

Designation Consultation

This designation consultation is open for comment until 19/02/2026

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	300061025
Name of Site	Ubiquitous Chip, 12 Ashton Lane, Hillhead, Glasgow
Postcode (if any)	G12 8SJ

Local Authority	Glasgow City Council
National Grid Reference	NS 56634 67004
Designation Type	Listed Building
Designation No. and category of listing (if any)	N/A
Case Type	Designation

Received/Start Date	23/09/2022
Decision Date	Pending

1. Proposed decision

Previous Statutory Listing Address	N/A	Previous category of listing	N/A
New Statutory Listing Address	10–22 Ashton Lane (The Ubiquitous Chip) with murals by Alasdair Gray and Michael Lacey, excluding 6–8 Ashton Lane (The Wee Pub at the Chip), Hillhead, Glasgow (LB52670)	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 and Development Proposals

2.1 Designation Background

There is no known previous listing review for this building.

The building is located within Glasgow West Conservation Area.

2.2 Development Proposals

The building is the subject of the following development proposals:

- 23/00354/FUL: Frontage alterations including change of window to doorway. Granted with conditions.
- 24/00556/FUL: Formation of flat roof extension and associated works to the rear of the building towards Byres Road. Granted with conditions.

We began our assessment of the building before the planning applications were submitted.

These applications have now been granted with conditions by Glasgow Council. Our understanding is that the work has not started. (See Policy considerations, section 3.3).

3. Assessment

3.1 Assessment information

We received a proposal to designate the Ubiquitous Chip restaurant on 23/09/2022. (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 history of the building/site
- The history of a person and/or an event associated with the site
- Their views on special architectural and historic interest

We informed the planning authority at Glasgow Council that we were carrying out a designation review for this building.

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 Ubiquitous Chip on 31/01/2023. We saw the exterior and interiors.

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.

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 and about development proposals and designation is found in Designation Policy and Selection Guidance, pp. 7-8. <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>. Our policy states:

“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.

“Where it is highly likely that a site or place no longer meets the designation criteria, we may consider removing the designation to avoid unnecessary regulatory processes.”

10–22 Ashton Lane (Ubiquitous Chip) is currently the subject of planning applications for alterations to the frontage, and the formation of flat roof extension and associated works (see Development Proposals). As these applications have been approved with conditions by Glasgow City Council, we consider the development proposals to be at an advanced stage.

We were made aware of developing proposals for the building at our visit in 2023 but did not have detailed evidence about the nature or status of these proposals.

We have decided to proceed with a consultation on a proposal to list the building so we can gather further information about the status and nature of the proposals. This will inform our final decision about whether to list the building at this time. Our current view is that the proposals would affect minor areas of the building and would not have an impact on the key areas of special interest such as the murals.

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."

The planning authority is the main point of contact for applications for listed building consent. They will consider applications for change to listed buildings or their demolition in line with national and local policies.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation information

Consultation period: 29/01/2026 to 19/02/2026.

We have consulted directly with the owner 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/ZlgU51tRA6g>.

Designations Service

Heritage Directorate
Historic Environment Scotland

Contact designations@hes.scot, 0131 668 8914

ANNEX A**Assessment of special architectural or historic interest****1. Building or site name**

10–22 Ashton Lane (The Ubiquitous Chip) with murals by Alasdair Gray and Michael Lacey, excluding 6–8 Ashton Lane (The Wee Pub at the Chip), Hillhead, Glasgow

2. Description and historical development**2.1 Description**

10–22 Ashton Lane (constructed in 1893 and converted to a restaurant, 1974 onwards) comprises a combination of former stable yard and workshop buildings at the north corner of Ashton Lane, Hillend, Glasgow. The buildings are mainly of brick construction, painted white with margins painted black. An irregular arrangement of doors and windows reflects its former use as well as its conversion to a restaurant. The northeast corner angle is rounded. The building has a grey slate roof covering with some later additions and infill. Doors are predominantly timber, and the windows to the upper floor have timber sash and case frames with an eight-pane glazing pattern.

