

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 26 August 2015

**Application for Conservation Area Consent 15/02773/CON
At 19 Grant Avenue, Edinburgh, EH13 0DW
Complete demolition of dwelling in a conservation area.**

Item number	4.1(b)
Report number	
Wards	A08 - Colinton/Fairmilehead

Summary

The proposed demolition of the house and garages is acceptable on the basis that their removal will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Approval is recommended subject to notification to Scottish Ministers. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Links

Policies and guidance for this application	CITE5, CITE6, CITD1, CITD3, CITD6, CITE12, CITH1, NSGD02, NSLBCA, CRPCOL,
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Report

Application for Conservation Area Consent 15/02773/CON At 19 Grant Avenue, Edinburgh, EH13 0DW Complete demolition of dwelling in a conservation area.

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that this application be Minded to Grant - Historic Scotland subject to the details below.

Background

2.1 Site description

The site is located at the corner of Grant Avenue and Bonaly Road and comprises a detached two storey five bed dwelling house situated within a substantial plot of approximately 2,590 square metres. Two single storey detached garages are also located at the main entrance to the site adjacent to Grant Avenue and a small glasshouse is located along the eastern boundary. A secondary pedestrian access is located on Grant Avenue to the west of the garages.

The original house (prior to extensions) was built around the 1920s and has been designed in the Arts and Crafts style. It is not listed. The house, garages and glasshouse occupy approximately 9.5% of the total plot area, and the plot is one of the largest in the immediate locality.

The site is bounded on all sides by a mixture of mature trees, bushes and hedging creating a generally secluded plot that is only partially visible from Grant Avenue. Land rises gradually from north to south, and the existing house adopts a slightly elevated position.

The surrounding area is residential and comprises a mix of traditional and more modern detached properties within large to medium sized plots along with a small number of semi detached and flatted properties within comparably smaller plots. The immediate area is characterised by strong green edges to plots.

In the immediate locality, corner plots accommodating traditional properties have an approximate built footprint of between 8% and 23% of the total plot area.

There is no established building line along Grant Avenue or Bonaly Road however properties are generally set back from the street, further enhancing the area's green character.

This application site is located within the Colinton Conservation Area.

2.2 Site History

26 January 2001 - Planning permission granted to alter and extend dwelling house (application ref: 00/01907/FUL).

24 February 2015 - Proposal for demolition of a complete house and erection of new dwelling withdrawn pending completion of bat survey (application ref: 14/05118/CON).

24 February 2015 - Proposal for two-storey replacement dwelling withdrawn pending completion of bat survey (application ref: 14/05119/FUL).

Committee decision pending for associated application for planning permission for the replacement dwelling (application ref: 15/02799/FUL).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

It is proposed to demolish the existing house, garages and glasshouse and erect a new two and a half storey six bed house with an integral garage.

The new house will be positioned within the southern and eastern part of the plot, and will be set back from Grant Avenue by approximately 13 metres. The new house will have a slightly elevated position due to a gradual increase in ground levels from north to south. The new house has a T-shape plan form and has just over double the footprint area of the existing house, garages and glasshouse. The new house will occupy approximately 19.5% of the total plot area. This is considered under application 15/02799/FUL.

A simple palette of materials will be used including natural sandstone, off-white coloured render, terracotta 'rosemary' roof tiles, aluminium composite window frames (black) and aluminium rainwater goods. The driveway and hardstanding will be resin bonded porous gravel.

Supporting Statements

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application and are available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services:

- Demolition Statement; and
- Bat Survey.

Scheme 1

The proposal has been revised to move the house 0.5 metres further away from the eastern boundary.

3.2 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.

3.3 Assessment

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

- a) the demolition will adversely affect the character and appearance of the conservation area;
- b) any impacts on equalities or human rights are acceptable; and
- c) comments raised have been addressed.

a) Impact of Demolition on Conservation Area

When considering the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area it is appropriate to assess the application against ECLP Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas - Demolition of Buildings) and Scottish Government's Historic Environment Policy 2011 (SHEP).

ECLP Policy Env 5 sets out the circumstances against which the demolition of an unlisted building in a conservation area will be considered. Policy Env 5 initially requires an assessment of whether the building proposed for demolition makes a positive contribution to the character of the area. If the proposal does not make a positive contribution, its removal is considered acceptable in principle so long as the replacement building either enhances or preserves the character of the area.

Policy Env 5 indicates that proposals for the total or substantial demolition of a building of merit will only be supported in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances take into account the condition / cost of repairing the building in relation to its importance, the adequacy of efforts to retain the building, the merits of alternative proposals for the site, and whether the public benefits to be derived from allowing demolition outweigh the loss.

The Scottish Historic Environment Policy 2011 (SHEP) requires in paragraph 3.58 that, in deciding applications for conservation area consent, local authorities should take into account the importance of the building to the conservation area, and the future proposals for the site. If the building is considered to be of any architectural or historic value a positive attempt should be made to achieve its retention and re-use before any demolition proposals are seriously investigated. In some instances demolition may be considered appropriate, for instance where the building is of little or no townscape value, or where repair costs are unreasonable, or where the existing form or location makes any re-use extremely difficult.

