

Full Planning Application
at
Former GPO Building
2-4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3BG

Development Quality Sub-Committee
of the Planning Committee

Proposal: **Modification of condition 6 attached to full planning permission 01/01869/FUL dated 21-11-01, to read "original fenestration on the main facades shall be refurbished and retained where condition and health and safety considerations permit". (Install 219 new windows and restore 41).**

Applicant: Castlemore Securities Ltd.

Reference No: 04/01772/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.

Reasons

1. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.

NB This consent is for planning permission only. Work must not begin until other necessary consents, e.g. listed building consent, have been obtained.

2 Main report

Site description

The application property is the former G.P.O. building on the corner of Waterloo Place and North Bridge. The rear of the building backs onto the railway and Calton Road at a lower level. The building is four storeys to the front and seven storeys to the rear. The main core of the building is currently void, but original rooms related to the external facade still exist, accessed by a period stair well to the west side of the building.

The building is category 'A' listed, designed by Robert Matheson in 1861 (Item 119), and is in the New Town Conservation Area and the World Heritage Site.

Site history

March 1993 - Consents were granted for the redevelopment of the G.P.O. building as office accommodation. Proposals included the retention of the existing facades and a significant roof extension. Works were never begun on site, therefore the consent has lapsed (2017/92).

June 1993 - Planning permission granted to erect a new doorway entrance to the telephone/ service area (93/00017).

June 1998 - Consents were granted for the renewal of the consent granted in March 1993, for offices. This scheme was amended to take into account new policies in the adopted Central Edinburgh Local Plan and the designation of the World Heritage Site. The approved scheme included significant changes to the roofing profile, largely containing the development within the existing building envelope, to preserve the historic skyline (98/410).

May 2000 - Planning permission and listed building consent granted for the demolition of the existing G.P.O. interior, retention of the listed facades and development for 5 star hotel accommodation (99/2190).

July 2001 - Planning and listed building consent granted to retain the existing facades and replace the interior floor layout with a new office design (01/1869/FUL/LBC). Condition 7 of the planning consent and condition 6 of the listed building consent required "All original fenestration on the main facades shall be refurbished and retained."

Reasons: "In order to retain and/or protect important elements of the existing character and amenity of the site." and "In the interests of the character of the listed building."

Development

The application is for the modification of a previous consent condition 7, for the retention and refurbishment of all the timber windows, to read "Original fenestration on the main facades shall be refurbished and retained where condition and health and safety considerations permit".

The applicants indicate 41 windows are capable of refurbishment and retention, the balance of some 219 are to be replaced.

Supporting Statement

A report indicating a condition survey of all the windows before removal has been submitted. This document and covering letter are available in the Party Group Rooms.

Consultations

Historic Scotland

It is not clear from the documentation what the reason is for the variation. Historic Scotland can only comment that the original fenestration should be repaired and conserved.

Further comment 31 Aug 2004:-

The HBI would not sustain an objection to the proposed works, but it is surprised at the extent of window replacement.

Representations

The application was not advertised. No representations have been received.

Policy

The site is allocated as Office Core in the Central Edinburgh Local Plan.

Relevant Policies:

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

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.

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 CD19 (BUILDING ALTERATIONS) sets out requirements for the design, form, materials and positioning of alterations and extensions.

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

Non-statutory guidelines on 'WINDOW ALTERATIONS' supplement local plan conservation and design policies, providing additional guidance on window alterations.

3 Conclusions and Recommendations

DETERMINING ISSUES

The determining issues are:

- do the proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area? If they do, there is a strong presumption against the granting of permission;
- 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 permission. For the purposes of this issue, "preserve", in relation to a building, means preserve it either in its existing state or subject only to such alterations or extensions as can be carried out without serious detriment to its character;
- 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:

- a) whether the proposals have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area;
 - b) whether the proposals have an adverse impact on the building, or its setting;
 - c) whether the design and materials are acceptable;
- a) The character of the New Town Conservation Area is described in the Central Edinburgh Local Plan as follows:-

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 application is now partly in retrospect and the majority of the windows have been replaced with new frames. These are single glazed with exactly the same profiles of frames as the original. Their design and appearance is acceptable.

The new windows do not adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area.

b) The new windows look exactly like the original windows, have the same reflective qualities and fine glazing bars and therefore do not have any adverse affect on the building, or its setting.

c) The design of the windows replicates the original windows in design, profile and materials.

The design and materials are acceptable.

Historic Scotland has no objection to the proposed window changes and therefore there is no necessity to refer the application to this organisation.

The proposals comply with the development plan and non-statutory policies, have no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the conservation area, the building or its setting and are of an acceptable design.

