

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 29 April 2015

**Application for Listed Building Consent 14/05148/LBC  
At 27,29,31 James Craig , Walk , Edinburgh  
Internal and external alterations and ancillary works.**

<b>Item number</b>	7.3 (b)
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	A11 - City Centre

## Summary

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The application complies with the Development plan and Edinburgh Planning Guidelines. The proposals represent a significant improvement on what currently exists and represent conservation gain. The proposals enhance the character of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## Links

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[Policies and guidance for this application](#)      LPC, CITE4, CITE6, NSG, NSLBCA,

# Report

## **Application for Listed Building Consent 14/05148/LBC At 27,29,31 James Craig , Walk , Edinburgh Internal and external alterations and ancillary works.**

### **Recommendations**

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

### **Background**

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#### **2.1 Site description**

27 - 31 James Craig Walk is a five-storey tenement block located on the west side of the site of the now demolished St James Square in Edinburgh. The structure sits on a south east to north west line with James Craig Walk, a pedestrian walkway linking Leith Street and Elder Street passing along its front elevation. To the rear of the building are the gardens of Register House. Opposite the site is the St James Centre, the rear of the Thistle Hotel and New St Andrew's House.

Originally built as tenements, commencing in around 1775 to James Craig's design, the building has been much altered externally and internally to suit its changing functions. Firstly, in 1902-4 the Sasine Office extension to Register House was built and merged with 27-31 James Craig Walk, which was converted from homes to offices. In the early 1970s further change occurred with the demolition of St James Square. Finally in 2002 the building was converted from offices to student accommodation which remains its current use.

The front elevation of 27 -31 James Craig Walk is made up of five storeys over 17 bays. It steps up slightly along its length from north west to south east and the ground floor has a band course running above it as this was originally the basement level. Two pairs of modern doors provide access from street level and a ramp provides access at the north west end of the building. The first, second and third storeys have large timber sash and case windows while the attic storey vertical wall is an obvious later alteration from 1902, having replaced the original mansard, and sits uncomfortably on top of the building.

The north west elevation, largely rebuilt in 1902-4 is a 3 bay end elevation with a prominent central spiral stair.

The rear of the building is L-shaped with the section to the rear of number 27 extending further beyond the rest of the elevation. The rear of number 27 has been heavily modified much like the north west elevation with the introduction of large sash windows and a small extension was added here in 1902-4. This section rises a storey higher than the rest of the building, providing access to the flat roof that extends from number 29 to number 31.

The remainder of the rear elevation extending from 29-31 comprises regular two over two sash and case windows along its length, introduced in 1902-4.

The building is a category B listed building and was listed on 27 January 1992 (LB Ref: 30027). The building is located within the World Heritage Site.

This application site is located within the New Town Conservation Area.

## **2.2 Site History**

12 December 2014 - planning permission application (ref: 14/05147/FUL) pending consideration for change of use from student accommodation to Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services) and/or Class 4 (Business) uses and residential apartments, proposed alterations and ancillary works.

### Other Relevant History

29 April 2009 - outline planning permission (ref: 08/03361/OUT) was granted for the redevelopment and refurbishment including demolition works and new buildings to provide mixed use development comprising retail (Class 1), leisure and culture (Class 10 and Class 11), hotel (Class 7), offices (Class 4), food and drink (Class 3), residential, and other related ancillary uses (including Financial, Professional and other Services - Class 2), car parking, servicing, access arrangements, provision of new public realm and refurbishment of existing department store, detailed approval of siting and maximum height of building blocks, points of vehicular access and egress and location of pedestrian routes at the St James Centre, Edinburgh.

23 May 2014 - application for approval of matters specified in condition 23 (ii) of planning permission 08/03361/OUT (ref: 14/02070/AMC) is pending consideration.

9 October 2014 - The St James Quarter Edinburgh (Number Two) Compulsory Purchase Order 2014 was made. This site forms part of the Compulsory Purchase.

