

**Full Planning Application 03/00036/FUL
at
14 Wester Coates Gardens
Edinburgh
EH12 5LT**

**Development Quality Sub-Committee
of the Planning Committee**

1 Purpose of report

To consider application 03/00036/FUL, submitted by Cala Homes (Scotland) Ltd. The application is for: **Demolition of existing house and erection of flatted development with 6 flats, and 2 mews houses (as amended)**

It is recommended that this application be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions in Appendix B.

2 The Site and the Proposal

Site description

The property is a modern bungalow set within extensive garden grounds (0.3ha) bounded by a stone boundary wall. The area is predominantly residential with villa style properties directly adjacent. To the rear (north) the ground falls very steeply to the Water of Leith.

The property is located within the Coltbridge and Wester Coates Conservation Area but is not a listed building.

Site history

02/02685/FUL - Application withdrawn on 17 January 2003. Proposal was for the demolition of existing house and erection of flatted villa and 2 mews houses to the rear.

Conservation Area consent for demolition of the existing property was submitted in conjunction with the above application. Currently pending consideration. (Reference number: 02/02722/CON)

Description of the Proposal

The proposal is similar to that of the original planning application withdrawn in 2002. It is for the demolition of the existing house and erection of a flatted villa and two mews houses. The principal difference is the reduction in the number of flats within the new block, which has been reduced from nine to six, with the mews houses remaining as two units.

The block of flats will be located to the front of the site, with the building at the rear containing the two mews properties.

The flatted block will be up to three and a half storeys, with two flats per floor at ground and first floor. One flat at first floor level has an upper level on the second floor. There is a further flat at second floor and one flat in the roof space. The flatted block is set back fourteen metres from the front boundary. It will be finished in natural stone blocks with small render infill panels. The roof is indicated as being slate, with windows being timber framed. There will be six 3-bedroom flats of varying styles and size. One of these will be a duplex flat, and one will be a penthouse flat occupying the entire attic level. With the exception of the penthouse flat, all flats will have two public rooms and dining kitchens. Parking for the flats will be in the basement, accessed to the west side of the block. There will be a total of eight spaces within the basement car park.

The mews block is one and a half storeys, with two four-bedroom units. The courtyard elevations will be finished in natural stone, with remaining elevations being in render. The roof will be slate and the window frames and doors timber. These properties each have an integral garage, with further space for surface parking. The building is at a slight angle to the boundary of number 16, and is three metres away at its nearest point.

Dimensions (as measured by City Development Department)

- Existing;
- The site area is 3065 square metres
- The existing bungalow has a footprint of 310 square metres.

- Proposed;
- The footprint of the flatted block is 430 square metres
- The footprint of the mews block is 260 square metres
- The area of all hard-standings is 350 square metres

There is therefore 690 square metres of building footprint and 350 square metres of hard standing. These figures amount to 22.5 and 11.5 percent of the total site area respectively. The amount of green space remaining as a result is 66%.

(The figures provided by the applicant differ only slightly, giving a site area of 3013, and a total building footprint of 667m² (equating to 22.1%).

Supporting Statement

Following a large number of representations objecting to the proposals, including some which had attached a simulated impression of what the building may look like from neighbouring properties, the applicant has submitted a supporting statement (23rd March 2005). This covers issues of development within conservation areas, and the preservation of the character of these areas. It is stated that this site was originally intended as the site for a further villa in the areas original master plan. The statement goes on to answer some of the objections raised. It concludes that the development sits well on the site and within the existing urban pattern of the area.

Furthermore the applicants wish to make it known that the visual submissions from third party objectors are misleading and unrealistic, and should be withdrawn, and should have no bearing on the decision.

Evolution of this scheme:

2002 Application

This was for eight flats and two mews houses. The flats were in a four and a half storey block of uniform height. This building required excavation such that the ground floor was more or less a basement floor. The footprint was 455 square metres. The basement parking was accessed via the rear, north elevation. The main elevation was 12.5 metres back from the front boundary. Main ridge height was 70.0m AOD.

The two mews houses were principally the same as scheme 1 above. The west gable was parallel to the boundary of number 16, and four metres distant.

