

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 15 January 2014

**Application for Planning Permission 13/02287/FUL
At McEwan Hall, 15 Bristo Square, Edinburgh
Refurbishment of existing building with basement level
extension and re-landscaping of adjacent Bristo Square.**

Item number	4.1
Report number	
Wards	A15 - Southside/Newington

Links

<u>Policies and guidance for this application</u>	CITD1, CITD3, CITD5, CITD7, CITE1, CITE3, CITE4, CITE6, CITE8, CITH8, CITT6, CITCA1, CITOS1, NSGESS, NSGD02, NSLBCA, CRPSSI, CRPOLD,
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Executive summary

Application for Planning Permission 13/02287/FUL At McEwan Hall, 15 Bristo Square, Edinburgh Refurbishment of existing building with basement level extension and re-landscaping of adjacent Bristo Square.

Summary

The proposals comply with the development plan and the Edinburgh Planning Guidance and do not adversely affect the setting of the listed buildings or the character and appearance of the conservation areas. The proposals achieve an acceptable quality of design. The proposals do not raise any impacts in respect of road safety, DDA compliance, equalities or human rights.

Recommendations

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

Financial impact

The majority of the application site forms part of the University of Edinburgh's estate with the works being funded through their capital programme. Arrangements for the delivery and implementation of the project have yet to be established and works may impact upon land in the control by the Roads Authority. This may have implications for Council Transportation budgets.

Equalities impact

The application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights. The impacts are identified in the Assessment section of the report.

An Equality and Rights Assessment Summary is available via the Planning and Building Standards On-line service.

No further human rights or equalities impacts have been identified.

Sustainability impact

This application is not subject to the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

Consultation and engagement

Pre-Application Process

The proposals were subject to various pre-application discussions between December 2010 and May 2013, including the Council's Streetscape Working Group on 17 November 2012.

The proposals were also presented to the Council's Urban Design Panel on 28 November 2012. Full details of the response can be found in the consultations section.

Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

One representation has been received from the Cockburn Association and raises the following material issues;-

- Object to the new glazed entrance pavilion, new layout of the square and landscaping.
- Recognise McEwan Hall as one of the most important public buildings in the city and probably the second most important public building in the university estate after Old College. Welcome the university's intention to continue the principal use for which the building was created.
- Generally supportive of the design strategy of the opening up of the basement, the remodelling of Bristo Square and make the building more user friendly to those with disabilities. However, have concerns to how these issues have been addressed and design intentions.
- The proposed sunken circular space and glass entrance pavilion imitating the circular form of the hall is naïve and results in a weak interplay of geometries. The design of the glass entrance pavilion would be intrusive and would compete with the main doors of the hall.
- The proposed layout of the space is an unsatisfactory response to the spatial demands of neighbouring buildings. Approach would create a remote space, away from building entrances where social interaction is found and would be disruptive to diagonal pedestrian routes across the space. Detail of new seating inappropriate and lacks a formal relationship with the square's design.
- Concern regarding the changes to provide ramped access to every space and DDA requirements would still be met where one entrance had ramped access.

Background reading / external references

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

Application for Planning Permission 13/02287/FUL At McEwan Hall, 15 Bristo Square, Edinburgh Refurbishment of existing building with basement level extension and re-landscaping of adjacent Bristo Square.

1. Background

1.1 Site description

McEwan Hall is Category A listed. The building was originally designed by Robert Rowand Anderson in 1875 as part of University Medical School complex, with the design being subsequently revised 1886-87. The listing description describes the building as extensive 3 storey and basement, with double quadrant, being purpose built as part of the university complex in 15th Century renaissance style with fine decorative detailing prominently sited on main thoroughfare. The building is used primarily as a Graduation Hall. Date of listing;- 14 July 1966, Listed Building reference;- 27993

The McEwan Lantern Pillar (Corporation Lamp) is Category B listed. The structure was designed by Robert Rowand Anderson, circa 1890. The listing description identifies a four-stage carved Portland stone tower on 3 convex plan steps with lantern prominently sited in front of McEwan Hall to the south side of Bristo Square. The lantern pillar is a fine example of Victorian commemorative and civic architecture. Date of listing;- 14 July 1966, Listed Building reference;- 27994

Bristo Square represents one of the major civic spaces in the Old Town and World Heritage Site. The area comprises hard landscaping, tree planting with associated walkways and highway. The levels across the site decrease from the north and west towards the south east corner by approximately 2.5 metres.

The application site and wider area of Bristo Square is bounded by tenemental blocks fronting Teviot Place and Lothian Street to the north. The southern edge of the Square is defined by Teviot Row and prominent listed buildings, The Reid School of Music, 1858, Category A listed, Date of listing;- 14 December 1970, Listed Building reference;- 27998 and Teviot Row House, University of Edinburgh Students Union, 1887-89, Category B listed, Date of listing;- 14 July 1966, Listed Building reference;- 27995.

To the east of the Square lies the busy pedestrian thoroughfare of Charlesfield/Charles Street and the modern University Health Centre and Students Union complex developed during 1970's. The University Informatics Centre, completed in 2008, is located to the south east corner.

