

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 26 March 2014

**Application for Planning Permission 13/02957/FUL
At GF 25 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh, EH4 3TP
Proposed change of use from existing redundant office
block to 32 residential units with associated car parking.**

Item number	5.1
Report number	
Wards	A05 - Inverleith

Links

Policies and guidance for this application	LPC, CITD1, CITD11, CITE1, CITE3, CITE6, CITE7, CITH5, CITH7, CITEM4, CITT4, CITT5, CITT6, NSG, NSDCAH, NSGD02, NSLBCA, NSP, OTH, CRPDEA,
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David R. Leslie

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

Contact: John Maciver, Planning Officer
E-mail:john.maciver@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel:0131 529 3918

Executive summary

Application for Planning Permission 13/02957/FUL At GF 25 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh, EH4 3TP Proposed change of use from existing redundant office block to 32 residential units with associated car parking.

Outcome of previous Committee

This application was previously considered by Committee on 12.02.2014

The application was continued by Committee for further information on parking, open space, design and materials, affordable housing and residential amenity. This information is included in the addendum to the report.

Summary

The proposal does not comply with the Edinburgh City Local Plan policies and the Council's non statutory guidance and would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and result in an inappropriate level of residential amenity for future residential occupants of the conversion.

Recommendations

It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below (in section 3 of the main report).

Financial impact

There are no financial implications to the Council.

Equalities impact

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

Sustainability impact

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

Consultation and engagement

Pre-Application Process

The proposal was subject of pre-application advice and the applicants were advised that the proposal would not comply with planning policy and guidance and, on balance, would not be able to be supported in planning terms.

Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

The application was advertised on 9 August 2013 and attracted 8 letters of representation all objecting to the proposal. These included comments from Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council, a neighbouring commercial company and 6 residential neighbours. The issues raised are:

Material Representations

- Loss of office space will reduce office space availability within the city;
- Non-compliance with policy Emp 4; adverse impact on Dean House as an office property;
- Result in a change to a more residential character of area;
- Intensity of development will compromise the character of the area;
- Overdevelopment of the existing building and the site;
- Additional traffic disturbance to neighbours;
- Inadequate vehicular access, unsuitable for large vehicles;
- Too many car parking spaces;
- Result in additional traffic generation and not use of public transport;
- Existing on-street parking congestion;
- Dual use of and impact on existing vehicular access and parking at Dean House;
- Close proximity of office use may result in disturbance and tension between occupiers;
- Inadequate distance between Dunedin House and Dean House resulting in privacy issues; and
- Insufficient green space to serve this scale of development.

Non-material Representations

- There is no right in title for construction traffic access.

Community Council Comments

Craigleith/Blackhall Community Council were consulted on 9 August 2013 and have a divided view on the proposed development.

They commented on the grounds of:

- Impact on the conservation area;
- Design and materials; retention of Queensferry Road boundary wall; and
- Impact on the neighbouring school buildings and setting.

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 site comprises an existing four-storey office building, known as 'Dunedin House', located on the south side of Queensferry Road at the end of an access drive, from Ravelston Terrace to the south. That access also serves an adjacent, parallel office block and a converted residential block fronting onto Ravelston Terrace.

The northern portion of the site is stepped down 0.5 metres below the adjacent public road level. The site then generally rises from the north to the south, with Ravelston Terrace standing 6.9 metres higher than Queensferry Road.

To the west of the site are the grounds of The Mary Erskine and Stewart's Melville College campus. To the east of the site is the Dean Cemetery.

Immediately to the south, and parallel with the application property, is 'Dean House', a four-storey office building. The northern face of the office is set 14.3 metres from the southern face of the application building.

Beyond that to the south is an eight-storey former office block 'Croythorn House', converted in 2005 to form residential flatted properties. That block is orientated on a north-south axis whereas the application site and its neighbour are orientated east-west.

To the north is Queensferry Road and beyond that to the west, a six-storey residential/flatted development served off Orchard Brae Avenue and to the east 'Orchard Brae House', a seven-storey office block at the corner of the junction with Orchard Brae.

The existing building has an internal floor space of 1,974 square metres and car parking for 54 vehicles served by an existing vehicular access from Ravelston Terrace to the south. This is shared with the adjacent office building and residential properties at Croythorn House.

The site is enclosed on its north, east and west boundaries by 2.6 metre high stone walls. The wall along the northern boundary is a continuation of the boundary wall to the neighbouring Dean Cemetery; a category 'A' listed building (listed in 1965; LB Ref 27924).

The land to the north, within the site, is comprised predominantly of hard surfaced car parking spaces and associated manoeuvring space. There is a shared access pend

through the central part of the building to the enclosed car parking space behind and predominantly servicing the neighbouring office building. There is a triangular shaped area of grass and trees to the west of the building. To the east is the vehicular access from Ravelston Terrace. At the eastern boundary wall is an access ramp and steps leading to a fire escape door set within the northern boundary wall.

The building is brick built in a dark red brown colour with horizontal glazing at each of the floor levels. On the flat roof there is ventilation and other associated plant.

The application site lies within the north western extent of Edinburgh's World Heritage Site.

This property is located within the Dean Conservation Area.

1.2 Site History

The relevant site history is:

Note: All applications relate to both the Dunedin House and Dean House buildings, as they were a single property at that time.

1 April 1987 - planning permission was approved for alterations to Dunedin House (application reference A/00404/87).

21 October 1987 - planning permission was approved for the erection of a satellite dish (application reference A/02040/87).