The site is located within the Colinton Conservation Area 'Villa Zone'. The Colinton Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that the Villa Zone is characterised, amongst other things, by *...substantial, detached houses of varied and high quality architectural character, sited individually within large gardens and set behind high stone boundary walls with inserts of fencing and hedging in addition to ...significant numbers of mature garden trees creating woodland effects in the vicinity of Spylaw Bank Road and parkland effects in Grant Avenue.*

The existing house is set back within a substantial plot and its entrance is marked by two single storey garages which directly front onto Grant Avenue. The site is one of the largest plots in the locality, and the existing house is one of the smallest in terms of its built footprint.

The defining characteristics of the site relate primarily to its mature landscaped edges which enclose the site, rather than the house and garages themselves. These defining characteristics are reflective of Grant Avenue's overall parkland character. Notwithstanding this, the existing house does make a contribution to the overall spatial character of the area which consists of large properties set within substantial garden grounds.

Views to the existing house are possible only from the main Grant Avenue entrance, with remaining views being screened by the site's landscaped boundaries. Originally the house would have adopted a symmetrical 'butterfly' plan form and was designed in an Arts and Crafts style; however it has since been subject to two substantial flat roofed two storey extensions to the front and side, and a large single storey uPVC conservatory to the rear.

Due to the orientation of the house, the two flat roofed extensions are the property's most prominent features when viewed from Grant Avenue, and are considered unsympathetic additions which detract from the character of this property. The garages do not have any special features of merit which would support their retention from an architectural perspective.

Having regard to the above points, the existing house and garages are considered to have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of this part of the Colinton Conservation Area in terms of their architectural contribution. Whilst their contribution to the spatial character of the conservation has merit, their loss would not have a negative impact on the overall character and appearance of the conservation area. The loss of the garages also presents an opportunity for further planting along the site's boundary with Grant Avenue, which will have a positive impact. The proposal to replace the dwelling with a new dwelling will have a neutral impact in terms of the use of the site.

Having regard to the above points, the existing house and garages are considered to have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of this part of the Colinton Conservation Area from an architectural perspective. Whilst the house's positioning has merits from a spatial perspective this is not considered significant enough to warrant refusal. The removal of the house and garages will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposal is therefore in accordance with ECLP Policy Env 5 and SHEP.

An assessment of the proposal's impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area is considered under application 15/02799/FUL.

b) Equalities and Human Rights

There are no issues of concern with regard to equalities and human rights.

c) Public Comments

One representation has been received from the Colinton Amenity Association which raises objection to the proposal with the exception of the principle of demolishing the house. The matters raised are summarised as follows:

Material Representations: Objections

- Scale and position of house detrimental to character of conservation area - this has been assessed under application 15/02799/FUL; and
- Detrimental impact on trees - this has been assessed under application 15/02799/FUL.

Community Council

No representations have been received.

Conclusion

The proposed demolition of the house and garages is acceptable on the basis that their removal will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. Approval is recommended subject to notification to Scottish Ministers. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

It is recommended that this application be Minded to Grant - Historic Scotland subject to the details below.

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions:-

1. No demolition shall start until the applicant has confirmed in writing the start date for the new development by the submission of a Notice of Initiation.

Reasons:-

1. In order to safeguard the character of the conservation area.

Financial impact

4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:

There are no financial implications to the Council.

Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact

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

Equalities impact

6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:

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

Sustainability impact

7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:

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

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Pre-Application Process

Pre-application discussions took place on this application.

8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

One representation has been received from the Colinton Amenity Association which raises objection to the proposal with the exception of the principle of demolishing the house. The matters raised are summarised as follows:

Material Representations: Objections

- Scale and position of house detrimental to character of conservation area; and
- Detrimental impact on trees.

Community Council

No representations have been received.

Background reading/external references

- 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 site is located within the Colinton Conservation Area and is within the Urban Area as designated by the Edinburgh City Local Plan.

Date registered

12 June 2015

Drawing numbers/Scheme

02 - 08, 11,

Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Acting Head of Planning and Building Standards

Contact: Ruth King, Planning Officer

E-mail:ruth.king@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel:0131 529 6475

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas – Demolition of Buildings) sets out criteria for assessing proposals involving demolition of buildings in conservation areas.

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

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 6 (Sustainable Design & Construction) sets criteria for assessing the sustainable design and construction elements of development.

Policy Env 12 (Trees) sets out tree protection requirements for new development.

Policy Hou 1 (Housing Development) supports housing on appropriate sites in the urban area, and on specific sites identified in the Plan.

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 Colinton Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the high quality architecture, the predominant use of traditional building materials, the strong sense of place derived from the containment within a rural setting, and the prominent views to the Pentland Hills.

Appendix 1

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Consultations

No consultations undertaken.

Location Plan



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