



## Case information

<b>Case ID</b>	300018186		
<b>File Reference</b>	HGH/B/LA/528		
<b>Name of Site</b>	Longstone Primary School, Redhall Grove, Edinburgh		
<b>Local Authority</b>	City of Edinburgh Council		
<b>National Grid Reference</b>	NT 21250 70471		
<b>Designation No. (if any)</b>	N/A		
<b>Designation Type</b>	Listed Building	<b>Current Category of Listing</b>	N/A
<b>Case Type</b>	Designation		
<b>Received/Start Date</b>	02/08/2016		
<b>Decision Date</b>	14/11/2016		

## 1. Decision

In our current state of knowledge, Longstone Primary School is considered to meet the criteria for listing at category C. The building has been designated (listed).

<b>Previous Statutory Address</b>	N/A
<b>New Statutory Address</b>	Longstone Primary School, including boundary walls, gates and railings and excluding linking canopy to Redhall School, 3A Redhall Grove, Edinburgh

## 2. Designation Background and Development Proposals

### 2.1 Designation Background

Longstone Primary School was proposed for listing on 02/08/2016.

### 2.2 Development Proposals

There are current development proposals to build a detached Nursery School building to the northeast corner of the playground area. (Ref: 16/01454/FUL)

### 3. Assessment

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#### 3.1 Assessment information

Longstone Primary School was visited on 16/08/2016. The exterior and interior were seen at the site visit.

The former janitor's house is adjacent to the main entrance gates and is known to be contemporary with the build date of the school. This building, which has been altered, is under separate ownership and it has not been assessed as part of this listing review.

#### 3.2 Assessment against designation criteria

The building was found to meet the criteria for listing.

An assessment against the listing criteria was carried out. See **Annex A**.

*The designation criteria are published in the Historic Environment Scotland policy statement June 2016, Annex 2, pp. 51-53.*

<https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/historic-environment-scotland-policy-statement/>

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#### **Elizabeth McCrone**

Head of Designations  
Heritage Management  
Historic Environment Scotland

<b>Contact</b>	Rohan Banyard, Designations Officer rohan.banyard@hes.scot, 0131 6688908
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## **ANNEX A – Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\***

Longstone Primary School, including boundary walls, gates and railings and excluding linking canopy to Redhall School, 3A Redhall Grove, Edinburgh

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### **1. Description**

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G Reid and J Smith Forbes, designed 1953 and built 1954-57. Longstone Primary School is a large primary school complex built in a horizontal, Art Deco style which is set to the edge of a contemporary housing development and surrounded by a large open area of playing grounds. The building consists of long rectangular plan and flat-roofed single and 2-storey blocks with a single storey main entrance at the centre of the north elevation and a 2-storey hall to the west incorporating a tower. There is a single storey corridor of offices and a further round ended infant classroom block to the rear creating a courtyard. The main classroom wing is a long linear 2-storey wing extending to the east with its principal decorative elevation facing the playing fields to the south, and single storey corridor, cloakroom and ancillary section to its north.

In accordance with Section 1 (4A) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the following are excluded from the listing: the external canopy to the west end of the infants classroom block linking to Redhall School.

The main entrance has a brick and concrete advanced tripartite frame forming an external porch with a similar detail around the 5 ground floor openings to the hall. The tower has 5 advanced niches at the south side arranged in a diagonal pattern with a single niche at the west side. There is a pair of symmetrical and curved fin privacy walls leading to the toilets from the playground. The south elevation of the main block is a symmetrical with an advanced frame around the central doorway with a geometric brick pattern detailing and a geometric brick and tile abstract motif detail over the entrance. There are a further two abstract motifs between the first floor windows.

The building is loadbearing brick and clad in painted render with smooth painted margins and flat parapet roof capping. The majority of the windows are replacements with some metal windows, likely dating to the date of construction, remaining to ancillary areas.