31 August 1990 - planning permission was approved for alterations to Dunedin House (application reference A/01922/90).

13 March 1991 - planning permission was approved for the erection of an entrance canopy (Ref A/00262/91).

27 April 2001 - planning permission was approved for the demolition of an existing single-storey office block and the erection of new three-storey office block with under-build parking (building that is now Dean House). The under-build parking was serviced by means of the existing pend through Dunedin House (application reference 00/02956/FUL).

5 August 2002 - planning permission was approved for the formation of gas supply and bin store housing, north east external corner of the Dean House site (application reference 02/02044/FUL).

23 Ravelston Terrace (Croythorn House)

13 December 2005 - planning permission was approved for the refurbishment and extension of the existing office building to form residential units with associated car parking (application reference 04/04401/FUL).

2. Main report

2.1 Description Of The Proposal

The application is for a proposed change of use of an existing four-storey office block to form residential flatted properties, including the erection of an addition floor level to the roof and the re-cladding of the building. It is proposed to form 32 residential units over five floors together with associated car parking for 36 vehicles, including one space that is disability compliant. Access is to be taken by the existing vehicular access from Ravelston Terrace.

The proposal also includes the provision of communal gymnasium, sauna/steam-room, bin store and cycle storage all within the building at ground floor level. An existing single-storey entrance area, on the south eastern part of the building, is proposed to be demolished.

The building measures 57.6 metres in length by 14.4 metres in depth to a parapet roof height of 12.4 metres. With the addition of a fifth floor, this will be 15.4 metres.

The proposed 32 residential units include 28 two-bed and 4 three-bed units with internal floor space of between 76 and 117 square metres; comprised as follows:

- Four, two-bed units at 76 square metres;
- Four, two-bed units at 77 square metres;
- Twelve, two-bed units at 78 square metres;
- Three, two-bed units at 83 square metres;
- Three, two-bed units at 88 square metres;
- Two, two-bed units at 106 square metres;
- Two, three-bed units at 108 square metres;
- One, three-bed unit at 115 square metres; and
- One, three-bed unit at 117 square metres.

It is proposed to face the existing brick face of the building with beige coloured, stone effect rendered and cedar wood panels, changing the existing horizontal orientation with new vertical features. The new upper floor section is flat roofed and is to be faced in glazing with dark grey, powder coated sections.

The southern elevation includes the insertion of eleven, three and four-storey height triangular projections. These extend 1.5 metres from the face of the building and will ensure that the windows to the associated flats are angled at 30 degrees from the rear elevation, facing both to the east and west.

The areas around the building will be mainly car parking with some small areas of planting, including 75.4 square metres of landscaping immediately under and along the northern side of the existing building. The area of landscaping extends in total to 429 square metres. The fifth floor also provides balcony areas to a total of 50.2 square metres; a total area of 479.2 square metres within an overall site of 2,617 square metres; equivalent to 18.3%.

The revised scheme provides greater detail to the application with regard to the landscaping, access, daylight impact, cycle parking and overlooking details.

The applicant has submitted supporting statements including:

- Design and Access Statement;
- Transport Statement;
- SUDS-Drainage Strategy;
- Architectural Statement; and
- Sustainability-Energy Assessment.

These are available to view on the Planning and Building Standards on-line 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 the proposal is acceptable in this location;
- (b) the works will adversely impact on the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building or its setting;
- (c) the proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- (d) the proposed scale, form, design and materials are acceptable;
- (e) the proposals affect road safety;
- (f) the proposals will result in an unreasonable loss of neighbouring amenity;
- (g) the proposals provided sufficient amenity for the future occupiers of the development;
- (h) the proposals have any equalities or human rights impacts;
- (i) comments raised have been addressed.

a) The Acceptability of the Proposal in this Location

The Council's up-to-date policy position (as identified in the Proposed Edinburgh Local Development Plan, March 2013) seeks to direct new office development to the city centre, as defined, and to other specifically identified locations elsewhere in the city area. It does not seek to prevent the loss of existing office premises, outwith those

defined areas, such as at this location. Accordingly, the loss of office space, as a result of this proposal, would not be detrimental to the wider overall objectives of sustainable development of the city in this instance.

The application site also stands within the Urban Area as defined by the Edinburgh City Local Plan. Policy Emp 4 does not protect existing office uses. The loss of office use is therefore acceptable. In terms of housing, Policy Hou 5 supports conversion to residential provided the proposals are compatible with other policies in the plan.

Other relevant consideration to the assessment of the detailed elements of this application are, the provisions of policy Des 1 and Hou 7, supplemented by the 'Edinburgh Design Guidance' and the 'Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing' guidance.

In terms of developer contributions, as the proposal is in excess of 20 units, affordable housing provision should normally be on-site and integrated with the remainder of the development. The applicant has entered into discussion and agreed in principle with officers to provide a commuted sum in the event that the application is granted planning permission. An education contribution would also be required.

In principle, conversion to residential is acceptable, provided the detailed proposals are compatible with other policies in the plan. These are considered below.

b) Impact on the Listed Building and its Setting

The application site is bounded on its northern side by a 2.6 metre high stone wall. That wall is a continuation of the northern boundary wall fronting Dean Cemetery, immediately to the east, and forms part of a category 'A' listed building. The application proposes no works or alterations to the wall.

The Dean Cemetery, to the east of the site, is also a listed building. The application does not include any works at the eastern boundary of the site. The cemetery is bounded by a number of mature trees along its western boundary. As such, the proposed alterations to the existing building will have little or no impact on the setting of the cemetery.

The Mary Erskine and Stewart's Melville College campus, to the west of the site, is also listed including the northern gatehouse and associated boundary wall. This forms a continuation of the site boundary wall. The eastern part of the school grounds is bounded by a number of mature trees and again the proposed alterations to the existing building would have little or no impact on the setting of the main listed building and the boundary wall in particular.