The modern square was formed during the early 1980's, with the current landscaping scheme dating from 1982-83. This surfacing largely comprises modern concrete block paving and flags, with some delineation provided using reclaimed Whin setts. The south eastern corner of the site is surfaced with modern granite setts, these being implemented as part the recent Informatics Centre project.

The main sunken part of the square (approximately 50 metres x 40 metres) is defined by a series of walled planters in cast stone containing trees, walkways, terracing and steps. A series of 15 Baillie Lamps (Victorian style lanterns) are arranged around the perimeter of the Square.

A triangular wooded area (approximately 49 metres x 35 metres) comprises the northern part of the application site. This is bounded by walkways to the southern edge, Lothian Street to the north west and Charlesfield to the east.

The site is located in the Southside Conservation Area, with the northern edge of the wider space abutted by the Old Town Conservation Area. The site is also located within the World Heritage Site.

1.2 Site History

20 September 2013 - Listed building consent was granted for works to the McEwan Hall including internal alterations (Reference 13/02290/LBC.)

No further recent planning history of relevance.

2. Main report

2.1 Description Of The Proposal

It is proposed to remodel the Category A listed McEwan Hall, including the development of a new main entrance pavilion and reconfiguration of public realm and landscaping to Bristo Square.

Works to the McEwan Hall including internal alterations have been considered as part of related listed building application 13/02290/LBC.

The entrance pavilion would comprise a cylindrical structure (11.7 metres diameter, 4.65 metres - 5.85 metres to the eaves line and a maximum 6.6 height to the centre). The pavilion would be positioned in the north west corner of the square, 13 metres from the outer extents of the Hall, and provide direct access to the basement of the hall via a low level entrance, ramp and subterranean walkway. It is intended that this facility will provide improved access to the building for graduations and other events.

The external finishes to the pavilion would comprise feature curved glazing with vertical 'brise soleil' to the upper levels of the structure. An internal timber clad core would enclose the lift to the centre of the structure, this being flanked by staircases to the outer edges.

The pavilion would enclose a level change of 1.2 metres between the upper and lower parts of the square and the McEwan Hall basement. Entrances will be provided to the northern side of the structure at the upper level of the square, and at the south eastern corner to serve the lower level of the square. The pavilion will provide access to the basement and lower level of the square via an internal lift and stairs. It is intended that the pavilion will be manned with the design including provision for a concierge.

The existing public realm and landscaping to the square would be remodelled. This would involve the removal of all stone planters, steps and 11 trees. The woodland area to the north of the square, comprising a further 26 trees, is also proposed for removal.

Surface treatments would comprise granite paving to the main plaza areas and staircases, with sandstone to the apron adjacent to the McEwan Hall and periphery of the square. The position of seating around the square has been reconsidered and has now been placed to the northern and southern edge of the square. It is anticipated that this aspect of the design will be subject to further development, with final details subject to condition.

The McEwan Lantern Pillar (Corporation Lamp) currently located to the south west corner of the square, would be dismantled and repositioned to the south east corner of the square, to align axially with the proposed pavilion and Bristo Place to the north west.

A secondary plaza would be formed within the triangular area to the north of the square, this being defined by new tree planting to the north and south. This area may potentially form the route of a new road alignment to Lothian Street/Potterow, as identified within the University of Edinburgh development masterplan.

It is intended that additional parking for 64 cycles would be formed within the application site as part of the proposals.

Additional plant required for the Hall would be contained within the raised courtyard area to the west of the McEwan Hall and would be concealed from public view.

Previous Scheme

The original entrance pavilion, (12 metres diameter, 2.2 metres height rising to a maximum 4.5 metres) whilst cylindrical in form featured an oblique roof arrangement rising upwards towards the square. External walls and roof were predominantly curved glass with etched logo and lettering applied to a steel frame and grey granite applied to the base course of the structure.

The original design of the pavilion enclosed a level change of 1.95 metres between the upper and lower parts of the square and the McEwan Hall basement, comprising both stepped and ramped access. The design featured a single entrance from the lower level of the square only, with inactive frontage to the upper level of the square.

The central part of the square featured a circular amphitheatre, defined by steps tapering upwards towards the pavilion and north west corner, this also being highlighted by groups of pleached trees around the perimeter. Surface treatments to the square comprised predominantly sandstone flag paving with grey granite steps, flags and setts used as secondary detailing.

The form, mass and material treatments to the entrance pavilion have been revised, with the oblique roof form omitted from the proposals.

The conceptual design for the public realm been subject to further development. The extents of level change across the square has been reduced from 1.95 to 1.2 metres, with the number of steps and extents of the tapering staircases being reduced to form a smaller raised crescent at the north western corner of the square. The pleached trees proposed for the perimeter of the original steps have also been omitted from the design.

Supporting Documents

McEwan Hall and Bristo Square, Design and Access Statement, July 2013

General Arrangement drawings, July 2013

Additional urban design analysis and visualisations, November 2013

Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment, December 2013

These documents are 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.