The interior of the school was seen in 2016. The 1950s interior plan form is evident throughout and it retains the majority of the interior detailing from the time it was built. The main classroom block has three staircases, each giving access to two classrooms on the upper floor and all of these six classrooms are linked by interconnecting doors. The entrance hall has decorative polychrome terrazzo flooring with metal lining and a pair of doors with a horizontal glazing pattern at the rear. The main hall has windows on one side and paired timber steps with large octagonal plan newel posts up to the stage. The classroom doors have small rectangular viewing windows.

## 2. Assessment Against the Listing Criteria (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 51-52

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Criteria for determining whether a building is of 'special architectural or historic interest' for listing under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 [[www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1997/9/contents)]

*To be listed, a building need not meet all the listing criteria. The criteria provide a framework within which judgement is exercised in reaching individual decisions.*

### 2.1 Age and Rarity

Longstone Primary School began construction in 1954 however its Art Deco style and horizontal form suggests that its design was possibly conceived during the 1930s. Building in the United Kingdom was heavily restricted until after the Second World War due to the severe shortage of building materials and labour and it may be that construction of Longstone Primary School was delayed from a pre-war plan. However, neither the school nor the surrounding streets are evident in the aerial photography dating to 1944-1950. The surrounding houses do appear on the 1953 building warrant drawings for the school design so it is not currently known if a proposal for the school and its adjacent housing was planned before the war.

The 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of Edinburgh (published in 1959) shows the Redhall housing estate but not the school itself, with the former board school to the north still noted as the school for the area. The building warrant drawings are dated 1953 and the Buildings of Scotland, Edinburgh notes the building would have been nearing completion when the map was surveyed around 1957. Redhall was undergoing swift and comprehensive construction at the time, and included a number of new community buildings, such as the neighbouring Slateford and Longstone Church by Leslie Grahame McDougall built in 1954 (which is also not noted on the 1959 map).

The early post-war years were a period of transformation in Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom. Social welfare and education reforms and the influence of the Modern

Movement in architecture was felt particularly strongly during these years in the provision of buildings for education. School building was the fullest expression of the movement for a social architecture in Britain which had gathered pace in the 1930s, although interrupted by the Second World War, it gained momentum again under the service of the post-war welfare state. The 'Education (Scotland) Act' of 1945 advocating free education for all and other new policies helped re-prioritise a designed ethos in the provision of schools and other forms of public building, as did the wider availability of building materials after the Second World War.

As a result of this reform, and in response to the rapidly rising birth rate, a large number of new schools were built during this period, most of which were planned within the context of new housing estates.

By the 1930s local authorities gradually moved away from the symmetrical board school schemes toward more modernist school designs, often inspired by the much-emulated work of the Dutch architect, Willem Dudok. Long horizontal glazing for classrooms was countered by cubic massing and offset by the vertical accent of glazed stair towers. Of particular relevance to this period are innovative plan forms or designs that reference innovation in current teaching programmes or theories which freed up the space for more flexible teaching practices. More imaginative teaching programmes resulted in informally planned, stripped back, heavily glazed buildings which were intended to stimulate learning.

Architects in private practice were sometimes engaged to provide local authorities with innovative school designs and the best schools would closely combine effective educational organization with good architectural solutions. Primary school planning was the principal focus of attention in the interwar and post-war period. The child as the principal user of the building was now considered in the building's design with low lying windows and bright colour schemes.

Because a large numbers of schools from this period survive particular attention is paid to the special value within its building type, either for architectural or for planning reasons as well as its intactness. Schools are often, along with churches, notable landmarks and were designed as such.

Longstone Primary School falls within this period of rapid post-war construction while its design suggests it was planned before the war. This school building, designed by Reid and Forbes (an architectural practice that specialised in school work) is a good example of its type. It survives largely as it was first constructed and has a distinctive Art Deco style including a landmark tower. It is also notable for its highly practical plan form (see Architectural or Historic Interest below).

A canopy was added around 10 years ago at the west end of the infants classroom block linking the school to Redhall School. It is proposed that this canopy is excluded from the listing.