Accordingly, there would be no detrimental impact on the setting of the listed boundary wall, the adjoining Dean Cemetery or The Mary Erskine and Stewart's Melville College campus.

c) Impact on Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The Dean Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies that the application site stands within the northern plateau area, set to the north of the original Dean Village. This is within an area of extension, to the original Dean Conservation Area, made in March 2007.

That area is characterised by buildings, mainly large listed buildings, set within extensive grounds; The Mary Erskine and Stewart's Melville College campus to the west, The Dean Church and associated cemetery to the east, the Dean Gallery to the south and Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art to the south west.

The application site, together with Dean House and the converted Croythorn House to the south, stands at variance with the prevailing character and appearance of the conservation area in general. However, the building currently has a neutral impact on the conservation area.

The existing flat roofed building presents a horizontal appearance when viewed from the principal vantage points along Queensferry Road. This reflects the long horizontal form of the extended Dean Cemetery boundary wall over which the upper part of Dunedin House is viewed. The dark colour of the brick and the tinted glazing result in a building that sits low within its setting, framed to the south by the higher Dean House and Croythorn House beyond. The ends of the building are broken by the mature trees located to both the east and west of, but mainly outwith, the application site.

It is proposed to add a fifth floor to the existing building; an addition of 3.0 metres that in parts is set back from the edges of the existing flat roof. That section is also flat roofed and is to be faced in glazing with dark grey, powder coated sections which will allow it to be subsumed within the form and appearance of the wider building. There is an existing central section of ventilation and other plant on the roof so the additional level would not, therefore, significantly increase the existing height of the building.

However, the proposal also includes the addition of beige coloured, stone effect rendered and cedar wood panels. These are not characteristic of the conservation area where buildings are of stone and slate construction and there are no other examples of such materials locally within the conservation area. Those panels are to be applied in alternating vertical sections changing the existing horizontal orientation of the building with new vertical features. They will also significantly lighten the overall appearance of the building within its present setting, thereby drawing attention to the building and increasing its appearance within the prevailing streetscape on the southern side of Queensferry Road.

The existing building, together with the two other buildings here, is constructed of facing materials that are not characteristic of this part of the conservation area either. Nonetheless, the existing building appears as a low key intervention within this part of the Queensferry Road streetscape. The proposal, more vertical in emphasis, represents a much more interventionist form of appearance, more diverse from the character of the area and of greater impact on the overall appearance of the locality.

At present, the building preserves the appearance of the conservation area at this location. However, the proposed alterations will result in a more noticeable, modern intervention of vertical emphasis that would increase the visual prominence of the building. The modern materials and form do not conform to the existing character of the buildings within this part of the conservation area and as such would neither preserve nor enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area at this location.

d) Scale, Form, Design and Materials

The proposal represents residential units that, in terms of the proposed floor space, comply in full with the provisions contained within the Edinburgh Design Guidance for one, two and three bedroom flatted properties.

The proposed addition of an additional floor of accommodation to the building would not in itself result in an overdevelopment of the existing site. However, the proposed number of residential units and, therefore, the associated area set aside for off-street car parking and manoeuvring, results in very poor levels of external, usable amenity space.

These proposed external alterations and the proposed materials will result in a more noticeable, modern intervention of vertical emphasis that would increase the visual prominence of the building to the detriment of the appearance of the building and to the wider character and appearance of the prevailing streetscape of Queensferry Road.

e) Road Safety Issues

The conversion will utilise an existing means of vehicular access to the site. It is proposed to rationalise the existing car parking arrangement to provide 36 car parking spaces, including one space that is disability compliant, and to provide an internal cycle rack storage facility capable of securing 64 bicycles.

Concern has been raised that the present proposal does not suitably address access issues. In particular there would be future conflict between residential occupants and the occupants of the commercial office premises at Dean House.

The existing office use, 1,974 square metres of floor space, presently is served by 54 car parking space. In terms of the Council's Parking Standards an office of this scale would require between 17 and 33 spaces. Those standards would also require 32 spaces for the proposed residential development. Accordingly, in traffic generation terms the proposal would not generate any greater level of traffic than that of the existing office use.

The proposed use of the existing vehicular access does not raise any road safety issues. Also, as there is adequate off-street parking space within the site, any existing on-street parking congestion, within the neighbouring public roads, would not be made worse as a result of the development.

When Dean House was extended, its car parking area was served by the shared vehicular access which passes through the ground floor pend access of the application property. There are no works that would inhibit the continued passage of vehicles along the length of this access.

Transport is satisfied that the proposal fully addresses all of the original transport concerns and that the proposal would not result in any road safety issues within the vicinity of the development site.

f) Neighbouring Amenity

There are no other residential properties within close proximity of the application site that would be impacted as a result of the proposed development.

Although concern has been raised at potential conflict between the existing and proposed uses it should be noted that commercial office use and residential dwellings are compatible uses throughout a number of mixed development sites across the city. Therefore, there would be no detrimental levels of conflict as a result of the juxtaposition of the two uses at this location.

The northern elevation of Dean House stands 14.3 metres to the south of the southern elevation of the application property and is conterminous with it for a distance of 43.6 metres.

In 2001 when planning permission was granted for erection of Dean House, the two buildings formed part of a single property wholly in use as a commercial office. Accordingly, this limited separation distance was not a material issue in granting that permission.

The separation distance between the two buildings would not adequately protect the privacy and outlook for residential properties. However, the applicant has provided amended plans that introduce triangular projections that ensure that the windows are angled from the rear elevation so that they face both to the east and west, between the buildings. This ensures that there would be no direct window to window loss of privacy, either due to a sufficient off-setting or these angled windows, in compliance with the guidance.