In considering whether to grant consent, special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. 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 principle of development is acceptable;
- b) the proposals affect the setting of listed buildings;
- c) the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas;
- d) the proposal has any impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site;
- e) the proposed scale, design and materials are acceptable;
- f) the proposal is detrimental to the amenity of neighbours;
- g) the proposal raises issues in respect of traffic and road Safety;
- h) the proposal raises issues in respect of archaeology;
- i) the proposals have any equalities and human rights impacts;
- j) public comments have been addressed;

a) the principle of development:

The application site is designated in the Local Plan as open space. It is necessary to consider Local Plan Policy OS1, Open Space Protection, and the potential loss of open space resulting from the development of the proposed entrance pavilion, the proposal will result in the loss of a relatively small proportion of the overall extent of the open space, and will enhance the quality and usability of the space. The character of the local environment and its function as community space would be maintained. The loss

of open space in relation Local Plan Policy OS 1 and the principle of development are considered acceptable.

b) the proposals affect the setting of listed buildings;

The proposals will principally affect the setting of the Category A listed McEwan Hall and Category B listed McEwan Lantern Pillar (Corporation Lamp).

The proposed development will also impact upon the setting of other listed buildings around the space, including the University Union building to the south of the square and tenemental buildings to the north of Teviot Place.

The setting of the McEwan Hall has changed since its original development in the late 19th Century. Following its completion, the area now occupied by the Square was characterised by a tighter urban form with the eastern side of the Hall being flanked by Teviot Row and enclosed by tenements beyond. These were cleared during the early 20th Century to form a triangular space containing the Lantern Pillar, this bounded by the former alignment of Bristo Steet. Further clearances took place during the 1960's before Bristo Street was eventually stopped up following the completion of the Potterow relief road c.1980 which resulted in the formation of the modern Bristo Square and the area becoming more open in character.

The proposed design concept for the pavilion has been conceived to provide a more legible and accessible entrance facility to the hall, with existing entrance arrangements currently lacking clarity and failing to meet modern access standards. The siting of the pavilion is to a large degree influenced by the layout of the undercroft area of the hall, with the siting and presence also needing to ensure a clear visual relationship with the hall it is intended to serve.

Whilst the siting of the pavilion will be evident in the key view of the hall when viewed from the east, being positioned to the right of the centre axis, it would allow the identification of a new entrance to the building in a clear contemporary style but would be subservient and would not usurp the primacy of the listed building. The setting of the Hall has also evolved over time and proposals would not therefore be considered detrimental to its setting.

The proposed pavilion will sit as a subservient feature within the space and will not visually compete with surrounding listed structures. The proposal to remove and reconfigure the 1980's layout to form a more open space, will also improve the views of the various listed buildings which contain the square.

c) the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas;

The South Side Conservation Area and Old Town Conservation Area Character Appraisals identify the following in relation to the application site;-

The South Side Conservation Area shares a common boundary to the north with the Old Town Conservation Area.

Bristo Square is identified as an 'Important Enclosed Space' with landmark of McEwan Hall.

Bristo Square , which was built in 1983, provides an appropriate setting to McEwan Hall. In developing the square Potterow has been ramped through a tight curve to marry with Lothian Street along the northern boundary. This has resulted in the creation of pedestrian underpass linking the University area to South College Street that disrupts the original street pattern.

McEwan Hall and the University Medical School, a large Venetian Cinquecento complex designed by Rowand Anderson and built in two stages. The medical school frontage to Teviot Place is long and regular, inside this building there is an impressive courtyard. McEwan Hall is described in the Buildings of Edinburgh as "magnificent petrified blancmange". Student's Union on Teviot Place is built in an early 16th Century Scots style.

A wide range of institutional buildings from different eras set against a backdrop of tenements contributing to an appearance of density, a close knit character and cohesive groupings associated with a medieval town.

The entrance pavilion has been positioned to respond to surrounding townscape and will be a subservient feature within the space. The pavilion will act as a visual marker particularly when viewed on a north west- south west axis, including the main approach to the square from Bristo Place and the Old Town.

The proposed re-siting of the listed McEwan Lantern pillar to a position approximately 23 metres to the east is considered acceptable, in that it will allow the Lantern to be aligned with the proposed pavilion on a north west-south east axis to achieve a stronger physical presence within the south east corner of the square. The proposed location of the pavilion and new position for the Lantern pillar could be considered as part of the historical evolution of the square and these aspects of the proposal are considered to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation areas.

It is also necessary to consider whether the proposed removal of 37 trees would detrimentally affect the character and appearance of the conservation areas. All of the trees affected were planted during the late 1970's - early 1980's. The 11 trees around the perimeter of the square are in poor condition with a number of trees already removed in recent years, which has undermined their structural role. The 26 trees comprising the small triangular wooded area to the north of the space would require to be removed in the event of Potterow being realigned, which is a longer term objective of the University of Edinburgh's Masterplan.

Whilst the existing trees form one aspect of the current character of the space and make a limited contribution to the biodiversity of the location, the underlying character of the location is essentially urban, with the proposals being developed to enhance the quality and function of a key urban space. New structural tree planting is also proposed to the north and south of the remodelled square. In view of these factors, particularly by virtue of their age, condition and siting the removal of trees within the conservation area is acceptable.

