

**Listed Building Consent Application
at
Former GPO Building
2-4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh
EH1 3BG**

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

Proposal: Modification of condition 7 attached to listed building consent 01/01869/LBC 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/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.

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.

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 (6) 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

No consultations undertaken.

Representations

The application was advertised on the 18 June 2004. 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 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 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 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. The design of the new windows replicates the original windows in design, profile and materials. 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.

The majority of the windows are in the peripheral atrium area which is situated between the outer walls and the new inner glazed office core, where they cannot be reached from floor level. Thus, they have to be low maintenance and hence the use of new windows in most cases.

The applicant's survey indicates that that only 41 out of 260 window units were recoverable, with only minor repairs necessary. The remainder have components broken requiring major repair or have parts that could not be removed. Given the difficulty in maintaining the windows, the limited guarantee that the contractor could give to any refurbished unit and the fact that the building is a retained facade without any original core, the use of replica windows in the majority is acceptable.

The proposals comply with the development plan and non-statutory policies, have no adverse effect on the character of the listed building.

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.


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Ward affected 34 -Holyrood

Local Plan Central Edinburgh

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision** Office Core

File A/F

Date registered 4 June 2004

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