly in front of the main elevation.

The fire station replaced an earlier tram depot that had previously occupied the site. Historic photographs (Canmore, 197321) show that the new building was designed to a similar height and scale to this earlier building, likely in an effort to reflect what had previously occupied the site.

The immediate area around Tollcross Fire Station is characterised as a dense, inner-city, multi-period setting. It includes the Queen Anne-style Tollcross Primary School, 1911 (listed at category B LB30253) to the west across Ponton Street, and the multi-storey former Methodist Central Hall, 1899-1901 (listed at category B LB30326) to



the immediate east. Buildings to the north have been replaced in recent years by a new health centre. This adjoins the north of the station building and emulates aspects of its design, including the use of ashlar sandstone to parts of the walls.

The wider setting comprises a mix of later 19th century tenements and commercial buildings with the Union Canal to the west (SM11097) and the Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area to the south (CA41). The general area has seen the piecemeal replacement of former industrial buildings and tenements with blocks of multi-storey apartment or office blocks in recent years, but much of its historic character remains evident.

The functional relationship between the station buildings and its ancillaries remains intact and these are all intervisible with each other. These structures, form an important group which share common design features and materials, and can be seen from the street.

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

Fire Stations are a relatively common building type that can be found in towns and cities across Scotland. Those that are early or innovative examples for their date, or are notable in terms of their design, and retain much of their original character, may be listed.

In terms of survival, a few early examples do remain, such as part of the early 19th century building in Cromarty (listed category C, LB23547), however such buildings were not purpose-built for firefighting. A number of purpose-built stations from the late-Victorian period to the early 20th century survive, notably Lauriston Place, Edinburgh (listed category A, LB30123) and the former Southern Fire Station in Glasgow (category B, LB49931) but these buildings no longer remain in their original use. Some purpose-built examples survive from the Interwar period (1919-1939) at Dunfermline (listed category B, LB26042 – now an art centre), Hamilton (not listed and substantially extended – still in use) and Kirkcaldy (listed category B, LB36318 – still in use).

Fire stations dating from the post-war period are particularly common as a large number were built from the 1950s into the 1970s, when settlement patterns were shifting and wider cultural changes in post-industrial Scotland (and Britain more widely) meant that the type of service required from the fire brigade had to rapidly evolve (Reading, p.52). These modern stations are most commonly found on the outskirts of towns and cities, allowing easy access to the improved road networks. The vast majority remain in operational use as they can be adapted for modern



needs and are generally characterised by simple forms, the use of affordable, readily available materials and prefabricated building systems. Surviving examples that retain much of their external character include Galashiels (1974), Inverness (1958) and a large number in the Glasgow area, such as Easterhouse (1964), Knightswood (1957) and Yorkhill (1970).

New fire stations continued to be built throughout the final decades of the 20th century but at a slower pace than in previous decades, meaning there are fewer examples from this period. In design terms the vast majority retain the simple form and use of materials that characterised the functionalist-modernism of the early post-war stations, largely as a means of saving costs. However, some stations such as at Calton, Glasgow (1983), Polmadie (1986) and Melrose (1991), and to a much greater degree Tollcross, represent a wider shift in the prevalent style of civic architecture at this time and show the influence of Postmodern design. This saw a move away from simple box-like arrangements and component parts of the earlier stations towards a more contextual approach, in which there was greater consideration of setting and use of traditional architectural forms and materials, as well as decorative elements. This led to the introduction of more varied and experimental plan forms as at Bathgate (1991) and Newcraighall (1994), and a playfulness with form and use of decorative motifs as at Maryhill in Glasgow (1991) and Islington in London (1992).

For its bold and highly distinctive design, Tollcross is a major example of a fire station design that is unique amongst other contemporary examples, both in Scotland, and in the context of the wider UK. The significance of its design was recognised at the time of completion as it was the cover-feature for Prospect, the magazine of the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS). The building has been partially altered, but it retains much of its original external appearance, layout and plan form, as well as many original fixtures and fittings.

Tollcross is of special interest as a rare and relatively early example of an ambitious public building that demonstrates authenticity in its use of Postmodern design principles. By the 1990s, the Postmodern aesthetic became widespread, and the style became often diluted and applied superficially to buildings. Tollcross is a rare and important example of authentic Postmodern architecture in Scotland, that sits alongside some other notable examples that include Glasgow Central Mosque (1983), the Royal Conservatoire (Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, 1987), the TSB in St Andrews (1989, listed at category C, LB40883), and Princes Square, Glasgow (1988, listed at category B, LB32634).