Additional plant required for the Hall would be concealed from public view. It will have no impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The overall impacts of the proposals are not considered to adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation areas. The scale of the proposed pavilion will be subservient within the space. The positioning of the pavilion, the McEwan

Lantern Pillar and the proposed layout of the square will both maintain and enhance surrounding views.

d) impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site:

The proposals are not considered to present any adverse impact to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, in that they will preserve and enhance the character of the conservation areas or preserve the setting of listed buildings, as addressed in Section b and c of the report.

e) scale, design and materials:

The initial design proposals for the scheme were discussed at the Edinburgh Design Panel in November 2012. At that stage, the alterations to the building, the enhancement to the accessibility of the square for pedestrians and consequent improvement to public safety are all supported. However, the panel commented on two strategies for accessing the proposed new lower ground level of the McEwan Hall, including an option to cut into Bristo Square and use it to take up the level difference between the new lower ground facilities. The alternative proposal resulted in a smaller level change in the public realm of the square and a pavilion building to take up the remainder of the difference in height. The latter strategy was subsequently developed prior to the submission of the planning and listed building applications.

The form and mass of the entrance pavilion have now been amended and the design is considered acceptable. The oblique roof form originally proposed has now been omitted to form a cylindrical structure, which possesses a strong proportional relationship with that of the McEwan Hall. The scale of the structure is now considered to be acceptable. Vertical 'brise soleil' cladding has also be applied to glazed exterior, with a timber clad core being introduced internally to the structure. These changes are considered to add a degree of solidity and weight to the structure without compromising the visual lightness which will be achieved through the predominantly glazed exterior.

The additional entrance to the northern side of the pavilion will increase the level of active frontage and improve the overall level of functionality to the building, particularly to with the street environment and key pedestrian flows to the north.

It is proposed that finalised details of material finishes for the pavilion structure would be subject to condition.

The existing layout of the square dates from the early 1980's, with the physical fabric now reaching the end of its design life and some areas of paving in disrepair. The current arrangement of dwarf walls, planters and trees has often exacerbated problems of anti-social behaviour, due to restricted sightlines and lack of passive surveillance. A number of trees have been removed from the square in recent years due to their poor condition and concerns regarding security.

The design proposals for the remodelling of the square and adjacent public realm have also been subject to amendment. The proposals will result in improved sightlines and therefore potentially reduce instances of anti-social behaviour. Design detailing such as tactile banding to the steps could also make the location less attractive to skateboarders. The reconfigured central space has also been designed to accommodate future temporary events with seating being repositioned to the north and south edges of the square. These changes are considered to have improved the overall level of accessibility through the square, particularly for the mobility impaired.

The finalised design details for the public realm have yet to be fully developed. Edinburgh Standards for Streets, Principle 4, identifies the need to design public realm in a manner that is easily understood and attractive to pedestrians. It is considered that the revised conceptual approach would achieve this aspiration, and would therefore be considered acceptable in principle.

It is intended that natural paving materials comprising sandstone and granite finishes, will be utilised in the finalised proposals. Edinburgh Standards for Streets, Principle 2, stresses the importance of considering local character as a reference point for the design in terms of layout and overall design arrangement and detailing. The use of high quality natural materials in place of the existing concrete products would be considered to offer an appropriate response to the Old Town location and high profile civic space. The approach would enhance both the setting of the listed buildings, the character of the conservation areas and reinforce the character of place.

The finalised details of the design of the public realm would be covered by condition.

The scale and design of the proposals are considered appropriate to the location, particularly in their response to the conservation areas and setting of surrounding listed buildings. The proposed material treatments for both the entrance pavilion and public realm would provide a sensitive response to the historic context.

f) traffic and Road Safety:

The application site largely comprises part of the University of Edinburgh estate and as such is designated a 'private road'. However, it has been suggested that should any area of public road be required to be stopped up to accommodate the proposed development, a financial contribution of £2500 should be paid by the applicant to progress a stopping up order. This aspect will be covered by informative.

g) the proposal is detrimental to the amenity of neighbours:

Residential uses around the site are largely concentrated along the northern side of Teviot Place and Bristo Place and the general nature of the proposals are not considered to raise any issues in respect of residential amenity.

Environmental Assessment has provided comments in relation to the internal remodelling of the McEwan Hall, including acoustics, the external rooftop plant and potential emissions from the proposed kitchen facilities. Issues relating to kitchen emissions will be covered by condition.

Environmental Assessment has also commented on potential impacts of future events taking place within the Square, e.g. Edinburgh Festival, and have advised that these can be controlled through the Licensing regime.

h) archaeology:

The City Archaeological Officer has objected to the proposed removal of the 15 Baillie Lamps within the square. Baillie Lamps were originally erected outside the homes of the Baillie's (a former Civic officer role abolished in 1975). However, the lamps have no specific historic relationship with Bristo Square, the then newly refurbished lamps being placed there as part of the current public realm scheme, 1982-83. The lighting equipment does not conform to current lighting standards and it is poor condition. It is proposed new lighting scheme would be installed as part of the proposed public realm works, with the existing lamps being removed, and the Council taking responsibility for the equipment.

