

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 6 November 2013

**Application for Planning Permission 13/02490/FUL
At 8 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh, EH2 4RP
Change of use from vacant storage of a shop and residential
accommodation to a hostel (class 7)**

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| Item number | 4.7 |
| Report number | |
| Wards | A11 - City Centre |

Links

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| Policies and guidance for this application | LPC, CITE4, CITE6, CITEM5, CITH6, NSG, NSBUS, NSLBCA, OTH, CRPNEW, |
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Executive summary

Application for Planning Permission 13/02490/FUL At 8 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh, EH2 4RP Change of use from vacant storage of a shop and residential accommodation to a hostel (class 7)

Summary

The proposals comply with the development plan and are acceptable in this location. They will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and the character and setting of the listed building. There will be no detrimental impact on neighbouring residential amenity or infrastructure or road safety. Public comments have been noted and there is no impact on equalities or human rights. There are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below (in section 3 of the main report).

Financial impact

The application is subject to a legal agreement for developer contributions.

Equalities impact

The application has been assessed and has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

Sustainability impact

The reuse of the existing historic building is inherently sustainable and the hostel's proximity to bus and tram links reduce the need for visitors to use private cars.

Consultation and engagement

Pre-Application Process

There is no pre-application process history.

Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

The application was advertised on 08.07.2013 and two letters of representation have been received. These included one letter of objection from a member of the public and one letter of comment from the West End Community Council. The letters of representation raised the following non-material matters:

- objections to the operator
- the internal arrangements
- the Shandwick Place elevation stonework.

The West End Community Council has commented that it is not clear where the on-site staffing will be located.

A full assessment of the representations can be found in the main report in the Assessment Section.

Background reading / external references

- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)

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1. Background

1.1 Site description

The application relates to the first, second and third floors above a retail unit on the north side of Shandwick Place and immediately adjacent to the corner unit on Shandwick Place and Queensferry Street. The current use of the building is as storage for the retail unit below, and two residential units. It has been vacant for a number of years

The building was designed by Robert Paterson and built in 1880 and was C listed on 22/07/09 (Ref. 51342)

The site is located within the World Heritage Site.

This property is located within the New Town Conservation Area.

1.2 Site History

27.05.2011- Planning consent refused for alterations and part change of use of existing building to form 3 no new flats at first and second floors and retain 2no existing flats at third floor level. (Application: 11/01095/FUL) The application was refused because the proposals did not provide adequate residential amenity for the potential occupants of the flats.

30.05.2011 - Listed Building consent approved for internal works relating to above application (Application: 11/01095/LBC)

13.08.2013 – Consent granted to listed building consent application that is concurrent to this current planning application and for internal alterations to create holiday hostel on 3 floors (Application: 11/01095/LBC)

2. Main report

2.1 Description Of The Proposal

This application proposes a change of use to hostel.

The hostel will provide a communal lounge, ten bedrooms and a kitchen for the residents. There will be a reception area and a staff kitchen. The drawings have been amended to reflect minor changes internally to satisfy requirements for the related Listed Building Consent application.

Supporting Statement

A supporting statement has been submitted which describes how it will be operated and that it will be staffed on a 24 hour basis. This document is available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services.

2.2 Determining Issues

Do the proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area? If they do, there is a strong presumption against granting of consent.

Do the proposals preserve the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses? If not, there is a presumption against the granting of consent. For the purposes of this issue, preserve, in relation to the 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?

2.3 Assessment

To address these determining issues, the Committee needs to consider whether:

- a) the proposed use is appropriate in this location;
- b) the proposals will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- c) the proposals will adversely affect the setting of the listed building;
- d) the proposal is detrimental to residential amenity;
- e) there is any impact on infrastructure or road safety;
- f) there are any other material considerations;
- g) the comments have been taken in to consideration; and
- h) there are any equalities of human rights impacts.

- a) The acceptability of the proposed use in this location:

The proposed new use will involve loss of residential units on the third floor. The two units at this level are each single aspect one bedroom flats. The previous application (11/01095/FUL) for residential accommodation on the first and second floors was refused because they did not provide adequate residential amenity. The two existing third floor flats, likewise, do not provide an adequate level of residential amenity because they are limited in terms of aspect and are subject to both street noise to the front and plant noise to the rear. Therefore the loss of these two residential units can be justified.

The city centre location and proximity to public transport and transport links, with no immediate residential neighbours offers an appropriate location for a hostel. As the

previous application for residential use was refused (Application: 11/01095/FUL) because a satisfactory residential environment could not be achieved, a proposal that will get this listed building occupied and into an appropriate use is to be encouraged.