There are no other material planning considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

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


11 **Alan Henderson**
Head of Planning and Strategy

Contact/tel Duncan Robertson on 0131 529 3560 (FAX 529 3717)

Ward affected 34 -Holyrood

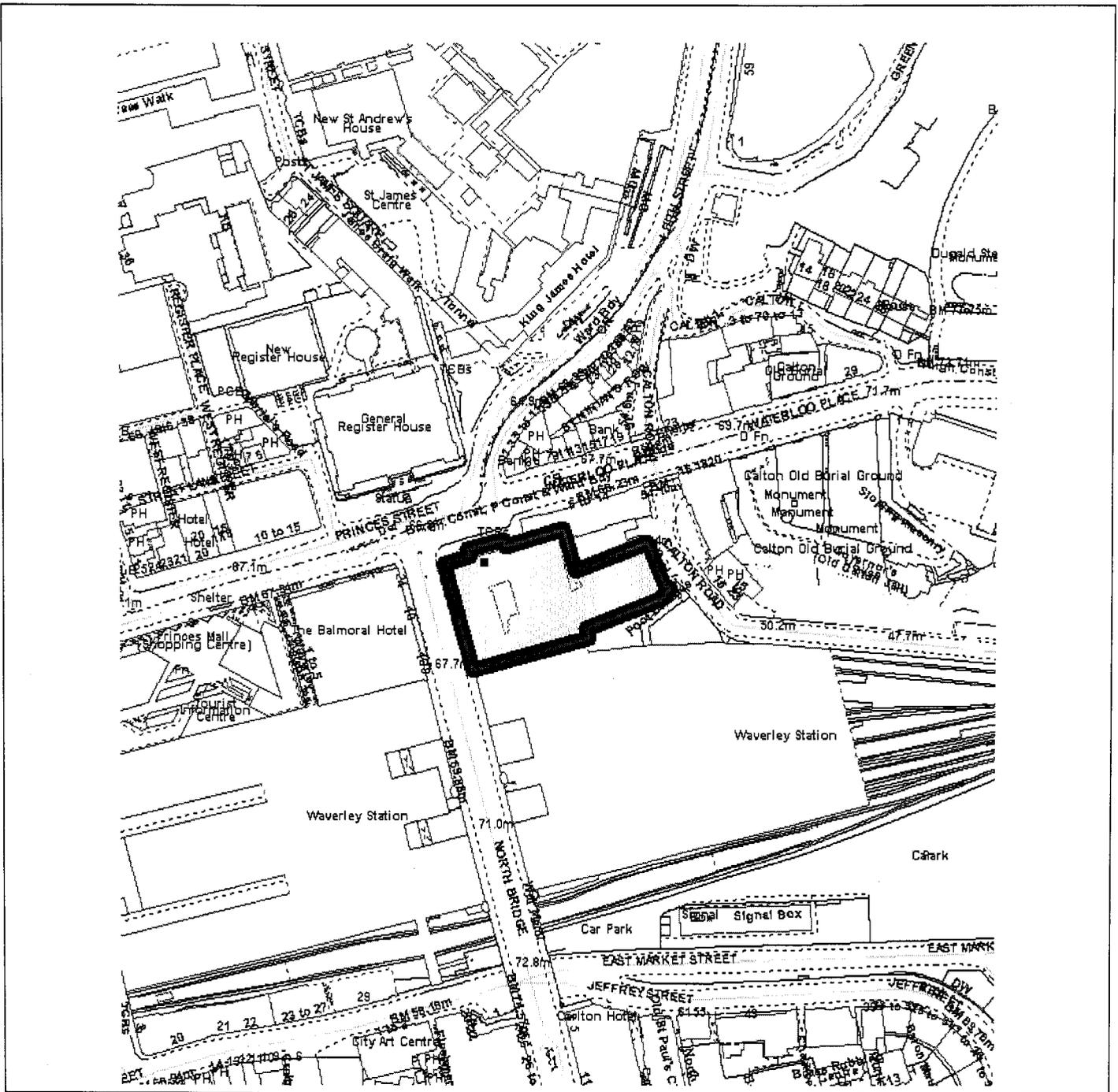
Local Plan Central Edinburgh

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision** Office Core

File A/F

Date registered 5 June 2004

**Drawing numbers/
Scheme** 01-04
Scheme 1



Reproduction from the Ordnance Survey mapping with permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence Number 100023420 The City of Edinburgh Council 2004.

PLANNING APPLICATION

Address	Former GPO Building, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1		
Proposal	Modification of condition 6 attached to full planning permission 01/01869/FUL dated 21-11-01, to read "original		
Application number:	04/01772/FUL	WARD	34- Holyrood

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL
 THE CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT- PLANNING & STRATEGY