It is requested that a condition be attached to the consent to ensure a programme of archaeological works are undertaken in respect of buried archaeology.

i) equalities or human rights impacts;

This application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights. The impacts identified are the need to ensure compliance with DDA legislation and that the design of the proposals maximise accessibility for the mobility impaired. Issues included;-

- i) access for the mobility impaired both leading into the Hall; including the main ceremonial doors;
- ii) General accessibility through the remodelled square including the nature and detail of the proposed level changes
- iii) Initial proposals did not include direct access into the entrance pavilion from the upper level of the square with access from the lower level of the square only. For those unable to use stepped access, this arrangement would have resulted in a longer and circuitous route to the eastern side of the square

A number of amendments have been made to the proposals including the provision of a doorway to the north elevation of the entrance pavilion, with internal lift added, thus providing DDA compliant access from the upper level to the lower level of the square and the undercroft. Levels of accessibility through the square have also been increased through the reduction in overall level changes, the extent of the proposed steps and increased the area of graded or ramped access.

The design of the proposal is considered to satisfactorily address the issues identified in the Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment

j) Public comments

Material representations

Design and positioning of the entrance pavilion - this has been addressed in section 2b), 2c) and 2d)

Layout and design of the space, including the proposed circular form and level changes - this has been addressed in section 2d)

Design of seating - this has been addressed in section 2d)

DDA compliance - this has been addressed in section 2h)

Non material representations - none were raised.

A Committee decision is required on this application given that the proposed works will affect the setting of important listed buildings and the design of a major civic space within the City Centre and World Heritage Site.

In conclusion, the proposals comply with the development plan and relevant non-statutory planning guidelines, preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of listed buildings. The proposals achieve an acceptable quality of design and would result in enhancements to a designated area of open space. The proposals do not raise any impacts in respect of road safety, DDA compliance, equalities and human rights or neighbouring amenity. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

3. Recommendations

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

3.2 Conditions/reasons

1. A materials schedule and sample panel for the Entrance Pavilion shall be submitted to and agreed with the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
2. A detailed layout for the public realm upgrading (RIBA Stage D equivalent) including materials specifications for surface treatments, street furniture, planting specification and lighting design shall be submitted to and agreed with the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
3. That a conservation mitigation strategy and method statement for dismantling, storage and re-siting of the Corporation Lamp be submitted to and agreed by the Planning Authority prior to work commencing on site.
4. That no development shall take place on site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording, conservation/preservation, excavation, analysis and reporting, publication) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority
5. The kitchen shall be ventilated by a system capable of achieving a minimum of 30 air changes per hour, and cooking effluvia shall be ducted to roof level as agreed with the Planning Authority to ensure that no cooking odours escape or are exhausted into neighbouring premises. The ventilation system shall be installed, tested and operational prior to the occupation of the building.

Reasons:-

1. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
2. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
3. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.
4. In order to safeguard the interests of archaeological heritage.
5. In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and other occupiers.

Informatives

It should be noted that:

1. The works hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.
2. The area is understood to be a 'private road' under the meaning of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 and therefore the area of road requires to be stopped up to accommodate the proposed development. Consent should not be issued until the applicant has entered into a suitable legal agreement to contribute £2, 500 to progress a stopping up order under Section 207 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 2007
3. Roads opening permits may be required.
4. The applicant should note that street lighting, cables and drainage is present in the area and is likely to require to be relocated as part of the proposed works.

Statutory Development Plan Provision	Edinburgh City Local Plan - Central Area and Open Space
Date registered	10 July 2013
Drawing numbers/Scheme	01, 02A-03A, 04-10, 11A-14A, 15, 16A, 17-66, 74-75, 76A, 77A, Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) sets general criteria for assessing design quality and requires an overall design concept to be demonstrated.

Policy Des 3 (Development Design) sets criteria for assessing development design.

Policy Des 5 (External Spaces) sets criteria for assessing landscape design and external space elements of development.

Policy Des 7 (New Pedestrian Routes in the City Centre) relates to the creation of new pedestrian routes in the City Centre.

Policy Env 1 (World Heritage Site) protects the quality of the World Heritage Site and its settings.

Policy Env 3 (Listed Buildings - Setting) identifies the circumstances in which development within the curtilage or affecting the setting of a listed building will be permitted.

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 Env 8 (Protection of Important Remains) establishes a presumption against development that would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or archaeological remains of national importance.

Policy Hou 8 (Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas) establishes a presumption against development which would have an unacceptable effect on the living conditions of nearby residents.

Policy Tra 6 (Design of Off-Street Car and Cycle Parking) sets criteria for assessing design of off-street car and cycle parking.

Policy Ca 1 (Central Area) sets criteria for assessing development in the Central Area.

Policy Os 1 (Open Space Protection) sets criteria for assessing the loss of open space.

Non-statutory guidelines 'The Edinburgh Standards for Streets' sets out principles and guidance whose aim is to achieve a coherent and enhanced public realm.

Non-Statutory guidelines Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings and landscape, in Edinburgh.

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

The South Side Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the harmonious scale, massing and materials and the significance of key institutional buildings within the area.