## **2.2 Architectural or Historic Interest**

### ***Interior***

The interior of the building is largely functional in its design in line with the ethos of the design and budgets of educational buildings at the time. The decorative detailing to the entrance hall area is more elaborate particularly the bespoke designed terrazzo flooring. Other areas retain fixtures and fittings from the time of construction such as the window details to the classroom doors and the toilet and cloakroom areas. The majority of the interior is standard for a school building of this period with the exception of its bespoke decorative flooring as well as the survival of a good decorative scheme in the assembly hall.

### ***Plan form***

In the inter-war period there was a move towards daylight and fresh air to be incorporated in the designs for schools thereby allowing for clear cross ventilation and good light to support a healthy learning environment. These were design

elements which followed a significant movement of progressive educational design from around 1930 onwards.

The plan form of Longstone Primary School demonstrates the contemporary interest combining a practical plan with design innovation. The plan consists of an entrance block with offices, hall and two separate linear wings containing the classroom blocks. The round ended single storey classroom block nearer the office block was designed for the infant classes (for which it is still used) with the longer 2-storey block set further away for the junior classes.

This larger block is entirely symmetrical in both plan form and elevation with careful thought given to how the circulation and service areas link to the classrooms. The 1953 colour coded plan drawings clearly illustrate the practical design. The plan is logically arranged with a corridor all along the ground floor linking single sided classrooms to the ancillary cloakroom and toilet blocks offset to the side. There are three separate staircases each linking to two upstairs classrooms however there is flexibility built in to the design as all six classrooms on this floor have interlinking doors. The floor plan means the upper floor classrooms are dual sided and therefore is in keeping with contemporary theory in school design and planning.

### ***Technological excellence or innovation, material or design quality***

The design of Longstone Primary School brings together various elements and influences of school design for which the architectural firm of Reid and Forbes are known. The design is of interest because of its function led plan form and the use of horizontality in the design punctuated by a prominent decorative tower. The use of Art Deco and geometric motif detailing to both the interior and exterior of the building is of interest in what was a relatively small suburban primary school in Edinburgh.

The Longstone infant classroom block was designed with a rounded end which was a signature detail of the Art Deco period. The two symmetrical external screen walls leading from the playground to the toilets are also an interesting design detail and an integral part of the original plan.

The architectural firm of Reid and Forbes made a significant contribution to school design in Scotland in the interwar and post-war period. Three notable examples are Chirnside Primary School of 1938 (listed at category A, LB6620), Kelso Academy 1936 (listed at category B, LB35712) and former Niddrie Marishal School, Edinburgh, around 1937 (listed at category B, LB49459). All of these schools are recognised for the quality of their 1930s Art Deco style detailing with the streamlined flat-roofed horizontality with counterpoint verticality in a tower and as recognition of the importance of this firm in earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century educational buildings.

The firm began their career in educational buildings with the competition win for former Leith Academy in 1928 and then later securing the competition for Inverness Academy in 1932. Some of their earlier schools such as the Royal High Primary School (1931) were in a classical revival style with pitched roofs but their later designs developed towards Modern Movement inspired schools. By the time of the Niddrie Marishal School (1935) the designs had become overtly modernist with flat roofs and horizontal styling. The firm also began to employ unusual carved motifs which McKean notes in 'The Scottish Thirties' may have derived inspiration from

Frank Lloyd Wright's re-interpretation of Native American Art and in particular his work at Midway Gardens of 1914.

Reid and Forbes's design for Niddrie Marishal School (now Castlebrae Business Centre) demonstrated the influence of the German open-air school movement and the importance of daylight and fresh air to create positive environments in educational buildings. The blocks are a single classroom in depth, with good light and cross-ventilation and this is also employed at Longstone Primary School.

Willem Dudok was the director of public works in the new garden city of Hilversum in the Netherlands who was also inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright adopted an architectural style of buildings with long horizontal glazing patterns offset with a clear vertical element of a tower. Dudok's influence in the Modern Movement in Britain is widely acknowledged and is clearly evident in the design of school buildings by Reid and Forbes, particularly at Chirnside and Longstone where the majority of the school appears horizontal except for key vertical elements of a tower and taller school hall.

