

**Listed Building Consent Application
at
Shrub Place
Edinburgh**

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

Proposal: Retention, alteration and partial demolition of listed buildings as part of new urban village development
Applicant: George Wimpey East Scotland Ltd.
Reference No: 02/04595/LBC

1 Purpose of report

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

Conditions

1. The works 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. A detailed specification, including trade names where appropriate, of all the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Strategy before work is commenced on site;
Note: samples of the materials may be required.
4. Details of reduction in height of brick gables and new railings shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Strategy before work is commenced on site.

5. A fully detailed condition survey of remaining listed buildings shall be undertaken. This shall include details of all architectural features such as windows, doors, clerestories, plasterwork and timberwork. Only those features which are beyond repair or cannot be kept because of other constraints shall be removed from the buildings. Details of any new features shall be subject to the further written approval of the Head of Planning and Strategy before work commences on site.
6. The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland shall be given access to the site, at any reasonable time in a period of at least three months from the date of this consent, for the purposes of recording the building, structure or other item of interest.

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 enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
4. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
5. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
6. In order to safeguard the interests of archaeological heritage.

2 Main report

Site description

This application relates to the listed buildings on the site of the former LRT engineering works in Shrub Place on the west side of Leith Walk. The listed buildings are located on the back half of the site, adjacent to Dryden Street, and consist of early tramway workshops and power station and later brick tram sheds. They are category B listed (Broughton Ward).

The oldest buildings were built in 1898 and extended out later, probably in 1920s. The original buildings are red brick with sandstone bands and have a number of interesting features such as large round arched recessed openings, shaped pediments and clerestory with circular windows. Internally, there is a grand painted brick interior with recesses reading through from the exterior arches and an exposed steel roof construction with a clerestory band. The chimney is included in the listing although it was reduced in height around 1975. The later buff brick tramsheds have tripartite concrete gables to the railway and brick gables to the Shaw's Colonies.

Site history

14 August 2002 - an application to redevelop the site to form 355 dwellings and 3 commercial units(as amended to 314 units) was refused by the Development Quality Sub-Committee, contrary to the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Strategy(01/00509/FUL). An appeal is currently in progress.

2 October 2002 - the parallel application for listed building consent was continued by the Committee as it felt approval could prejudice the final outcome of any planning permission.

28 November 2002 - A statement of design principles for the site was approved by the Planning Committee.

Development

This a new, revised application for the partial demolition and alteration of the listed buildings on the site, as part of its redevelopment to form a new urban village. The parallel application for planning permission assesses the new build and the use issues of the development.

This application is similar to that continued by the Committee on 2 October 2002 in that it proposes the demolition of the later brick tram sheds, an early recessed block and the concrete gables to the railway. The main changes relate to the powerhouse, which will now be converted to 18 flats, rather than 20, and the brick gables to Shaw's Colonies which will now be reduced in height.

The demolition of the recessed block will allow ramped access to be formed into the basement car park and can be justified because it allows the re-instatement of the south west elevation of the power house. The later infill between the powerhouse and the tram shed will be removed and new elevations formed. Typically, the external proposals involve new timber windows, including decorative clerestory windows, new slates on roof, new brick infill and new metal railings.

The chimney stack is proposed for retention. The removal of the remaining tramsheds around the chimney will include the loss of the concrete tripartite windows to the railway. A piazza will be formed around the chimney.

The proposals now include the lowering of the brick gables to the Colonies and railings erected on top.

Internally, the proposals for the south block involve the retention of a large central spine in the middle of the building. The accommodation will be set behind new walls with a staircase on either side giving access to the upper floors. The central spine is 12m wide and the original roof will be visible from this area. The remainder of the interior will be boxed in with walls and ceilings to form the flats on four floors. In the north block one floor will be inserted and 4 flats formed on each floor.

Parking for the majority of the flats will be in the underground car park.

Consultations

No consultations undertaken.

Representations

4 letters have been received, 3 objecting and 1 non-material. Grounds of objection relate to;

- conversion of listed power station and tramsheds into flats and impact this has on a surviving part of Edinburgh's transport history
- knocking down gables destroys part of Leith's history and would be detrimental to the adjacent listed buildings
- other grounds relate to planning issues

Policy

The site is identified for Business/Industry in the North East Edinburgh Local Plan. The frontage (although not having any buildings) is within the recent extension to Leith Conservation Area. The frontage faces a Secondary Retail Frontage and a Route Safeguarded for Light Rail Transport System.

In the approved Proposed Alteration to the local plan (March 2001), the entire site is redesignated Housing and Compatible Uses (as are all sites on this side of the railway line in this vicinity).

Relevant Policies:

Policy E18 (LISTED BUILDINGS) sets out criteria for assessing proposals affecting a listed building and its setting, including alterations, extensions and changes of use.

Non-statutory guidelines 'ALTERATIONS TO LISTED BUILDINGS' provide general guidance for assessing proposals for both internal and external alterations.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Determining Issues

The determining issues are:

- Do the proposals preserve the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses? If they do not, there is a presumption against the granting of consent.
- 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 the determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether the proposals have an adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

The buildings on this site are listed not only for their architectural interest in some cases, but also for their contribution to the development of the municipal transport system within Edinburgh, and therefore have significant historical and social importance. The whole site is to be redeveloped from Leith walk to Dryden street, but it is important that this takes account of the special interest of the listed buildings and their setting.

The extent of demolition is largely acceptable. It is regrettable that the tripartite gables to the railway are to be removed, but their retention would make redevelopment difficult in this area. The reduction in height of the brick gables to the Colonies is acceptable. Whilst they are prominent features, they do in fact have a noticeable kink at a central point and they then are behind a fronting brick wall. This makes them difficult to fully retain and it is envisaged that they will be reduced and topped with features similar to existing. The buff brick tramsheds have no features of interest internally. Retention of the gables would involve significant propping as the roof and frame of the tramshed basically hold up the gables.

The main point of contention is the extent of the works to the remaining red brick sheds with fine interiors. Under these current proposals original roofs, windows, doors and clerestories would be lost and be replaced with modern equivalents to satisfy modern housing requirements and to meet the building regulations. It may be that many of these features can be retained and a full condition survey will be required to assess this. Full details will also be required of any replacement features.

Internally, an attempt has been made to keep some of the sense of space and to keep some of the features visible, although it is accepted that the interior character will change significantly.

In conclusion, whilst it is clear that the character of these buildings will be significantly changed, the proposals give them a new use compatible with the whole site. Provided sufficient control is exercised to retain original fabric and ensure the new detailing is correct, this is considered to be acceptable.

The works comply with the development plan and do not adversely affect the character of the listed buildings.

There are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

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

Alan Henderson

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Ward affected 19 -Broughton

Local Plan North East Edinburgh Local Plan

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision** Business/Industry

File

Date registered 23 December 2002

**Drawing numbers/
Scheme** 014535-44/47-59, 7379-80
Scheme 2