The Old Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the survival of the original medieval street pattern; the wealth of important landmark buildings; the survival of an outstanding collection of archaeological remains, medieval buildings, and 17th-century town houses; the consistent and harmonious height and mass of buildings; the importance of stone as a construction material for both buildings and the public realm; the vitality and variety of different uses; and the continuing presence of a residential community

Appendix 1

Consultations

Historic Scotland

The major revision from previously discussed proposals has been the creation of a new stand-alone glass and steel pavilion to access the basement of the building from a raised publicly landscaped space. The previous scheme proposed a new and horizontal entrance at basement level accessed directly from a new public square (in fact a circular public space successfully echoing the hall). The proposed entrance podium wall extended upwards and to either side forming a significant visual element, exacerbated by a large flight of steps linking the significant change in level, itself a barrier to movement. We considered that the primacy of the listed building could have been put at risk by the scale of the new works, and that the entrance to the hall, albeit in many ways unsatisfactorily, would have been necessarily diminished.

The revised scheme, progressed with the landscape consultants, raise the lower level of the new landscaped area. This immediately loses 10 steps from the previous proposals providing, in conjunction with the removal of the existing dwarf walling and raised beds, a more accessible, traversable and visible open space. The basement of the hall is now accessed directly from the lower level of the new landscaped area by a short flight of steps and ramp. (Is wheelchair access required from the upper level, or is that accommodated directly within the existing building?)

We welcome the proposed solution which addresses many of our concerns with the previous scheme. In particular, the new pavilion allows the identification of a new entrance to the building in a clear contemporary style but does not usurp the primacy of the listed building. It is subsidiary yet not apologetic, positioned to allow existing axial views of the listed building to remain. The new landscaping allows an open public space to be created with clear visibility and context.

There may be further details required on the existing and proposed level changes and their interaction with other listed buildings in the vicinity, but we have no concerns with the B-listed lamp standard, and assume from the drawings the existing lamp standards (listed by curtilage?) by the hall will be reinstated.

To conclude, the applicants design strategy has been predicated on an understanding of the importance of the building and their 'focused and limited interventions' will retain its special interest whilst safeguarding the future use of a nationally important, yet underused building. We therefore support the scheme.

Transport Planning (Development Control)

No objections subject to the following being included as conditions or informatives as appropriate:

- 1) The area is understood to be a 'private road' under the meaning of the Roads (Scotland) act 1984 and therefore the area of road requires to be stopped to accommodate the proposed development. Consent should not be issued until the applicant has entered into a suitable legal agreement to contribute £2,500 to progress a stopping up order under Section 207 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 2007;*
- 2) Roads opening permits may be required*

The applicant should note that street lighting, cables, and drainage is present in the area and is likely to require to be relocated as part of the proposed works.

Enquiries and applications regarding the above matters can be made to the Director of Services for Communities at Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG

Environmental Assessment

The application proposes to refurbish and extend the existing McEwan Hall. University buildings are situated to the west on Teviot Place with Bristo Square to the east. Residential flats are situated across Teviot Place to the north with Reid concert hall situated to the south.

Noise

An acoustic assessment has been provided in support of the application which mainly attempts to address the acoustic limitations of the hall itself. The existing limited acoustical qualities of the hall presently restrict the types of events to be held within the premises. The proposals attempt to improve the hall acoustics which may then allow the hall to host additional events. The agent has confirmed that additional conferencing would be the kind of event which the premises would like to further attract. Environmental Assessment would be concerned if the hall were to intensify to the stage where large scale amplified music events were to be held on site. However, the agent has indicated that this is not the intention nor is it likely that the proposed alterations would make such events more likely to cause noise to leak from the envelope of the building. In addition, it is born in mind that the premises can host amplified music events at the moment albeit with reduced acoustic qualities. In an attempt to reduce noise break-in to the premises, the acoustic report recommends secondary glazing be installed to windows. In effect, this secondary glazing will also reduce any additional noise leaking from the envelope of the building by that route and in this respect can be seen as planning gain.

Rooftop plant is proposed to be located on the medical courtyard roof, vertically stacked in a steelwork supporting frame. Residential properties are situated nearby and the noise impact assessment therefore recommends that plat noise meets NR25 noise levels. A condition is therefore recommended which requires the proposed plant to cumulatively meet the NR25 noise level within the nearest noise sensitive room and the windows open for ventilation purposes.

The application proposes to upgrade Bristo Square itself to include a basement entrance to the hall, include pop-up electrical outlets and attempts to increase the safety of the square by opening up the visibility for users of the area. The agent for the application has confirmed that the square is currently used for events and will continue to be utilised in the same manner. Environmental Assessment would be concerned were the square to intensify dramatically and to be consistently used for outside entertainment with amplified music. Such intensified operations are likely to draw complaint to the Council in terms of noise. In this regard, the agent has advised that the area will continue to be used for events as it is at the moment and the Council is in receipt of noise complaints from the use of the square as a festival venue.

However, it is likely that events can be suitably controlled by license as they can be at present and on balance it is unlikely that this application will significantly increase the viable usage of the area for such events than could occur at present.

Odours

A new kitchen with associated ventilation is proposed for installation into the basement of the new premises. The agent has confirmed that ventilation will reach above all surrounding sensitive premises.

Lighting

External lighting is proposed to be surface mounted on the building, on the external steps and on the pavement. It is understood that lighting will be low level to provide direction, for safety reasons and to light the exterior of the building. Therefore, there are not expected to be any issues of concern from this aspect of the proposal.

