

**Full Planning Application  
at  
4 Brunswick Street  
Edinburgh  
EH7 5JD**

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

**Proposal:** Convert ex offices into 40 flats (as amended)  
**Applicant:** Sundial Properties Ltd.  
**Reference No:** 03/03169/FUL

**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. Flatted accommodation: The design and installation of the lifts shall be such that any associated noise complies with NR20 when measured within any nearby living apartment, and no structure borne vibration is perceptible within any nearby living apartment.
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. A fully detailed landscape plan, including details of all hard and soft surface and boundary treatments and all planting, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Strategy before work is commenced on site.

5. The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented within six months of the completion of the development, and thereafter shall be maintained by the applicants and/or their successors to the entire satisfaction of the planning authority; maintenance shall include the replacement of plant stock which fails to survive, for whatever reason, as often as is required to ensure the establishment of the approved landscaping scheme.
6. Secure cycle parking shall be provided within the underbuild car parking area at a level of at least one per flatted dwelling.
7. 4 visitor-parking spaces to be available at all times.

### **Reasons**

1. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.
  2. In order to protect the amenity of the occupiers of the development.
  3. In order to enable the Head of Planning & Strategy 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 ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly established on site.
  6. In order to ensure adequate cycle parking.
  7. In order to safeguard the interests of road safety.
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## **2 Main report**

### **Site description**

The site lies on the east side of Brunswick Street and extends to meet Windsor Street Lane. The existing building faces Brunswick Street and extends between traditional stone tenements at number 2 and 42 Brunswick Street. To the rear of the site lies a number of single storey lock-ups and mews style buildings. Vehicular access to the site is through a pend on Montgomery Street.

The site lies within the New Town Conservation Area. There are a number of statutory listed buildings in the surrounding area.

## **Site history**

1970s office building formerly occupied by Standard Life.

15.09.98 consent granted for the erection of a smoking shelter.

## **Development**

### Scheme 1:

Conversion of existing office into 40 dwellings including the minor alterations to elevations, slots in front roof plane and additional accommodation on roof.

### Scheme 2:

The proposal has been amended to accommodate 39 units incorporating a greater mix of unit type. The flats range in size from 40m<sup>2</sup> to 255m<sup>2</sup> including 10 one bedroom flats and 18 flats over 100m<sup>2</sup>. Six of the flats are to be main door, accessed off Brunswick Street. A large number of duplex flats are also incorporated.

The front elevation alterations include:

1. The proposed roof slot has been removed. The existing dormers will be removed and replaced with conservation style rooflights.
2. Insertion of four additional window bays.
3. Create new door openings to visually recreate the proportions of houses.
4. The addition of balconies at first floor level.
5. Adding cast iron downpipes to delineate the houses.
6. Raising the parapet above the palace block.
7. Introduce traditional astragaled windows.
8. Roof additions, setback from facade and form individual pods.

The rear elevation alterations include:

1. The removal of the upper floor of the existing rear outshoot.
2. Alterations to the fenestration, particularly on the outshoot.

Internally, scheme 2 has been amended to provide residents with a direct link from the front entrance, through a winter garden, to the rear open space. The rear open space now incorporates a significantly greater area of amenity space through the reduction in the amount of road. Two common roof terraces have been added.

## **Consultations**

### **Education**

There is spare capacity available in the catchment schools for the development of this site. Accordingly, there is no objections to development of this site.

## **Transport**

Parking spaces to be available for visitors at all times.

## **Environmental and Consumer Services**

The design and installation and operation of the passenger lifts shall be such that any associated noise complies with NR20 when measured within any nearby living apartment, and no structure borne vibration is perceptible within any nearby living apartment.

## **Representations**

This application was advertised on 5.9.03. One letter of objection was received. The issues raised are:

1. Increased congestion in surrounding area.
2. Existing trees should be retained.
3. Mix of unit type important.

## **Policy**

The Central Edinburgh Local Plan places the site within a Housing and Compatible Uses policy area.

### Relevant Policies:

Policy H1 (HOUSING DEVELOPMENT) encourages the provision of new residential accommodation, in conjunction with other land uses if necessary to maintain the mixed use character, its locality, and sets out criteria for assessing development proposals in predominantly residential areas.

Policy H7 (HOUSING DIVERSITY) sets out policy objectives for achieving a mix of house types and sizes in new developments.

Policy CD10 (NEW DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVE) encourages new development of the highest possible architectural and urban quality.

Policy CD11 (NEW DEVELOPMENT - GENERAL) sets out general design requirements for new development, and requires particular attention to be paid to main approach roads to the city centre.

Policy CD17 (MATERIALS) sets out requirements for materials in new developments and seeks a greater use of stone, roofing slate and other traditional materials in appropriate cases.

Policy T8 (CYCLE PARKING) requires new development to provide cycle parking facilities in accordance with agreed standards and on suitable sites to contribute to the network of safe routes.

Policy T15 (PRIVATE CAR PARKING) requires all new development to comply with car parking standards set out in the Development Control Handbook, including provision for people with disabilities, and requires car parking to be designed to minimise visual intrusion.

