

Livi Skatepark becomes B Listed

It is recognition usually reserved for castles, stately homes, churches and historic monuments.

Now a concrete skatepark in West Lothian has officially joined some of Scotland's most significant structures after it was awarded listed building status by Historic Environment Scotland (HES).

Livingston or "Livi" Skatepark has been designated a B listed structure, ensuring its significance will inform decisions about its future.

The skatepark, which opened in 1981, is the earliest surviving purpose-built skatepark in Scotland.

It achieved international renown within the skate scene due to its pioneering design, including a very deep "Double Bowl" and finely-tuned transitions, which have been enjoyed by generations of skateboarders over the past 43 years.

When the world's best known skateboarder, Tony Hawk, visited he described it as "super challenging... such a legendary spot".

Dara Parsons, Head of Designations at HES, said: "We are delighted to confirm 'Livi' Skatepark as a listed building after West Lothian Council asked us to consider designation.

"Iain Urquhart's original design is grounded in early skate culture, and the park is known around the world for its pioneering design, the quality of the skating experience, and as a prototype for later concrete skateparks.

“We are very grateful for everybody who contributed to our public engagement, which helped us understand the history, design, quality and experiences for those who use the skatepark.

“Tony Hawk, who skated there back in 1991, described it as ‘a legendary place’, and it is clear that this remains a highly valued creative and social space for the community of Livingston and the skating and biking community.

“Through designation, we hope to recognise and protect the best examples of our cultural heritage.”

Skateboarding originated in 1950s California and became popular in Scotland during the later 1970s.

This is when skateboarder Kenny Omond first approached Livingston Development Corporation with the idea for a skatepark in Livingston.

Architect Iain Urquhart designed the park after extensive study of US skateparks and conversations with skateboarders.

As a result, the skatepark is an authentic reflection of the skate culture of the 1970-1980s.

Concrete skateparks from the era are now increasingly rare across the UK as many have been filled in or demolished.

The Livi Skatepark is also an important example of public enterprise architecture, built to serve the postwar New Town.

Omond designed an extension to the skatepark in 1992, a time when very few skateparks were being built.

Parsons added: “Listing Scotland’s oldest skatepark helps demonstrate the variety of our historic environment and especially the important role the built environment of the late 20th century structure has in telling Scotland’s story.”

Rick Curran, Secretary at Skateboard Scotland, said: “Livi is a beloved, world-renowned skatepark recognised by many for its ground-breaking design, but at 43 years old it is showing considerable signs of age, so we are extremely keen to see the necessary steps taken to ensure this essence is protected for future generations through sympathetic, considered stabilisation and restoration.

“We want to thank the skate community for the huge amount of feedback and information they provided to Historic Environment Scotland as part of the survey last year which has helped them to consider and award this designation.”

Lawrence Fitzpatrick, Leader of West Lothian Council, added: “I’m absolutely delighted that Livingston Skate Park has been granted B listed status.

“Thanks to everyone in the local and skating communities who showed their support for the unique facility during the consultation process.

“As the custodians of Livingston Skate Park, we are well aware of the importance of the park, and adding it to the list of Scotland’s significant structures will help ensure it is protected for future generations.”

Photos courtesy of HES



Livingston Skate Park.