In conclusion, Environmental Assessment has no objections to the proposed development subject to the following conditions:

The design, installation and operation of any plant, machinery or equipment shall be such that any associated noise cumulatively complies with NR25 when measured within any nearby living apartment, and no structure borne vibration is perceptible within any nearby living apartment.

The kitchen shall be ventilated by a system capable of achieving a minimum of 30 air changes per hour, and cooking effluvia shall be ducted to roof level as agreed with the Planning Authority to ensure that no cooking odours escape or are exhausted into any neighbouring premises. The ventilation system shall be installed, tested and operational prior to the use hereby approved being taken up.

City of Edinburgh Archaeological Service

Further to your consultation requests I would like to make the following comments and recommendations concerning these two linked applications for the refurbishment of McEwan Hall with a basement extension, a new entrance pavilion, new staircase and lift installed in the North Tower and the re-landscaping of Bristo Square.

The proposed development affects the late Victorian (1890's) A-listed McEwan Hall and associated B-listed McEwan Lantern Memorial and 20th Century Bristo Square. McEwan Hall and Bristo Square occur at the heart of the late mediaeval suburb of Potterow constructed across the main road leading into Edinburgh's Bristo Port, which ran diagonally across the current square. Historic maps show development across both sides of the medieval road with Edgar's 1765 plan showing a range of continuous buildings across the eastern side of the road and a large house (Lord Ross's) and

gardens occupying the South. By the late 18th century development of the houses gardens has occurred and the 19th century the area has been fully developed.

Accordingly this application must be considered therefore under the terms of the Scottish Government Historic Environment Policy (SHEP), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), PAN 02/2011 and also Edinburgh City Local Plan (2010) policy ENV2, ENV4, ENV8 & ENV9. The aim should be to preserve archaeological remains in situ as a first option, but alternatively where this is not possible, archaeological excavation or appropriate level of recording may be an acceptable alternative.

Buried Archaeology

In terms of buried archaeology, it is considered that this proposal would be regarded as having a potential moderate impact. Ground-breaking works associated with construction both internally to McEwan Hall, and externally as part of the new construction of the pavilion and the new square layout are likely to disturb significant remains associated with the development of the historic Potterow settlement from the medieval period to the 20th century. Accordingly, it is essential that an appropriate programme of archaeological works to be undertaken prior to/during ground breaking works, in order to excavate, record and analyse any significant surviving archaeological remains that may be disturbed.

McEwan Hall Lantern Monument (Corporation Lamp)

The proposals seek to re-site this B-listed monument from current position to one of the SE corner of the new square. In principal, I have no concerns regarding this re-siting, however, it is essential that a Conservation mitigation strategy covering the down-taking, conservation, storage and reconstruction of the listed monument is submitted to CECAS and also CEC's Collection Care Officer (Monuments) for approval/agreement prior to works commencing.

Bristo Square Victorian Lampposts (Bailey Lamps)

This site contains 7 Victorian decorative lampposts situated four on the north and three on the south side of Bristo Square. (Case Officer Site Visit confirmed 15 in total) These rare survivals although not in their original locations are nevertheless of historic importance and must be preserved and indeed in the case of at least one restored with addition of the upper lamp section. It is therefore of great concern that the proposed new plans for the square do not contain any reference to their retention. Accordingly I regard this as a significant adverse archaeological impact and is contra to CEC Policy ENV8 which seeks to preserve important archaeological and historic remains.

Therefore unless confirmation is given that these important streetscape features are to be retained and restored on site (the position of these monuments would be subsequent to agreement along with a mitigation strategy for their conservation and restoration) then it is my recommendation that the Full application, concerning the proposed landscaping, is refused.

Accordingly it would be recommended that if consent is granted that the following condition be attached to the consent to ensure that these programmes of these archaeological works are undertaken.

No development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording, conservation/preservation excavation, analysis and reporting, publication) in

accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.'

The work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation, either working to a brief prepared by CECAS or through a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed by CECAS for the site. Responsibility for the execution and resourcing of the programme of archaeological works and for the archiving and appropriate level of publication of the results lies with the applicant.

Police Scotland

Bristo Square experiences a medium recorded crime rate, the majority of these crimes have been thefts of pedal cycles and portable electrical items. The area experiences a medium level of anti-social behaviour calls to the police, namely drunken behaviour and youths causing a disturbance. Skateboarders have been a problem in the past and regularly return to the area.

Consideration should be given to materials such as tactile pavers and landscaping techniques that dissuade skateboarders from using the area

The position and design of handrails on either side of the pavilion should be such that it also discourages use by skateboarders and bikers

Due to propensity of drinkers to congregate in this area it is highly recommended that the space is kept as visually open as possible. I note from the drawings that the Hornbeams will have a 2 metre clear stem. It is recommended that the same treatment is given to all the trees in the Square.

The current position of the long feature bench and timber seating, next to screening from shrubs and trees will encourage inappropriate loiterers such as drinkers or drug users. I recommend that the seating is either removed, moved into a central open position of the ground cover shrub planting is preplaced with decorative aggregate.