In terms of skylight factor, the ground floor windows in Dean House would not be impacted as a result of the increased height of the application property; neither would that property be affected in terms of any additional overshadowing, as a result of the increase height of the building.

The revised scheme would not result in any detrimental impact on the existing levels of amenity presently enjoyed by the occupants of the neighbouring property.

g) Amenity of Future Occupants

Although in principle the conversion to housing of redundant commercial buildings, contributes to housing needs in the city, the provisions of policy Hou 5 seek to ensure that satisfactory living conditions are achieved for the future occupants of the proposed development. In that regard, the development should be compatible with nearby uses and provide a satisfactory residential amenity for the future occupants; including appropriate levels of open space, amenity and car parking standards.

The application site is in a part of the conservation area characterised by high density developments set within little or no open space. This stands in variance with the wider conservation area context characterised by properties set within extensive grounds.

That external space is further limited given the extent of the required car parking and associated manoeuvring space and that it almost entirely within the shadow of either the application building, or Dean House to the south. Accordingly, the limited level of open space has a reduced amenity value.

The application identifies an area of 429 square metres at ground level and a further 50.2 square metres of balcony space at fifth floor level. This is equivalent to 18.3% of the overall site and less than the minimum guideline requirement of 20%. However,

that space would mostly be unusable. It is comprised of relatively small and fragmented plots; the ends of the car parking spaces, narrow boundary strips and 75 square metres located directly underneath the building. None of this could be considered to be 'usable' space in regards to policy. This leaves a single usable area of 260.4 square metres, in the north-western corner of the site, equivalent to 9.9% of the site area.

Accordingly, the provision of exterior amenity space falls significantly below the minimum guidance level of 20%.

As a consequence of the southern elevation alterations all of the windows, serving bedrooms or other secondary rooms, would have no direct skylight penetration. The angled construction of the windows would prevent any view of the skyline, as identified in the guidance, and therefore would prevent an adequate level of daylight into those rooms. Although the principal rooms are unaffected, this would reduce the level of suitably lit accommodation within the properties to approximately half of the available floor area. This would reduce the effective levels of internal amenity for the future occupants of a significant number of the proposed properties.

Environmental Assessment has raised no objections to the proposal. They have suggested conditions, specifically regarding glazing, to mitigate road traffic noise, and construction mitigation measures, relating to the ground floor gymnasium; but neither is a material planning consideration. Road traffic noise here would be no worse than that existing for other residential developments elsewhere along this part of Queensferry Road. It is therefore inappropriate to prevent residential development within a built up part of the city based on road traffic noise.

Overall, the level of both internal and external amenity for the future occupants of the proposed residential conversion would not meet the expected standards necessary for such accommodation to the detriment of the amenity for the future occupants of the development.

h) Equalities and Human Rights Impacts

This application has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

i) Public Comments

Material Representations

- Loss of office space will reduce office space availability within the city - assessed in section 2.3(a) and found not to be detrimental in the overall balance of the proposed development of the site.
- Non-compliance with policy Emp 4, adverse impact on Dean House as an office property - assessed in section 2.3(a) and found not to have a detrimental impact on future viability of the existing office use.
- Recent change to a more residential character of area - assessed in section 2.3(a) and found not to be detrimental in the overall balance of the proposed development of the site.
- Intensity of development will compromise the character of the area - assessed in section 2.3(a) and found not to be detrimental in the overall balance of the proposed development of the site.

- Overdevelopment of the existing building and the site - assessed in section 2.3(d) and found that it would have a detrimental impact in terms of the wider character and appearance of the prevailing streetscape.
- Additional traffic disturbance to neighbours - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found not to have a detrimental impact.
- Inadequate vehicular access, unsuitable for large vehicles - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found that the vehicular access would be adequate for the level of traffic generated by the development.
- Too many car parking spaces - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found that the number of spaces was within the acceptable levels for a development of this scale.
- Result in additional traffic generation and not use of public transport - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found that in terms of planning control the proposal was acceptable in policy and road safety terms.
- Existing on-street parking congestion - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found that the proposal would not worsen any existing on-street parking congestion.
- Dual use of and impact on existing vehicular access and parking at Dean House - assessed in section 2.3(e) and found that the vehicular access would be adequate for development and would also be a private legal matter between the two parties.
- Close proximity of office use may result in disturbance and tension between occupiers - assessed in section 2.3(g) and found not to be detrimental in the overall balance of the proposed development of the site.
- Inadequate distance between Dunedin House and Dean House resulting in privacy issues - assessed in section 2.3(g) and found not to be detrimental to the proposed development of the site.
- Insufficient green space to serve this scale of development - assessed in section 2.3(g) and found that the provision of exterior amenity space within the site falls significantly below the minimum guidance level.

Non-material Representations

- There is no right in title for construction traffic access - would be a private legal matter between the two parties.

Community Council Comments

- Retention of Queensferry Road boundary wall - assessed in section 2.3(b) and found that the proposal would have no impact on the existing wall.
- Impact on the conservation area - assessed in section 2.3(c) and found that the proposals do not conform to the existing character of this part of the conservation area.
- Impact on the neighbouring school buildings and setting - assessed in section 2.3(c) and found not to have any direct detrimental impact.
- Design and materials - assessed in section 2.3(d) and found that these would increase the visual prominence of the building to the detriment of the wider streetscape of Queensferry Road.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposals do not comply with the Edinburgh Local Plan and the Council's non-statutory guidance and would not preserve or enhance the character

and appearance of the conservation area and would result in an inappropriate level or residential amenity for future residential occupants of the development. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Addendum to Assessment

The application was considered at the Development Management Sub-Committee on 12 February 2014.