Non-statutory guidelines 'DAYLIGHTING, PRIVACY AND SUNLIGHT' set criteria for assessing proposals in relation to these issues.

Non-statutory guidelines on 'PARKING STANDARDS' set the requirements for parking provision in developments.

Non-statutory guidelines on 'OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT' set the required standards for open space provision.

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.

Policy CD2 (LISTED BUILDINGS) sets out criteria for assessing proposals affecting listed buildings and seeks to safeguard their character and setting.

### **3 Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **Determining Issues**

The determining issues are:

- Do the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area? There being a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission if this is not the case.
- Do the proposals preserve the listed building or its setting or any features of special or historic interest? There being a strong presumption against granting permission if they do not.
- 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 (a) the residential use is acceptable in this location, (b) the scale and design of the proposals are acceptable in terms of their relationship to and impact on adjacent listed buildings and the character and appearance of the conservation area, (c) the proposals will have any detrimental impact on residential amenity through overshadowing, loss of privacy, loss of daylight or increased noise and activity, and (d) there are any implications for road safety.

a) The residential use is in accordance with the Development Plan and represents a sustainable reuse of this building, incorporating a mix of unit size which will supplement the housing mix in this area.

The existing site incorporates extensive areas of hard surfacing. The revised scheme incorporates a single vehicular access to the underbuild car park, facilitating a significant increase to the area of garden ground (32% of site). All residents have good access to this space, from the main foyer and two access stairs. In addition to the ground level open space two rooftop terraces are provided for the use of all residents. The four top floor flats have private roof top terraces. A condition is required to ensure a comprehensive landscaping plan is submitted and implemented.

The proposal has been amended to increase the amount of dual aspect flats. While there are a small number of single aspect flats the majority of these are duplex units with accommodation on two levels. Each of these units has either eight or ten windows ensuring that the apartments have excellent natural daylight. The single bedroom flats, located within the rear outshoot, have windows located on three elevations providing adequate daylight.

The existing structure and circulation cores place significant constraints on the reuse of this building. The existing three cores are reused and provide access to two flats on each floor. To eliminate dual aspect units within this existing structure would reduce the size of the flats, and result in the end cores only providing access to one flat on each floor. This would be a particularly unsustainable reuse of the building by creating excessive circulation space in relation to the amount of accommodation created. All flats have access to high levels of external amenity space and private roof terracing. The revised scheme minimises single aspect units, through careful planning, and creates generous flats with high overall levels of amenity. Therefore an exception to the Daylighting, Sunlight and Privacy guideline is acceptable in this case.

The revised design ensures that the residents of the remaining flats will benefit from an acceptable level of internal and external amenity, and therefore residential use is acceptable in this location.

b) The Central Edinburgh Local Plan describes the New Town Conservation Area as:

*A planned urban concept of European significance, the New Town has an overriding character of Georgian formality. The First New Town, built to James Craig's 1767 plan, has experienced significant redevelopment, while the Second, Third and Fourth New Towns, which were laid out on estates to the north, east and west retain most of their original buildings. Stone built terrace houses and tenements, built to the highest standards, overlook communal private gardens; to the rear are lanes with mews buildings, many of which are now in housing use. The importance of the area therefore lies in the formal plan layout of buildings, streets, mews and gardens and in the quality of the buildings themselves. Many of the New Town's buildings are listed category 'A' of national importance and the area contains some of the city's finest interiors.*

The alterations to the existing elevations, on Brunswick street, will subtly enhance the existing facade to reflect more of the rhythm of the adjoining buildings. The revised scheme introduces a number of doors at ground floor level, which will strengthen the appearance of a series of buildings, breaking up the mass of the existing office. In conjunction with this the strengthened cornice, over the palace façade, the introduction of first floor railings and the removal of the dormers will result in an enhanced streetscene and a more domestic appearance. The proposed doorways and decorative railing successfully introduce a hierarchy to the elevation. The doorways reflect the traditional point of access on adjoining properties and will create a more vibrant pedestrian realm.

The removal of the upper floor of the rear outshoot will improve the relationship between the rear of the building and the more modest buildings to the rear. The rear elevation has been further enhanced by the introduction of rooftop accommodation and additional fenestration, all of which combine to break up the building mass. While the rooftop accommodation will increase the absolute height of the building it is broken up and well setback (5m) from the front of the building. The section illustrates that only a small element of this accommodation will be visible from the public realm. The proposed elevational alterations, and the removal of the upper floor of the rear outshoot, represent a significant improvement, which will enhance the wider area.

The proposals enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation area as a whole and the setting of surrounding listed buildings.

c) The proposed dwellings will not result in any additional overlooking to neighbouring dwellings. The upper floor terraces will create an opportunity to overlook neighbouring properties, however, the terraces are no closer than existing windows and are considered to represent a minimal, and acceptable level of overlooking.

d) The existing vehicular access will be used to provide access for all car parking. The amount of car parking is slightly reduced and the number of vehicle movements is likely to be reduced with the use of the building changing to residential.