Notwithstanding the information submitted in the supporting statement, planning has no control over the management or staffing associated with the use.

b) The impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area:

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal notes that *Shandwick Place, the western extension of Princes Street, has become a significant retail location with purpose built properties replacing the original Georgian houses.* The presence of the hostel will not have any significant impact on the appearance of the conservation area as it will occupy upper levels of this building and will not necessitate any physical alterations to the exterior. The use will be in character with the bustling character of the city centre and will not be to the detriment of the character or appearance of the conservation area.

c) The impact of the proposals on the setting of the listed building:

There are no physical alterations associated with the exterior of the building and therefore there will be no impact on the setting of the listed building.

d) The impact of the proposals on residential amenity:

It is not appropriate to request a noise impact assessment as the hostel use is not a residential use and the nature of the occupancy and end users is not a planning matter. Such issues would be more appropriately dealt with by the management of the premises. There are no adjacent residential neighbours who may be affected by the proposed hostel use and it is not considered reasonable to expect the applicant to produce a Noise Impact Assessment in this case.

There will be no impact on residential amenity because there are no adjoining residential units.

e) The impact of the proposals on infrastructure and road safety:

The site is adjacent to the new tram line and will benefit from its proximity. A contribution of £12,189.00 to the tram project is requested and the conclusion of a legal agreement is required prior to a decision being granted. Otherwise there will be no impact on road safety.

f) Other material considerations:

There are no other material considerations that outweigh the points discussed above.

g) Public comments:

Material representations -

No material comments were made by the member of the public.

Non-material representations -

Comments relate to the operator and are not relevant to the assessment of this application.

Community Council Comments

Facilities for the staff - this has been clarified in section 2.3a of the assessment where it is stated that planning have no control over the staffing.

h) The impact on human rights and equalities:

There will be no significant impacts on equalities and human rights.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion the proposals comply with the development plan and the use is acceptable in this location. It will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and the character and setting of the listed building. There will be no detrimental impact on neighbouring residential amenity or infrastructure or road safety. There is no impact on equalities or human rights. There are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Subject to the conclusion of a legal agreement for a contribution of £12,189.00 to the tram project, it is recommended that this application be approved.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that this application be Granted subject to the details below

3.2 Conditions/reasons

Conditions:-

Informatives

It should be noted that:

1. Consent shall not be issued until a suitable legal agreement, including those requiring a financial contribution payable to the City of Edinburgh Council, has been concluded in relation to transport infrastructure.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision**

Date registered 3 July 2013

Drawing numbers/Scheme 1, 2, 3a,

Scheme 2

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Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Edinburgh City Local Plan.

Policy Env 4 (Listed Buildings – Alterations & Extensions) identifies the circumstances in which alterations and extensions to listed buildings will be permitted.

Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas Development) sets out criteria for assessing development in conservation areas.

Policy Emp 5 (Hotel Development) sets criteria for assessing sites for hotel development.

Policy Hou 6 (Loss of Housing) identifies the circumstances in which the change of use of an existing dwelling to another use will be permitted.

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

Non-statutory guidelines 'GUIDANCE FOR BUSINESSES' provides guidance for proposals likely to be made on behalf of businesses. It includes food and drink uses, conversion to residential use, changing housing to commercial uses, altering shopfronts and signage and advertisements.

Non-statutory guidelines 'LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS' provides guidance on repairing, altering or extending listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

Other Relevant policy guidance

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that the area is typified by the formal plan layout, spacious stone built terraces, broad streets and an overall classical elegance. The buildings are of a generally consistent three storey and basement scale, with some four storey corner and central pavilions.

Appendix 1

Consultations

Transport

No objections to the application subject to the following condition:

Prior to the issuing of consent the applicant to enter into a suitable legal agreement to make provision for the following:

Contribute the sum of £12,189 towards the Edinburgh Tram project in line with Council Policy. The contribution is based on the COU Hostel 8 beds Zone 1 £34,400 less existing retail 295 sq.m Zone 1 £22,220.

Informative

This application is located on Shandwick Place and on the Greenways and tram corridors. There is no opportunity of parking adjacent to the development because of the waiting and loading regulations but there is a loading bay which could be used for servicing the hostel.

It is anticipated that patrons using this hostel will access it on foot or by taxi.

Environmental Assessment

The application proposes the change of use of retail storage space and ancillary caretaker's accommodation to a hostel. Retail premises are situated below with offices and storage to the east. A club is situated to the west with a public house to the north-east.

Hostels fall under use class 7 and can include long term residents staying within the premises. In this regard, the site is surrounded by a number of noisy operations in the form of an adjacent club directly through the wall to the west and a public house to the north-east. Shandwick Place is also an extremely busy thoroughfare affected by street and traffic noise. Therefore, it is likely that the internal levels of noise affecting the application premises will be high and occur into the early hours of the morning. In addition, should complaints emanate from the hostel residents or hostel operator from music or noise from the club or public house then the operations of these surrounding commercial premises is likely to be compromised. For these reasons, Environmental Assessment has requested that a noise impact assessment be provided which would identify any likely issues of noise concern. The assessment could recommend mitigation measures to address road traffic and street noise and ensure that residents are protected from surrounding noise sources. In addition, the assessment would confirm if the proposal is likely to indirectly impact upon the operations of the surrounding licensed commercial premises. However, a noise impact assessment has not been provided by the applicant.

Therefore, Environmental Assessment is currently not in a position to support the application due to insufficient information being provided in support of the application.

Location Plan



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