Committee continued the application for the Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards to request the applicant to provide further information on matters of:

- the provision of amenity issues that may affect neighbouring properties and future residents;
- the material and design of the proposed cladding;
- the number of affordable housing units; and daylighting.

Revised plans have been received that seek to address these issues.

In terms of amenity, the amendments seek to remove two of the 34 off-street car parking spaces and the adjacent associated manoeuvring space. This area is replaced by an equivalent area of open space. Consequently, this represents an increase over the previous level of open space from 479.2 square metres to 545.2 square metres; from 18.3% of the overall site area to 20.8%.

This provision of exterior amenity space exceeds the minimum guidance level of 20%.

However, the single, usable area of 286 square metres, in the north-western corner of the site, would be equivalent to 11% of the overall site area. The remainder would still be comprised of relatively small and fragmented plots that could not be considered to be 'usable' space in regards to policy.

Transport has responded stating that the revision consisting of 32 spaces for the proposed conversion would still comply with the Council's Parking Standards for a development of this scale. In transport terms, there are no objections to the proposal.

Concerning the material and design of the proposed cladding, the applicant contends that:

"Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas Development) is reliant on non statutory guidance on 'Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas'.

The report states that 'the proposed external alterations and materials would result in a prominent building that would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area'. This is contested and it is suggested that the re-development would significantly enhance the character and appearance of the locality.

The second reason for refusal is made without reference to the fact that a myriad of materials and finishes are evident within the Dean Conservation Area. Dunedin House relates more to Queensferry Road and Orchard Brae House opposite rather than the

core conservation area. In addition, the Council has had possession of the proposed drawing details since the end of November 2013 without any adverse comment.

There is no objection from Historic Scotland or the World Heritage Organisation in relation to Policy Env 1.

However, it is possible that the scheme can be controlled to assist in overcoming the Councils objections as articulated in the committee report. It is suggested that this 'Reason for Refusal' can be overcome by imposing a straightforward condition on any consent to be granted here:

By making the external cladding, colour and finish proposed for the exterior to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in order to reduce the perceived prominence of the building."

Consequently, no revised scheme has been submitted for the external design, appearance and materials of the re-clad building.

The issue of the design of the external appearance of the building is more fundamental than that which could be achieved by means of a revised scheme of materials and therefore, a condition would not appropriately deal with those issues in this instance.

This does not alter the original recommendation with regard to the materials and design of the proposed cladding of the building.

In terms of affordable housing, a revised consultation response has been received from Housing. This confirms that an open book viability assessment has been carried out evidencing that the delivery of on-site affordable housing would render the development unviable. Accordingly, it was agreed between council officers and the applicant that a commuted sum would be acceptable for this development.

The affordable housing requirement for this development is 8 homes and therefore the sum of £200,000 will be payable by way of a commuted sum. There is confidence that this sum can be utilised to assist in the provision of affordable homes on another site within the same or adjacent ward within 5 years.

There is additional information submitted concerning matters of daylight into the rooms, on the rear elevation of the building. This seeks to insert additional opaque windows within the triangular projections and a revised drawing identifying, more clearly, the cross-sectional skyline views from within those properties in compliance with the guidance.

The proposal will provide an additional level of daylight into those rooms without compromising issues of overlooking from the adjoining office building.

Whilst these alterations and supplementary information represent a degree of improvement over the previous scheme of development, the original recommendation for Refusal remains.

However, mindful of the contractual burdens upon the applicant and the associated requirement for a determination at this time, a schedule of conditions is proposed, if Committee is minded to overturn the recommendation in this instance as follows;

Conditions:

1. Notwithstanding the details hereby approved and prior to the commencement of any work on the site, full details of the external design, finishes and materials shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning and Building Standards and thereafter the development of the building shall be carried out in full with that approved scheme, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Building Standards.
2. Prior to the commencement of any development on the site, full details of a landscape plan, including details of all hard and soft surface and boundary treatments and all planting, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning and Building Standards.
3. The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented within six months of the completion of the development.

Reasons:

1. In order to enable the Head of Planning and Building Standards to consider these matters in detail.
2. In order to ensure that a high standard of landscaping is achieved, appropriate to the location of the site.
3. In order to ensure that the approved landscaping works are properly established on site.

Informatives

1. Permission should not be issued until the applicant has entered into a suitable legal agreement to ensure that affordable housing is provided in accordance with Council policy.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.
3. No development shall take place on the site until a 'Notice of Intention to Develop' has been made in writing to the Council stating the intended date on which the development is to commence. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of planning control, under Section 123(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
4. As soon as practicable upon the completion of the development of the site, as authorised in the associated grant of permission, a 'Notice of Completion of Development' must be given, in writing to the Council.

3. Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below

3.2 Conditions/reasons

Conditions:-

Reasons:-

1. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Hou 5 in respect of Conversion to Housing, as interpreted using the non-statutory Edinburgh Design Guidance, as the proposed residential conversion represents an overall form of development that is too large and out of scale with the very limited extent of the application site boundaries resulting in a detrimental level of amenity for the future occupants of those properties.

2. The proposal is contrary to Edinburgh City Local Plan Policy Env 6 in respect of Conservation Areas - Development, and to non-statutory guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, as the proposed external alterations and materials proposed would result in a prominent building that would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Statutory Development Plan Provision

Edinburgh City Local Plan - Urban Area, designated Conservation Area, designed landscape and World Heritage site.

Date registered

1 August 2013

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01,03-09,16,19, 22, 24, 26 + 29-37,

Scheme 3

David R. Leslie

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Edinburgh City Local Plan.

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 11 (Alterations and Extensions) sets criteria for assessing alterations and extensions to existing buildings.

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

Policy Env 7 (Historic Gardens & Designed Landscapes) establishes a presumption against development that would be detrimental to Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes.