The interior includes two painted murals by the Scottish artist and author, Alasdair Gray (1934–2019) – see below for details. There is an internal courtyard with a glass roof covering, with a cobblestone floor, fishpond, and mezzanine seating area. The building also incorporates some fixtures and fittings that were salvaged from other buildings.

Florid Jungle (Alasdair Gray, 1977) is a dense and colourful jungle scene with many exotic animals, located in the courtyard area. Numerous irregularly shaped mirrors are integrated into the design, with parts of the mural overlapping, to reflect light and space. A small separate section of wall mural to the left of *Florid Jungle* features two seated gentlemen in conversation. A glass of red wine is painted directly onto the mirror between them.

Arcadia (Alasdair Gray, 1980–81 with repairs and additions 2000 and 2006 by Gray) is located in the rear stairwell. Largely painted directly onto the walls, it places friends, employees and customers in a leafy outdoor setting among tables with food and drink, trees and flowers, and several animals including a frieze of peacocks. The ceiling is painted with clouds against a bright blue sky with birds in flight. The walls at the top landing are painted with heavy blue curtains against a yellow background. The mural also incorporates quotes and aphorisms by Gray, including “Work as if You Live in the Early Days of a Better Nation” (paraphrased from Canadian poet Dennis Lee).

The front stairs of the restaurant have three intricate collage murals by Glasgow School of Art graduate Michael Lacey (b.1985), completed in 2011.

2.2 Historical development

Ashton Lane was established in the 1870s as a mews row of commercial workshops, stables and coach-house accommodation. 10–22 Ashton Lane was largely built in 1893 as a livery stable and yard for Thomas Russell, Fruit Merchant, on the site of an existing stable. The footprint of the building is shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map (surveyed, 1894). Part of the site became a dairy yard during the 1940s, and an engineer's workshop and showroom.

The Hillhead area of Glasgow, close to the University of Glasgow, became known for its community of artists, journalists and academics during the late 20th century. The renowned author and artist Alasdair Gray left a significant mark on Hillhead, creating public art and contributing to its cultural landscape.

Local entrepreneur Ronnie Clydesdale established the *Ubiquitous Chip* restaurant in January 1971 in nearby Ruthven Lane, off Byres Road. From the outset the menu featured traditional seasonal Scottish dishes using locally sourced ingredients - an unusual and pioneering concept at the time. The restaurant moved to the larger former stable and livery yard at 10–22 Ashton Lane in 1974.

The owner glazed over the central courtyard in 1976, added a goldfish pond along one wall, and inserted a mezzanine with leafy plants to form a 50-seat restaurant area that retains a sense of an outdoor space.

In 1977 Alastair Gray, who was a friend of the owner, offered to paint a mural for the courtyard area in exchange for meals and drinks. He added a further mural in 1980–81 at the rear staircase, carrying out repairs and additions in 2000 and 2006. Further collage murals (for the front stairs) were commissioned from Michael Lacey in 2011 as part of the restaurant's 40th anniversary.

The *Ubiquitous Chip* changed ownership in 2022, having been one of the longest-running, family-owned restaurants in Glasgow. It continues to operate as a restaurant (2026).

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

The building is a representative example of a late 19th century former stables and workshops building that has been altered for use as a restaurant. The wall and ceiling murals within the building, by the celebrated Scottish author and artist, Alastair Gray (1934–2019), are important examples of his work and of 20th-century public art in Scotland more widely (see also under 3.2 Historic interest).

The interest of the designer of the mural is of particular significance to the building. Born in Glasgow, Alasdair Gray's work includes murals, illustrations, novels, poems and plays that combine realism and local settings with fantasy, symbolism and allegory, while reflecting his interest in social equality and the place of humankind in the universe.