During the 1980s, government cuts meant that there was a move away from the more ambitious, public-sector architectural commissions, towards large-scale commercially funded building ventures. In this context, Tollcross Fire Station is among a small group of contemporary public sector buildings of definite architectural quality, which show the influence of Postmodern thinking. These include the Burrell Collection, Glasgow (1983, listed at category A, LB52002), Glasgow Sheriff Court



(1986, listed at category B, LB52067), Lochgelly High School (1987) and the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh (1985-7).

3.2.2 Social historical interest

All fire stations have a level of social historical interest as they are specialist buildings that are easily identifiable and fulfil an important role in the functioning of our towns and cities.

Tollcross Fire Station is important for what it can tell us about how fire stations, and the fire and rescue service operated in the later 20th century. It is also of interest for its connection to the creation of the municipal fire service in Scotland, which was first founded in Edinburgh and is the model on which fire brigades were established across the UK and beyond during the 19th century (see *Other Information* for more detail). The heritage and civic pride of the fire service in Scotland is reflected in the building's architectural quality and the unusual design is a legacy of its pioneering ambition.

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

Tollcross Fire Station meets the criteria of special architectural or historic interest for the following reasons:

- It is of exceptional design and material quality. Its bold and innovative design in the Postmodern style, combines traditional materials with the playful reinterpretation of deconstructed elements of fortified Scottish architecture.
- Its plan form is innovative and highly functional, designed for the specific requirements of the fire service within the confines of a compact urban site.
- It is a prominent public building within its built-up urban setting and forms an important group with the associated boundary walls, gates, and drill tower.
- It is a major example of its building type and for its date and shows exceptional architectural quality when compared with the relatively small number of contemporary examples of fire stations across Scotland.
- For its rarity as a significant and relatively early example of the classic Postmodern style in Scotland.

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

The building'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 building type.

Taking into account the exceptional of design interest within its building type and style, and of the minimal later alteration, category B is considered to be the most appropriate level of listing.

7. Other Information

Tollcross Fire Station was built for the Lothian and Borders Fire and Rescue Service, which stemmed from the Edinburgh Municipal Fire Engine Establishment. This was formed in 1824 under James Braidwood and was the first true independent municipal fire brigade to be established in Scotland, and in Britain (Reading, p.17). There are some examples of earlier attempts to create municipal fire brigades. Prior to 1824 there were semi-private ventures in Edinburgh, Yorkshire, Gloucestershire and Lincolnshire, but these were not entirely run as public services, or, as in Belfast, the fire-fighting duties were carried out by the police (Reading, pp.16-17).

In Edinburgh, Braidwood pioneered a scientific approach to fire fighting and placed great emphasis on training. He divided the city into four districts and his brigades into four companies (red, blue, yellow and grey). Each had an engine house and both the engines and the men were clearly marked with the distinguishing colour of that district (Edinburgh Fire Brigade; Reid, p.15-20). Braidwood later went on to form the London Fire Brigade and is widely referred to as the father of modern firefighting. The model he established in Edinburgh set the pattern for the creation of fire brigades all over the world during the 19th century and beyond. (Reading, p.17)

8. References

Canmore: <http://canmore.org.uk/> CANMORE ID [156866](#)

Maps

Ordnance Survey National Grid Maps (revised 1960, published 1961)



NT2472NE – C (includes Edinburgh). 1:1,250. Southampton: Ordnance Survey.

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Other Information

Designation Application (2021) Supplementary Information.

Floor plans (2013 and 2017) provided by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

9. Images

Images proposed for inclusion in online Listed Building Record if building becomes listed or if an existing listed building record is amended or removed.



Type: Standard.
Title: Tollcross Fire Station, main elevation, looking north.
Alternative Text: Tollcross Fire Station, main elevation, looking north, on a clear day with blue sky.



Type: Standard.
Title: Tollcross Fire Station, west elevation detail, looking east.
Alternative Text: Tollcross Fire Station, west elevation detail, looking east, on a clear day



Date taken: 25/01/2023
Photographer: HES
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with cloudy blue sky and a person walking past.

Date taken: 25/01/2023
Photographer: HES
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9. Indicative Map

A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.