Policy Hou 5 (Conversion to Housing) sets criteria for assessing the change of use to residential.

Policy Hou 7 (Affordable Housing) requires 25% affordable housing provision in residential development of twelve or more units.

Policy Emp 4 (Employment Sites and Premises) sets out criteria for development proposals affecting business & industry sites and premises.

Policy Tra 4 (Private Car Parking) requires private car parking provision to comply with the parking levels set out in supplementary planning guidance, and sets criteria for assessing lower provision.

Policy Tra 5 (Private Cycle Parking) requires cycle parking provision in accordance with levels set out in supplementary guidance.

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

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

Non-statutory guidelines on Developer Contributions and Affordable Housing gives guidance on the situations where developers will be required to provide affordable housing and/or will be required to make financial or other contributions towards the cost

of, providing new facilities for schools, transport improvements, the tram project, public realm improvements and open space.

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.

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

Other Relevant policy guidance

The Dean Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the distinctive village character of the streetscape within Dean Village, the heritage of high quality buildings, the limited range of building materials, the predominance of residential uses, and the importance of the Water of Leith and its corridor.

Appendix 1

Consultations

Environmental Assessment

The application proposes the change of use of offices to residential flats. A school with associated school grounds and sports field is situated to the west. A cemetery is situated to east and offices are to the south.

Queensferry Road bounds the site to the north which is a main thoroughfare into central Edinburgh and it is therefore likely that the application premises will be affected by road traffic noise. Environmental Assessment is of the opinion that traffic noise should be adequately mitigated to ensure that internal noise levels are commensurate with the "good" standards as prescribed within BS 8233.

The application also proposes to site a gym on the ground floor of the application premises with residential properties situated immediately above. Gyms can be a source of significant noise and vibration to affect surrounding, structurally attached residential properties. Satisfactorily addressing these issues can be especially difficult to mitigate when proposed within conversion applications as a bespoke solution cannot be introduced at the design stage.

The offices to the south are large, very close to the application properties and likely to have considerable operational plant. It is recommended that the exact site of any plant and any associated noise be investigated to ensure that such noise does not impact upon the amenity of the application properties should the application gain consent.

Therefore, Environmental Assessment is not in a position to support the application until a noise impact assessment is provided which satisfactorily addresses the above noise and vibration concerns.

Revised consultation

The application proposes the change of use of offices to residential flats. A school with associated school grounds and sports field is situated to the west. A cemetery is situated to east and offices are to the south.

Queensferry Road bounds the site to the north which is a main thoroughfare into central Edinburgh. Therefore, a noise impact assessment has been provided which recommends mitigation in the form of glazing to ensure that acceptable internal noise levels will be achieved. The mitigation measures recommended within the assessment are recommended within a condition below.

The noise impact assessment has also considered the noise and vibration impacts associated with the proposed gym on the ground floor and plant associated with the office premises to the south. Mitigation measures have been recommended for the

gym floor and ceiling which are shown within a recommended condition below. Plant noise was also found to be at acceptable levels.

Therefore, Environmental Assessment has no objections to this proposed development subject to the following condition:

The enhancements to the building envelope, as defined in the Charlie Fleming Associates 'Report on Traffic, Mechanical Services and Gym Noise' report (Ref: 2202-01-R and dated 31 October 2013), shall be carried out in full and completed prior to the first use of the building as residential properties.

Those works comprise construction improvements to the:

- Glazing*

- 6mm and 10mm thick panes of normal float glass, separated by a 12mm wide cavity. The glazing should be installed in bedroom windows on the northern, western and eastern elevations of the building.*

- Gym Ceiling and Floor*

The separating floor between the gym and the flat above will be constructed as follows:

- 22mm thick tongued and grooved chipboard flooring.*
- Resilient Cradle and Batten System by CMS Danskin Acoustics.*
- 150mm thick cast in-situ concrete slab.*
- 500mm deep void formed by metal wire suspension system.*
- Mineral fibre lay in ceiling tiles.*

- The gym floor will be constructed as follows:*

- A floating floor consisting of one of the following products:*
 - i. Reflex Bearer by CMS Danskin Acoustics*
 - ii. Premier RD Batten by Delta Acoustic Systems*
 - iii. Monarfloor Acoustic Batten System by Monarfloor Acoustic Systems*
 - iv. Profloor Dynamic Batten by Proctor Group*

Transport

Whilst Transport has no objections to the application in principle, there are a number of issues which are not adequately addressed in the Transport Statement and other supporting documents. I would be grateful for the applicant's comments on the following:

1. Transport Strategy:

a) no evidence is provided to support the statements set out in para.3.3 of the Planning Statement that:

"It is not expected that there will be any discernible impact on transport issues resulting from the change of use. Indeed, the residents will be pre-disposed to taking sustainable public transport cycling and walking. There is adequate roads and junction capacity to accommodate trip movements at peak periods from the existing use";

b) no information is provided under the heading para.4.4 Surveys/Modelling;

c) little or no information is provided in support of the Summary and Conclusions, para.5:-

- Dunedin House is in a highly sustainable location within the Edinburgh Urban Area within close proximity to the city centre:*

- *Development of the site is in accordance with the Development Plan Transport Policies and the Local Transport Strategy for Edinburgh:*
 - *The site is well located for public transport and is in easy walking distance to all local facilities and community services:*
 - *Internal layout of the site is in accordance with design standards and guidelines;*
 - *Road safety:*
 - *Access to emergency vehicles and statutory services;*
- d) *no information regarding cycle parking provision including numbers, location, design and specification;*
2. *Current Council standards require public access from an adoptable road to be within 30 metres for residential developments. In this case, in view of the existing building and access road, I am prepared to waive this requirement provided that adequate pedestrian access is maintained. I would therefore wish to see the existing gate on Queensferry Road to be permanently unlocked and a suitable ramp constructed at a gradient of no more than 1:12.*

Therefore, the application should be continued.