The development incorporates 100% residential car parking in accordance with the adopted guidelines. The revised proposal incorporates cycle within the lower ground floor.

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed residential development is acceptable in this location, that the scale and design of the proposals respects the surrounding listed buildings and preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area, does not result in an undue impact on residential amenity and has no implications for road safety.

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

Alan Henderson

**Alan Henderson**  
Head of Planning and Strategy

**Contact/Tel** Bruce Nicolson on 0131 529 3516 (FAX 529 3717)

**Ward affected** 20 -Calton

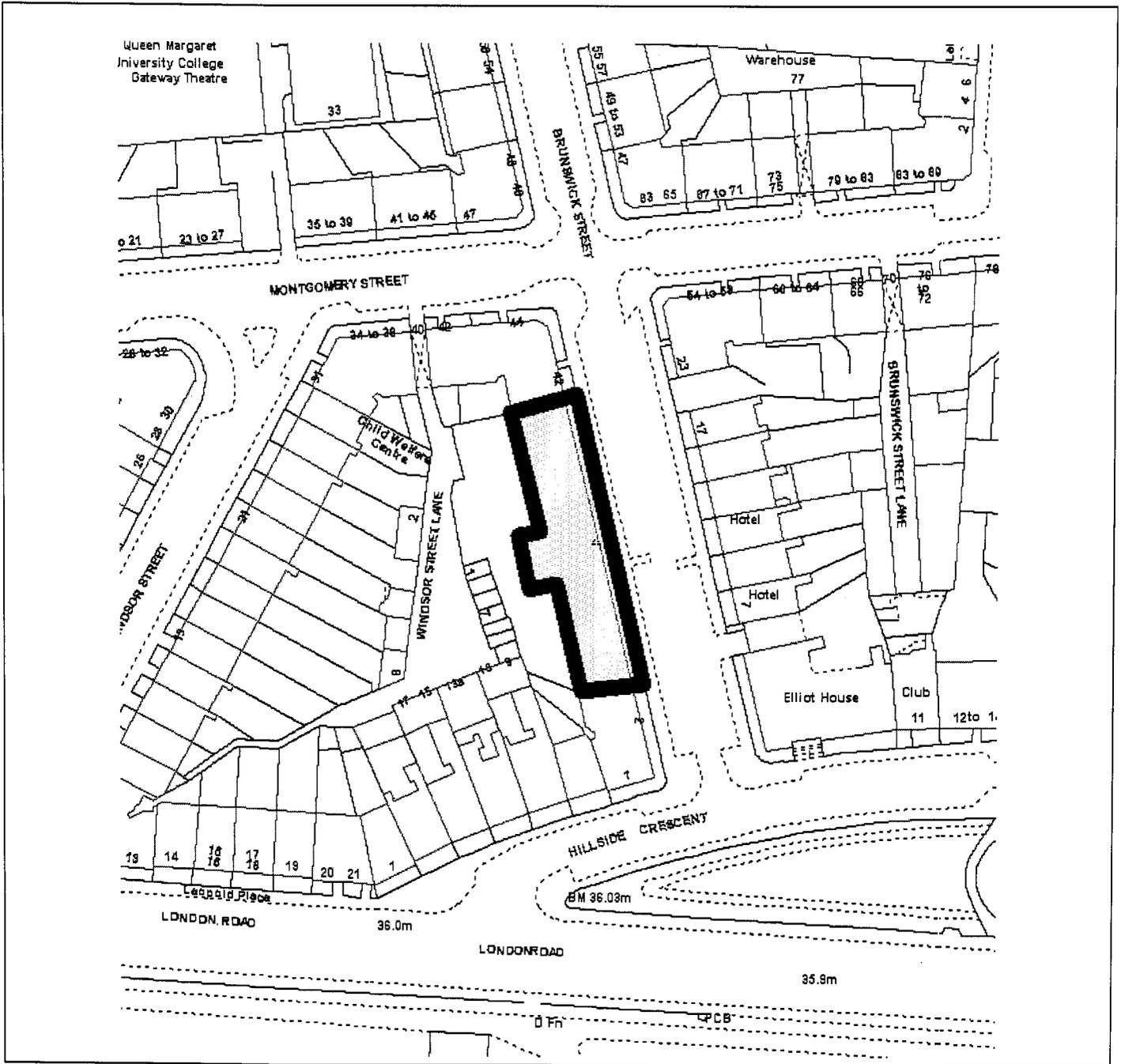
**Local Plan** Central Edinburgh

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

**File**

**Date registered** 26 August 2003

**Drawing numbers/  
Scheme** 01,10-17



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# **PLANNING APPLICATION**

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<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Convert ex offices into 40 flats (as amended)</b>		
<b>Application number:</b>	<b>03/03169/FUL</b>	<b>WARD</b>	<b>20- Calton</b>
<b>THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL</b>			
<b>THE CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT- PLANNING &amp; STRATEGY</b>			