19 December 2014 - application for approval of matters specified 23 (i), (iii), (vii), (ix), (x), (xi), (xvi) and (xvii) of Planning Permission 08/03361/OUT relating to number of residential/commercial/business units, design of external features and materials, pedestrian and cycle access arrangements, treatment to adopted roads or footways, car parking venting, servicing, surface water and drainage, and hard and soft landscaping details (ref: 14/05263/AMC) is pending consideration.

24 February 2015 - The St James Quarter Edinburgh (Number Two) Compulsory Purchase Order - Under consideration of the Scottish Government's Department of Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA reference CPO-EDB-005).

## **Main report**

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### **3.1 Description Of The Proposal**

The proposals for 27-31 James Craig Walk are to convert the block into a combination of residential and commercial use. This will tie in with the wider Edinburgh St James scheme, which has outline planning permission. Specifically, the public realm to the front of the tenement will be raised up to close to its 1770s level allowing the current first floor level to revert back to being the ground floor. The obtrusive 1902-4 attic storey will be removed and a mansard roof reinstated.

A summary of the changes that are required include:

- The reintroduction of flights of steps that will lead from the raised street level to the reinstated ground floor level;
- Reintroduction of porticos at the reinstated ground floor level;
- Removal of the 1902-4 attic storey and replacement with a reinstated mansard roof and dormer windows;
- Conversion of the lower ground floor and ground floor into retail units; and
- Conversion of the first, second and third floor into residential flats.

### **3.2 Determining Issues**

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

### **3.3 Assessment**

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

- a) The proposals preserve or enhance the character of the listed building; and
- b) representations raised have been addressed.

#### **Listed Building**

a) The application property formed part of the historic St James Square, which was demolished in the early 1970s. As one of two remaining buildings of the original square, it was built in 1775 to James Craig's design but has been much altered externally and internally to suit its changing functions. The proposal seeks to restore the building to as close to the original design as possible with some contemporary interventions to the roofscape and proposed entrance platts. The conservation benefits of the proposal are significantly. The modifications that have taken place over the course of time have had a significant detrimental impact on both the character of the building and the character and appearance of the area.

Changes to the context of the building, such as the level changes and new build surrounding it, as well as the demolition of the square, have also eroded its significance. However, it remains an important component of the historic environment and the proposals for a significant restoration scheme, incorporating the building into the wider St James proposals would see the building re-established as a vital part of the overall character of the area. The proposals not only enhance the character and setting of the listed building but also the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The proposed modifications to the building would be undertaken in a sensitive manner with much of the work being historic restoration. The new entrance steps, in a contemporary style and materials are designed with the philosophy of the square meeting the building rather than the building meeting the square. A contemporary take on this historic form adds to the overall proposals enhancing the character of the building, tying in to the new proposals for the St James development, re-engaging the building to the street and enhancing the character and appearance of the area in the process.

Internally, there is very little of value left in the building. The proposed alterations would represent an improvement on what currently exists.

#### b) Representations

- Impact on listed building - addressed in section 3.3a); and
- Impact of entrance steps and platt - addressed in section 3.3a).

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposal complies with the development plan and relevant non-statutory guidelines, enhancing the character of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

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

### **3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

#### **Conditions:-**

1. The application shall be notified to the Scottish Ministers prior to determination.

#### **Reasons:-**

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

## **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.

## **Financial impact**

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### **4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council. The application site is subject to the St James Compulsory Purchase order. This has been reported to Planning Committee and the City of Edinburgh Council.

## **Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact**

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5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

## **Equalities impact**

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### **6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:**

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

## **Sustainability impact**

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### **7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application meets the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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### **8.1 Pre-Application Process**

Pre-application discussions took place on this application.

### **8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

The application was advertised on 19.12.2014. One letter of representation was received. The letter of representation raised the following material issues:

- Concerns over the new stairs and platt; and
- Impact of proposals on the character of the building.