Correspondence with Applicant - 8 November 2013

It appears from the drawings that the cycle racks are not a good design.

Stands which only support the wheels mean that the cycles can fall over and twist the wheel and provide little opportunity to lock the cycle securely. We are looking for high quality stands which support the frame and give good locking positions. The 'Sheffield' style rack is the preferred choice and is deceptively simple in its design.

We are always open to innovative design but it must meet the user's needs first. If there is a compromise to be made due to lack of available space then we would rather compromise on numbers and not on quality.

Revised consultation

Further to my memorandum of 8 November 2013 and to our subsequent telephone conversations, I can confirm that the proposed two-tier cycle rack design is acceptable.

I believe that all the Transport aspects have now been addressed.

Transport Revised consultation

Confirms that current Council parking standards is for 1 space per unit in this area. Therefore, the proposed 32 spaces for 32 units are sufficient.

Affordable Housing

Services for Communities have developed a methodology for assessing housing requirements by tenure, which supports an Affordable Housing Policy (AHP) for the city.

- *The AHP makes the provision of affordable housing a planning condition for sites over a particular size. The proportion of affordable housing required is set at a minimum of 25% (of total units) for all proposals of 12 units or more.*

- *This is consistent with Policy Hou 7 Affordable Housing in the Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP).*

This proposal is for the conversion of an existing office building to form 32 residential apartments. In terms of the AHP a provision of 8 (25%) homes of approved affordable housing tenures will therefore require to be provided on site.

The applicant states that they would prefer not to integrate affordable housing into the development due to design and management issues, and they would wish to pay a commuted sum instead. However, no satisfactory justification has been submitted to support this. The AHP requires that on sites of over 20 or more dwellings, provision should normally be on site. This would only be varied where exceptional circumstances are evidenced from an open book viability appraisal.

There are a broad range of delivery options in Edinburgh, and in 96% of cases a viable delivery mechanism is found that produces affordable housing on-site. The broad range of approved affordable tenure types including subsidised, unsubsidised, rented and low cost home ownership (LCHO) options.

The applicant has argued that the management of the properties may be an issue in this case. However, LCHO options allow for the properties to be sold to eligible purchasers thus negating any issues in relation to management of the properties. In terms of design, the AHP sets out that affordable homes should be well integrated with market housing and as such offers the opportunity for the developer to provide a well integrated representative mix of affordable homes within the development. Therefore, we do not consider design and management issues to be a justification for off-site provision of affordable housing on this site.

In terms of the AHP this site has the potential to deliver on site affordable housing in line with Policy Hou 7 of the Edinburgh City Local Plan. However, this proposal makes no commitment to the provision of this.

As such, in order to be in a position to recommend approval, this department requires the following additional information from the applicant:

- *a commitment to the provision of 8 on site affordable homes of approved tenures*
- *confirmation of location of the affordable homes*
- *evidence of tenure blind design elements*
- *a commitment to securing this through a Section 75 legal agreement*

The above issues have been raised with the applicant in pre-application discussions for this site, and the Council has been consistent in providing this same steer for sites throughout the city.

Should the requested information not be forthcoming we would recommend refusal on the grounds that the proposal does not satisfy the terms of the AHP.

Affordable Housing Revised consultation

Confirm that an open book viability assessment has been carried out. This process has evidenced that the delivery of onsite affordable housing would render the development unviable.

Various approved affordable housing tenures were discussed with the applicant, in particular golden share; however, it was ascertained from the information provided that the value of golden share properties would be too high to be considered as reasonable.

As such it has been agreed between the Council Officials and the applicant that a commuted sum will be acceptable for this development.

In addition to the above it should be noted that the applicant was keen to provide onsite affordable homes. However, after lengthy discussions and the provision of evidence that this would not be viable it was agreed with Council officials that a payment of a commuted sum would be the most suitable solution.

The affordable housing requirement for this development is 8 homes and therefore the sum of £200,000 will be payable by way of a commuted sum. There is confidence that this sum can be utilised to assist in the provision of affordable homes on another site within the same or adjacent Ward within 5 years.

Children and Families

These comments are based on a residential development of 32 units which I have treated as flatted development.

This site is located within the catchment areas of:

- Flora Stevenson Primary School;*
- St Mary's (Edinburgh) RC Primary School;*
- Broughton High School; and*
- St Thomas of Aquin's RC High School.*

There is currently spare capacity at Broughton High School and in respect of RC provision, where there is capacity issues, management controls will be applied to give priority to baptised Roman Catholics.

Flora Stevenson Primary School is facing accommodation pressure and a feasibility study is being undertaken on options for expanding the school. Another possible alternative given the constrained school site is to undertake a catchment review, with extra accommodation being provided in the adjacent school catchment.

Developer contributions will be sought to help address the accommodation pressures at Flora Stevenson Primary School. Based on 32 flats the required contributions would be £10,275. Payment of contributions will be index linked to the BICS All in Tender Price Index with a base date of October 2009.

Historic Scotland

Thank you for your consultation dated 2 August.

We have considered your consultation and have no comments to make on the proposals. We confirm that your Council should proceed to determine the application without further reference to us.

Police Scotland

It is recommended that this application seeks SBD accreditation, it has to be noted that the guidance will be changing in the near future from 2010 to 2013, which will determine the requirements.

All ground floor flat entrance doors and windows have to meet the PAS 24 standard with laminate glass (impact tested or 6.4 mm) as well as balcony doors, windows and any window that is accessible from design features above ground floor.