Scheme 1

The proposal was originally for seven flats and two mews properties. The whole of the flatted block was three and a half storeys, and the entrance to the basement car parking extended beyond the rear of the block. The footprint was 450 square metres. There were six three bedroom flats and a four bedroom flat. Eight parking spaces were proposed. More render and reconstituted stone were proposed for the elevations. The main elevation was fifteen metres back from the front boundary. Main ridge height was 67.79m AOD.

The mews building was slightly different in its design, and it was slightly closer (2.5 metres) to the boundary of number 16, and parallel to it.

Scheme 2

Similar to scheme 1 but the rear fourteen metres of the flatted block was lowered to two and a half storeys. The main elevation was still fifteen metres set back, and the main, front ridge height was still 67.79m AOD.

Scheme 3

Flat numbers reduced to six with some significant reductions in height and mass of the block. Mews unchanged.

3 Officer's Assessment and Recommendations

DETERMINING ISSUES

The determining issues are;

- Do the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area? There being a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission if this is not the case;
- 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?

ASSESSMENT

To address the determining issues, the Committee needs to take account of the following specific considerations:

- a) Is the proposed mix of housing appropriate to this location?
- b) Are the proposals acceptable in terms of design?
- c) Will the proposals preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area?
- d) Will there be any adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring residents?
- e) Are the parking and access arrangements acceptable?

a) The site is within an area allocated for housing and compatible uses. It is a predominantly residential area, and the type of properties are generally large villas. There are also some smaller modern houses and there is a block of flats at the corner of Wester Coates Gardens and Wester Coates Terrace. The proposal for 6 flats and two mews properties will enhance the mix of housing within the area, giving a greater range of housing type than is presently available. The proposals are supported by local plan policy H7. There are advantages of permitting higher density of housing in close proximity to the city centre, particularly in reducing car dependency on travel needs. This site is close to good public transport services, with the potential to be further enhanced when the tram lines are completed. The principle of higher density housing on this site is accepted.

The education department initially requested that a financial contribution be made towards schools in the local catchment areas. However they have subsequently withdrawn this request, partly due to the reduction in number of units.

b) The design of the two buildings is a contemporary interpretation of a traditional form. The building is predominantly three storeys, part of which has developed roofspace, equating to three and a half storeys, with the rear section is two storeys, and the mews properties are one and a half storeys. The materials proposed have been upgraded since the first submission to include natural stone on the main elevations with some small render panels. Roofs will be natural slate. The scale of the building has been greatly reduced since the initial submission, and this together with its slightly sunken base renders a street elevation which is very much in keeping with the character of buildings that front onto the street. The ridge of the property to the west is 67.3m AOD and that to the east is 70.25m AOD, therefore the 69.45m AOD of the proposed development is in keeping with neighbouring properties. The width of the frontage is relatively slim, being 15 metres across, compared to 15 and 17 metres for adjacent properties. The depth of the building over the main three storey element is 23 metres deep, and the overall depth is 32.5

metres. This is greater than the two adjacent properties which are 22 and 24 metres deep. It does however sit in a plot which is 87.5 metres deep.

The scale and design of the proposals are considered acceptable

c) The conservation area's character is summarised in the local plan as follows; *'The area contains two distinct character zones: the streets of Victorian and Edwardian villas to the west of Donaldson's School and the tenements and stone built terraces of Roseburn further west. Murrayfield House (1735) is an important listed building (category 'A'), the setting of which is defined by the surrounding streets of terraced housing. More recent housing constructed in Wester Coates, although not visible from the main A8, has led to an erosion of character'*.

New development must take proper account of the character of the area in order to be deemed acceptable. The brief character statement within the local plan recognises that the Wester Coates Area has had its character eroded by the introduction of modern housing. The application site is close to modern housing both to its north east boundary and across the road to the south west. The existing house on this site is itself a modern building, and it is not considered to be of any merit. Being on a main frontage, its low size is out of character with the area. The loss of this building raises no concerns. The applicant has submitted a plan which shows the layout and spatial character of the surrounding area. This shows that the development is not out of character with the spatial character. All 5 properties east of this site on the north side of the crescent have buildings built to the rear. Building footprint to plot ratios for the proposed development is 22.1%, and in the surrounding area they range from 10.3 to 37.8% (5 being lower density than the development, 4 higher and one almost identical). The average figure of those surveyed in the area is 20.7%. The area of hardstanding has been significantly reduced and this retains levels of greenspace at an acceptable level (66%).