Gray created the murals at the *Ubiquitous Chip* in 1977 and 1980–81 – shortly before the release of his landmark debut novel *Lanark* in 1981, which is widely considered a significant literary work of the late 20th century. The production of the murals also coincided with his positions as 'Writer in Residence' at Glasgow University, and 'Artist Recorder' at the People's Palace. One obituary described him as 'the father figure of the renaissance in Scottish literature and art' (Guardian, 2019).

Gray was a regular customer of the *Ubiquitous Chip* until his death in 2019. He designed the murals specifically for their location within the restaurant, and their content relates closely to the social environment and function of the building.

The interior decorative scheme of the glazed internal courtyard of the restaurant, known for its leafy potted plants, hanging baskets and ornamental fishpond, likely inspired the design of Gray's *Florid Jungle* mural in 1977. Meanwhile, the 1980–81 mural, *Arcadia*, located in a more secluded location at the rear stairs, captures regular customers and staff in a colourful stylised outdoor setting. The tied-back painted blue curtains add a sense of theatricality, as well as suggesting the idea of passing between two worlds. This mural is more directly illustrative of Gray's inclusive and socially orientated worldview. It also incorporates quotes from his early written work, reflecting his development as an artist and writer and adding further to the significance. The fact that Gray carried out repairs and additions to this mural adds to its authenticity as one of his works.

The collage murals of 2011 by artist Michael Lacey (b.1985) contribute to the design interest of the interior of the Ubiquitous Chip. Lacey's work often engages with the architectural and social history and memory of places. He describes his murals as a 'modern counterpoint' to Alasdair Gray's work, depicting 'customers in a landscape which contains many references to local history and culture' (Michael-Lacey.co.uk).

The survival of the Alasdair Gray murals as fixed features within their original context is the focus of the building's design interest.

3.1.2 Setting

10–22 Ashton Lane (The *Ubiquitous Chip*) is part of a mews of former workshops and stables of mainly late 19th-century date, located near to Glasgow University and Hillhead. These buildings have been repurposed as pubs, restaurants, breweries and a cinema while retaining much of their 19th-century fabric and character (2025). Listed examples include 44–46 Ashton Lane (LB32937) and 21–43 Ashton Lane, Mews Cottages (LB32936). The buildings on Ashton Lane contribute to the immediate setting of 10-22 Ashton Lane.

Inside the building, the light and leafy courtyard interior and adjacent ornamental fishpond – little altered since the later 20th century - provide the setting for the *Florid Jungle* mural of 1977, while the more secluded back stair and landing is the setting for the more personal subject matter and execution of the *Arcadia* mural. The position of these murals within the building contribute to the special architectural interest.

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

Before the 20th century, painted murals in Scotland were more commonly found within buildings such as churches and high-status private houses. The former Catholic Apostolic Church at Mansfield Place, Edinburgh, for example, contains extensive murals by Phoebe Anna Traquair of 1893-1901 (LB26849). A notable mural in a public building is the large-scale historical mural frieze and astrological ceiling by William Hole in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh of 1887–1901 (LB27764).

By the mid-20th century art came to be valued as an important part of the new state sponsored public building and housing development. The commissioning of sculptures and concrete or painted murals for public buildings and spaces reflected a more socially aware approach to public art. The objective was to add to the sense of place and identity while bringing art out of galleries and into people's daily lives. In

this context, murals came to be commissioned more commonly in public buildings such as community centres and schools.

Fixed artworks such as murals are vulnerable to redevelopment and easily covered or painted over when decorative schemes are changed. Many mid to later 20th-century murals have been lost to demolition or redecoration making surviving examples increasingly rare.

Alasdair Gray is one the most significant Scottish mural artists of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Between 1958 and 2019, he produced mural artworks for churches, pubs, stations and other locations in and around Glasgow. Some of these have since been lost to demolition including 'The Seventh Day of Creation - Eden and After' mural of 1963 in Greenhead Church. Public murals by Gray that survive within listed buildings include an ecology-themed wall mural at Palacerigg Visitor Centre, Cumbernauld (1974, LB52610); the 1995 *Thistle of Dunfermline* ceiling mural at the 16th century Abbot's House, Dunfermline (LB25978); and the expansive murals created from 2004 to 2019 at the Oran Mor Centre (former Hillhead Kelvinside Parish Church, LB32584). The murals at the *Ubiquitous Chip* are significant surviving examples of Gray's public art.