Ideally entry from Queensferry Road should be at least a 1.8 metre weld mesh gated access control with a similar fence line as required along with anti-climb measures as required. Entry onto the side from this direction would be limited to residents only. Depending on the height of the wall adjacent to the pedestrian footpath, this may have to be heightened by means of a fence to limit the opportunities of getting into the site.

Good illumination of car parking areas will be paramount, especially those spaces that are under cover.

The pend should be fenced and an access controlled gated, there should be no gaps to get over or under so it covers the full aperture at either end to ensure there is no unwanted access into the area and it is not misused, good illumination of the area will also be paramount.

In terms of the 'Storage' it is unclear what would be stored and who would use it - understanding those parameters would determine any recommendations made, it may be due to value or importance of the items stored that the level of door security and an additional measure such as an alarm would be considered.

Cycle Storage it would be better if the entry door to cycle store was directly into the common stair as there is no or limited natural surveillance of the door in its current location - if the pend is access controlled this limits concerns, if it is not then the entrance door should be moved onto the northern aspect. It should be a windowless room with a single leaf 44 mm solid core door with lock to BS 3621:2007 or a PAS 24 door. The cycle should have stands and not racks, which allow better securing of the bike to it a rack simply supports the wheel of the cycle. If the store was further subdivided for each stair, this would create further layers. If the cycle stores were access controlled by means of a fob or card it could allow an overview of users with an ability to remove a fob/card if it has been lost, stolen or the user has moved on. If it is a key access then these should be issued to residents who want to use it.

Depending on the equipment installed in the gym facility - for instance a flat screen TV for use by users. The entrance door into the gym should be access controlled, ideally a card system that persons who have left the premises can be removed easily from the system and not allowed entry (if push button access locks require to be re-coded at least monthly and a secure method of passing the code to residents, so that the facility does not get used by non residents). Ensuring that the area is alarmed out of hours will discourage misuse. Windows for the gym should not be able to be opened or closed by users to ensure that they are left insecure and offer an opportunity for criminals.

The main entrance doors are slightly recessed which limits natural surveillance from either side.

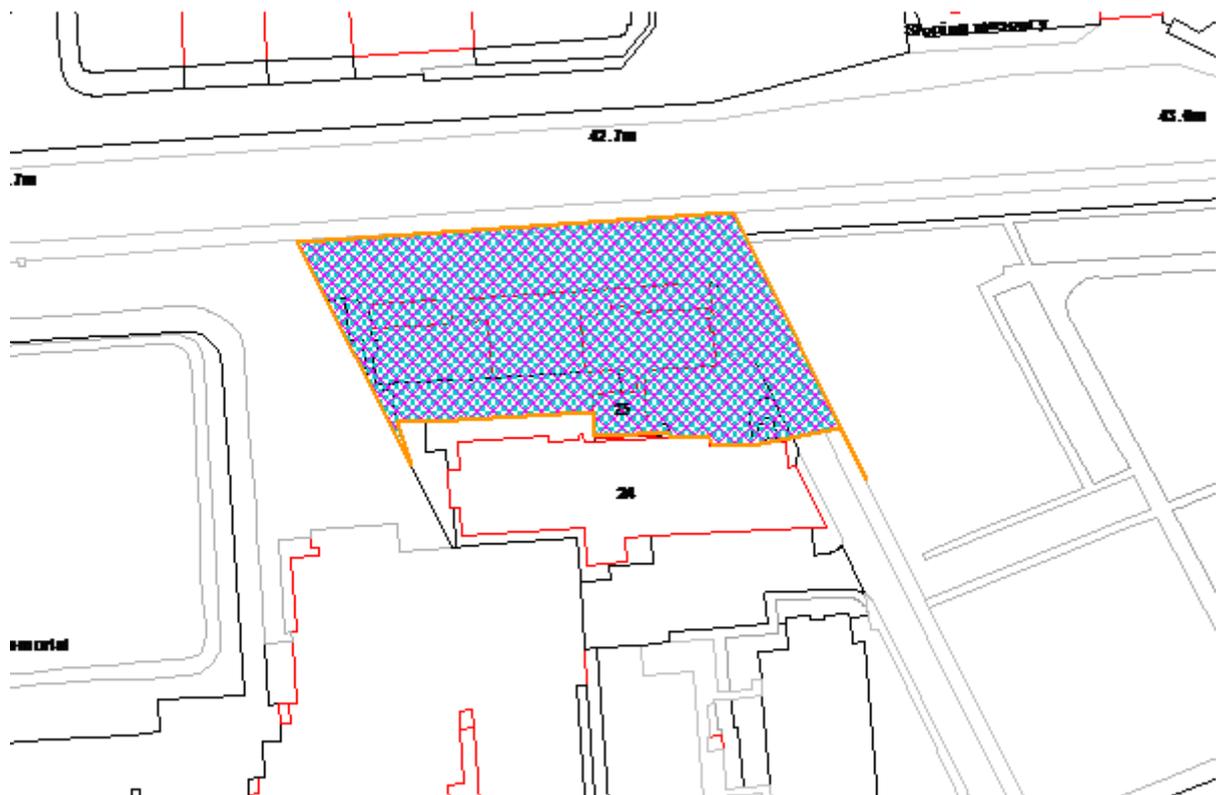
Post Delivery to flats should either be by means of a mail box which allows delivery of mail from outside the premises and collected by residents inside or an 'airlock' created

with an outer door with an access control button and an inner door with no access control button but mail delivery boxes located between the two doors.

Ideally the lift and stair access should be access controlled, which would limit any unwanted movement in the premises.

Ideally meter reading should be done by service providers electronically (remotely) or from outside the stair so that access is not required into the premises.

Location Plan



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