

**Conservation Area Consent
at
Raeburn House Hotel
112 Raeburn Place
Edinburgh
EH4 1HG**

**Development Quality Sub-Committee
of the Planning Committee**

Proposal: Demolition of existing sports clubhouse and ancillary buildings, outbuildings and squash courts to Portgower Place, non-original extensions to rear of Raeburn House Hotel, sections of boundary wall to Portgower Place.

Applicant: The Edinburgh Academical Sports Club + Festival Inns Ltd.

Reference No: 03/03864/CON

1 Purpose of report

To recommend that the application be **GRANTED** subject to;

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than five years from the date of this consent.
2. The application shall be referred to the Scottish Ministers prior to determination.
3. No demolition shall take place until the contract for the new development has been let, and written evidence of this has been made available to and accepted in writing by the Head of Planning & Strategy.

Reasons

1. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.
 2. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.
 3. In order to safeguard the character of the conservation area.
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2 Main report

Site description

The application site involves two separate planning units; the Raeburn House Hotel and the Edinburgh Academicals Sports Grounds.

The Raeburn House Hotel is a fully licensed hotel, an original villa with extensions and outdoor sitting area. The building is category B listed. Only part of the sports grounds are within the site - a strip running from the hotel grounds, running the length of Portgower Place. This area includes the Edinburgh Academicals Clubhouse, a two-storey building of limited architectural merit (not listed), and some open space (not playing pitches).

The site is within the Inverleith Conservation Area.

Site history

December 2002: Planning permission, listed building consent and conservation area consent refused for extension to existing hotel and new members clubhouse (all to operate with hotel liquor licence) (as amended) (references 01/01432/FUL, LBC and CON).

Planning permission was refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy CD2, in respect of Listed Buildings, as the scale, design and lack of architectural quality of the new build design does not respect the setting or architectural integrity of the category B listed building.
2. The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy CD5, in respect of Conservation Areas - Redevelopment, as the inappropriate scale and lack of architectural quality of the new works would be detrimental to the spatial and visual character and appearance of the conservation area

3. The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy H11, in respect of Housing Amenity, as the intensification of commercial leisure uses on the site will result in increased noise and activity to the detriment of neighbouring residential amenity, particularly in the late evening.
4. The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy L2, in respect of Commercial Leisure Uses, as the scale and intensity of commercial leisure activity is at odds with the residential character of the area and will result in the loss of residential amenity by virtue of increased noise and activity, particularly in the late evening.

Listed Building Consent was refused for the following reason:

The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policy CD2, in respect of Listed Buildings, as the scale and design of the alterations are detrimental to the architectural integrity of the B listed building.

Conservation Area Consent was refused for the following reason:

The proposal is contrary to Central Edinburgh Local Plan Policies CD4 and CD5, in respect of Conservation Areas, as it would result in the loss of the pavilion building, which contributes to the character of the area and does not propose replacements that preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

These applications are now the subject of an appeal, which is intended to be heard at a Public Inquiry. However, the appeal has been sisted, pending the consideration of this application.

March 2004: Listed building consent granted for demolition of non-original extensions to rear of hotel, erect single storey extension, reinstate boundary wall and internal alterations (reference 03/03864/LBC).

An associated application for planning permission for the redevelopment of the hotel and clubhouse is considered under a separate report.

Development

The application involves the demolition of the unlisted buildings on the site. These are the pavilion buildings to the rear of the hotel. The extensions to the hotel are not buildings in their own right and do not, therefore, require conservation area consent. The original clubhouse building appears to have been rather domestic in character and has been substantially altered and extended in modern times.

Consultations

No consultations undertaken.

Representations

The application was advertised on 21 November 2003.

Whilst letters of representation were received which referred to the reference number for this Conservation Area Consent, none of the letters contained any comments regarding the demolition of the unlisted buildings at the site and are therefore not material. The Raeburn Community Association, in their letter of representation, did, however point out that it would not be appropriate to grant Conservation Area Consent as the redevelopment proposals are unacceptable.

Policy

CENTRAL EDINBURGH LOCAL PLAN

The site is within an area allocated for housing and compatible uses. The Raeburn Place frontage lies within the Stockbridge District Shopping Centre.

Relevant Policies:

Policy CD4 (CONSERVATION AREAS) requires that developments in a conservation area retain all features which contribute to the area's character and appearance.

Policy CD5 (CONSERVATION AREAS - REDEVELOPMENT) sets out the criteria against which new development in conservation areas will be assessed, and seeks to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

DETERMINING ISSUES

The determining issues are:

- Do the proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area? there being a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission of this is not the case;
- Do the proposals comply with the development plan?
- If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for not approving them?
- If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling reasons for approving them?

ASSESSMENT

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether the demolition of the buildings is acceptable and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The buildings on site are modern and unattractive, with a variety of additions to the original clubhouse having taken place over the years. They are not considered to be of any architectural merit and do not currently contribute positively to the character or appearance of the conservation area in visual terms. However, the pavilion buildings are a feature of the spatial character of the area, defining the use of the playing fields and breaking the vista between the rugby and cricket grounds. Their removal is, therefore, considered acceptable provided a suitable replacement is proposed.

The proposals for planning permission for the redevelopment of the site are considered acceptable. However, it would be inappropriate to consider demolition of the existing buildings without an appropriate replacement, therefore a condition is attached requiring contracts to be let for the new development prior to demolitions commencing.

It is recommended that the Committee approves this application subject to the conditions stated.

Alan Henderson

Alan Henderson
Head of Planning and Strategy

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Ward affected 16 -Dean

Local Plan Central Edinburgh Local Plan

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision** Housing and Compatible Uses

File

Date registered 5 November 2003

**Drawing numbers/
Scheme** 07