## **Background reading/external references**

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- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Edinburgh City Local Plan and Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)
- [Scottish Planning Policy](#)

**Statutory Development****Plan Provision**

The application property is located in the Central Area of the Edinburgh City Local Plan

**Date registered**

15 December 2014

**Drawing numbers/Scheme**

1-43,

Scheme 1

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**Links - Policies**

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**Relevant Policies:****Relevant policies of the Edinburgh City Local Plan.**

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

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

**Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines**

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

# Appendix 1

## Application for Listed Building Consent 14/05148/LBC At 27,29,31 James Craig , Walk , Edinburgh Internal and external alterations and ancillary works.

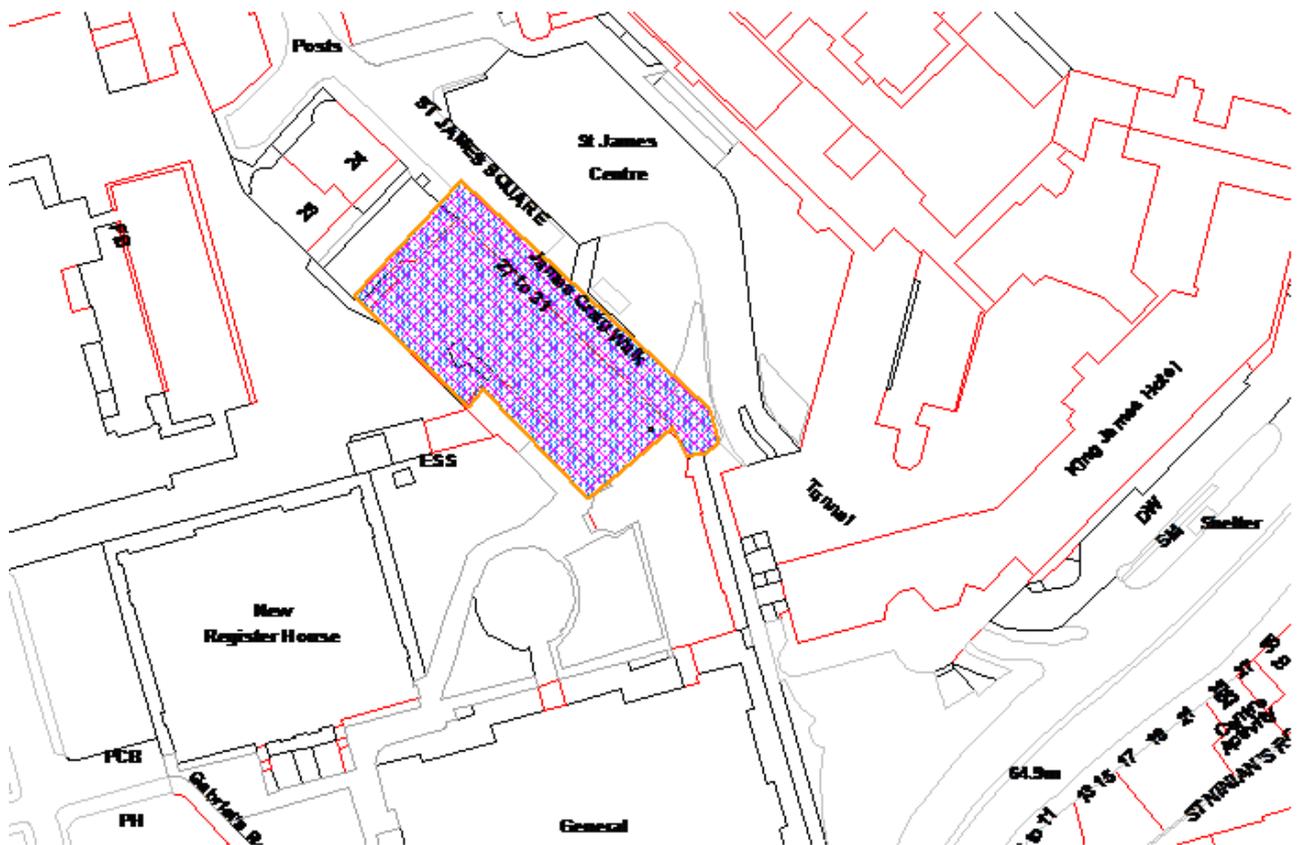
### Consultations

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No consultations undertaken.

### Location Plan

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