The A listed Chirnside Primary School was completed in 1938 and is recognised as the firm's signature work, with its square-plan tower, flat roofs, horizontal window pattern, round ended elevations and diagonally placed tower decorations. All these details are also evident in the design of Longstone Primary School.

### ***Setting***

Longstone Primary School is set within a large site that includes a playground and extensive open playing fields to the rear. It is at the edge of a contemporary housing development in a suburb of Edinburgh. The suburban setting is typical for a school building of its date.

### ***Regional variations***

There are no known regional variations.

## **2.3 Close Historical Associations**

There are no known associations with a person or event of national importance at present (2016).

## **3. Working with the Principles of Listing** (HES Policy Statement, 2016) Annex 2, pp. 53

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In choosing buildings within the above broad headings particular attention is paid to:

- a. special value within building types*
- b. contribution to an architecturally or historically interesting group*
- c. the impact of a grouping of buildings*
- d. authenticity*

When working with the principles of listing Longstone Primary School has particular interest under a and d.

a. Longstone Primary School is a good example of a modernist primary school and is a notable example of school designed by an architectural practice renowned for their Art Deco style school commissions in Scotland.

d. The school is largely intact and retains its characteristic Art Deco detailing and its innovative plan form. The replacement windows have not interrupted the intended horizontality to the exterior elevations.

#### **4. Summary of Assessment Against the Listing Criteria\*\***

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Longstone Primary School is a notable example of a modernist school building with Art Deco detailing. Designed by a renowned Scottish architectural practice who specialised in school buildings in the earlier and mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, its plan form and elevations are characteristic of the ethos and trends of educational building design of the period when it was designed.

In our current state of knowledge it meets the criteria for listing.

A canopy at the west end of the infants classroom block linking the school to Redhall School is not considered of special interest in listing terms at the time of this review. It is proposed to be excluded from this listing.

#### **5. Category of Listing**

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Categories of listing are non-statutory and buildings are assigned a category (A, B or C) according to their relative importance following the assessment against the criteria for listing.

Category definitions are found at: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/what-is-listing/>

Category C denotes buildings of local importance; lesser examples of any period, style or building type, as originally constructed or moderately altered. The Longstone Primary School building is of interest for its Art Deco style design which has an unusual floor plan and which aimed to provide the best physical environment for education in line with contemporary education principals at the time. It also has a striking horizontal design punctuated by a vertical tower which was a form designed to emulate the work of international architects such as Willem Dudok and Frank Lloyd Wright. While the building has all these elements, when compared to other similar buildings, its interior finishes are largely functional and the detailing small scale, therefore on balance it is considered to meet the criteria at category C.

#### **6. Other Information**

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N/A

#### **7. References**

## Archives

City of Edinburgh Council Plan Store. Dean of Guild Building Warrant Drawings Longstone Primary, dated 1953.

## Printed Sources

Gifford, J. McWilliam, C. and Walker, D. (1984) *The Buildings of Scotland: Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: Yale University Press. p.507.

McKean, C. (1987) *Buildings of the Scottish Thirties, An Architectural Introduction*. Glasgow: Scottish Academic Press. p.122.

Harwood, E (2010) *England's Schools, History Architecture and Adaptation*. United Kingdom: English Heritage. p.63.

## Online Sources

The Dictionary of Scottish Architects. Reid and Forbes at [http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect\\_full.php?id=200912](http://www.scottisharchitects.org.uk/architect_full.php?id=200912) [accessed 25/08/2016].

The National Map Library of Scotland. Ordnance Survey Air Photo Mosaics of Scotland 1944-1950 NT 27 S.W. (Midlothian) at <http://maps.nls.uk/view/75221805> [accessed 05/09/2016].

\* This assessment is based on our current state of knowledge and has been prepared for the purpose of consultation or to provide a view on the special interest of a building. This assessment is a consultation document and will form the basis of any new or updated listed building record should the structure be listed. The content of this assessment may change to take into account further information received as a result of the consultation process.

\*\* A building may be found to meet the listing criteria but in some circumstances may not be added to the list. See 'When might Historic Environment Scotland list a building' at <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/listing-scheduling-and-designations/listed-buildings/what-is-listing/>