3.2.2 Social historical interest

Relocated to this building in 1974, the *Ubiquitous Chip* restaurant was pioneering in its promotion of Scottish cuisine and seasonal produce, combined with an unusual ad-hoc approach to architectural design and decoration.

The surviving murals by Alasdair Gray represent the relationship between the artist and the progressive ideals of the original owner of the *Ubiquitous Chip*. They also relate to the wider reputation of the Hillhead area of Glasgow, close to the University, which became known for its community of artists, journalists and academics in the late 20th century.

3.2.3 Association with people or events of national importance

10-22 Ashton Lane (The Ubiquitous Chip) has a close historical association with the celebrated Scottish author and artist, Alasdair Gray (1934–2019) due to the survival of two of his mural artworks within their original interior settings (see under Architectural Interest).

4. Summary of assessment

In our current state of knowledge, we have found that 10–22 Ashton Lane meets the criteria for listing for the following reasons:



- As representative examples of former mews workshop and stable buildings, the internal design of which has been distinctively adapted for use as a restaurant, with glazed internal courtyard with fishpond and mezzanine being key interior design features.
- For its interior wall murals (*Florid Jungle* and *Arcadia*) by nationally significant Glaswegian artist and writer, Alasdair Gray (1934–2019) which are important and increasingly rare examples of late 20th century public mural art as well as important surviving examples of the artist's work.
- For the buildings' contribution to its setting as part of a secluded lane of workshop and stable mews buildings of similar date and type.
- For the broader cultural associations of the restaurant on the site which, together with the murals by Alasdair Gray, illustrate the social and cultural life of Glasgow's west end during the late 20th century and beyond.

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: 6–8 Ashton Lane (The Wee Pub at the Chip)

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 type.'

Category definitions are found at Annex 2 of Designation Policy and Selection Guidance (2019) <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/designation-policy>.

Taking into account the prolific building type and its level of alteration, category B is considered to be the most appropriate level of listing.

6. Legal exclusions

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing:
6–8 Ashton Lane (The Wee Pub at the Chip)

No 6–8 Ashton Lane was partly incorporated into The Ubiquitous Chip to form the 'Wee Pub at the Chip' in 2005. A sign outside shows a list of alternative name suggestions provided by customers prior to its opening (including 'The Micro Chip' and 'Nip at the Chip'). While interconnected internally, this building is not of special interest in its own right and does not contain murals by Alasdair Gray.

7. Other Information

N/A

8. References

Trove: <https://www.trove.scot/place/163279>

Ordnance Survey (Surveyed 1858, Published 1865) Lanarkshire, Sheet VI – 6 inches, 1st Edition, 6 inches to 1 mile. Ordnance Survey: Southampton.

Ordnance Survey (Revised 1894, Published 1896) Lanarkshire, Sheet VI – 6 inches, 2nd Edition, 6 inches to 1 mile. Ordnance Survey: Southampton.

Gray, A (2012) *A Life in Pictures*, Edinburgh: Canongate.

Michael Lacey Website – Michael-Lacey.co.uk [accessed 2025].

Mitchell Library, Dean of Guild Plans.1893, *Plan for livery stable and yard in Ashton Lane for Thomas Russell, Fruit Merchant* (accessed 2022).

Moores, P (2002) *Alasdair Gray: critical appreciations and a bibliography*, Boston Spa: British Library.

The Alasdair Gray Archive - [Alasdair Gray Archive](http://AlasdairGrayArchive.com) [accessed 2025]

The Guardian, Alasdair Gray Obituary -
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/dec/29/alasdair-gray-obituary> [accessed 2025].

9. Indicative Map

A map of the proposed listed building is attached separately.