Architecture + Design Scotland

Within A+DS, our Design Forum programme responds to enquiries regarding proposals being considered via the planning system. In order to deal effectively with some of the most important development projects across Scotland, appropriate to our role as national agency, and to achieve the repeat engagement which we believe will result in a stronger service offer, the number of projects the Design Forum can engage with is necessarily limited.

Even though the McEwan Hall project has been referred to use by the Local Authority and might be considered as Locally Significant (These are projects which local authorities consider to be the most significant in their area, with the process being initiated by the local authority or a design team, to address the particular qualities and issue surrounding 'place') since a full planning application has been submitted it appears to be too late in the project to allow useful engagement via the Design Forum Workshop Process

Edinburgh Urban Design Panel - Pre Application

The proposals were discussed the Edinburgh Urban Design Panel, 28 November 2012, with the following report prepared;-

1. Introduction

1.1 This report relates to proposals for alterations to McEwan Hall and proposals for Bristo Square.

1.2 The brief for the project envisages internal alterations to the Hall to improve its internal usability, accessibility and legibility and proposals to provide access to a new lower ground floor level from Bristo Square. Along with this, proposals for improvements to the square are proposed

1.3 This is the first time the proposals have been reviewed.

1.4 No declarations of interest were made by any panel members in relation to this scheme.

1.5 This report is the view of the Panel and is not attributable to any one individual. The report does not prejudice any of the organisations who are represented at the panel forming a differing view about the proposals at a later stage.

2. The Panel's views on the design process

2.1 The level of analysis that has been carried out in developing this proposal is commended. The research of historic development of the building and its surroundings, the sectional information showing different circulation for users of the building as well as the contextual information help underpin the rationale for the proposed design solution.

2.2 The design itself is broadly welcomed. The alterations to the building, the enhancements to accessibility of the square for pedestrians and the consequent improvement to community safety are all supported.

2.3 There are a number of matters that should be considered as the design is taken forward.

3. The Panel's views on the alteration of the building

3.1 The McEwan Hall is an undoubted asset to not only the University of Edinburgh but to the city itself. It is noted that it is used on a limited basis (primarily for graduations and a number of smaller scaled events throughout the year). Therefore, improvements that will allow its use to be increased are welcomed.

3.2 Internal alterations including providing clearer and more legible circulation routes and spaces, improved accessibility through the provision of lifts and the creation of ancillary space to support the use of the Hall are all positive.

3.3 On the matter of detail, if glazing is to be provided at pavement level to provide daylight into the proposed lower ground space this should be design to obviate vertical barriers. Such features would detract from the setting of the McEwan Hall.

4. The Panel's views on the relationship on the proposals for Bristo Square

4.1 *The mix of different type of people, including people passing through, students and skateboarders and others that use Bristo Square mean that even though it presents challenges for clarity of pedestrian movement, community safety and so on, the space does contribute positively to the life of the city.*

4.2 *With this aim in mind, the aim of improving accessibility of the square is welcomed.*

4.3 *There appear to be 2 main strategies for accessing the proposed new lower ground level of the McEwan Hall and with these there are both advantages and disadvantages.*

4.4 *The option to cut into Bristo Square and use it to take up the level difference between the new lower ground facilities*

4.5 *The alternative proposal which uses a smaller level change in the public realm of the square and a pavilion building to take up the remainder of the difference in height is perhaps less forthright architecturally, but in terms of the public use of the square is positive. The lesser changes in level make it comparatively easier for people to traverse the square if different directions. The number of steps is likely to be conducive to people sitting. This option may be considered a positive compromise*

4.6 *Care should be taken with the relationship of the square to McEwan Hall. While this is clearly a very important civic and university building, the square must be designed to support functions beyond this. While the Hall plays a key role in the square, surrounding existing and future uses contribute to its vitality as well as people passing through, so these should be bourn in mind.*

4.7 *Care should be taken with both proposals that the original entrances to the building do not become overly diminished by the new entrances.*

5. *Community Safety*

5.1 *The existing square with its blind corners, level changes and dense planting creates challenges for community safety. The proposals will make the space more visually open. This will help reduce any perceived sense of intimidation that may result from people being forced to walk past one another. From a community safety perspective, the proposals will much improve the square.*

6. *Movement*

6.1 *The proposals will improve pedestrian movement through Bristo Square by making the space more navigable. The proposal that involves fewer steps is more likely to be attractive to pedestrians.*

6.2 *Care should be taken to ensure that the space can accommodate cyclists safely.*

6.3 *Clarification is required on pedestrian, cycle and wheelchair user movement through the square - the latter being a particularly important consideration. Distances between drop off areas, accessible parking spaces, public transport and main access points, will all be key to the success of the design in respect of movement.*

7. Summary

7.1 *The presenting team is commended on the design approach taken thus far.*

7.2 *The proposals presented are a sophisticated design solution for this important civic building and space. The level of analysis underpins a strong design rationale.*

7.3 *Improvements to the building to increase its use, access and internal legibility are fully supported.*

7.4 *In relation to the alternative proposals for accessing the building and consequent impacts on Bristo Square, there are 2 strategies that could be taken forward. The Panel does not advocate either of these. Rather, in developing the proposals further - whichever option is developed, the design should address the matters highlighted above. In doing this, simplicity may be the key to achieving a successful design.*