The non-statutory guidelines on development in villa areas suggests that "minimum distances of 25 metres between main elevations (i.e. 12.5 metres to a boundary) should be maintained (a main frontage being one which contains windows of habitable rooms)". If this rule were to be applied, then the resultant building on this site would be 5 metres wide. By setting the front elevation of this building back by 14 metres, and with it being well screened by mature trees, and being set at a lower base level the proposals will not have an adverse effect on the spatial characteristics of the conservation area.

The proposed development is of good quality design and materials, and will have no significant impact on the overall character of the conservation area. It will be a significantly larger building than is on site at present and so to the immediate neighbours the effect would appear more significant. However the character of the Coltbridge and Wester Coates Conservation Area as a whole will be preserved.

d) With regards to amenity, the main issue is regarding privacy. The development is at its nearest point is 8 metres from the boundary. This is the distance from the circular tower at the south west corner to the boundary with number 16 Wester Coates Gardens. The nearest window is 9 metres from the boundary, following the most recent amendments made by the applicant. There are trees screening the north boundary, and there is no issue of loss of privacy to neighbouring windows. It should be noted that to the south, the extension to the rear of 16 Wester Coates Gardens severely breaches the privacy guidelines and is a bad neighbour in this respect. The applicant cannot be expected to pull back the development greater than the 9 metres presently achieved to comply with window to window standards of 18 metres.

The proposed development will have no significant overshadowing effect, and will not result in any loss of daylight to adjacent buildings. The closest that the building comes to the boundary is 7.5 metres. As the eaves height, from existing ground level is only 7.5 metres, then the "2 metres 43 degree" rule is fully complied with. There will be no adverse effect on daylighting. Again it should be noted that the extension to 16 Wester Coates Gardens is in fact in breach of this guideline.

e) Access arrangements have been amended following initial concerns from Transport. The access road is 3.5 metres wide with a wider 5.5 metre wide entrance extending 9 metres back from the roadside edge of the pavement to permit cars to pass. Parking provision for the flats is at 133% which is acceptable in terms of parking standards. Transport had asked for an extra space to be provided in the basement, which would have given 150% provision, however this would have required the enlargement of the whole building which is not possible. For the mews properties there are two garages plus informal surface parking which could easily accommodate a further two cars. Visibility on the access is good, and is in any case taken from a quiet street. With regards to possible tram contributions, this application is exempt, having been submitted in January 2003. A 'safer routes to schools' contribution is requested which shall be obtained by legal agreement. Cycle parking can be incorporated in the basement for the flats. All transport issues are therefore resolved.

In conclusion, the revised proposals for this site have been designed to respect the constraints of the site, and have managed to achieve this whilst still achieving a high density development. The development relates well to the character of the Wester Coates area and not just to the site as it exists at present. The large number of local objections centred on issues of privacy, overdevelopment, and the character of the area, and these have all been considered, and the proposals are deemed to respect these concerns.

It is recommended that the Committee approves this application, subject to the conditions stated.

ADDENDUM

This application was considered at the Development Quality Sub Committee on 28 September 2005. The application was continued with the associated planning application for a visit, for further comments on access and pedestrian safety issues, information on loss of trees, improved visual material and clarification on privacy and overshadowing distances.

1. The site was visited on 27 October 2005.

2. Transport have confirmed a footway would be required at the entrance to the site. After the bellmouth area, where the road decreases in width, the surface for vehicles and pedestrians can be shared. A footway can be accommodated within the site with minimal alterations to the layout.

3. Trees identified as being lost are at the entrance to the site, along the west boundary and in the existing rear garden area - at the north of the site. Along the west the only significant tree is sycamore which is causing damage to a wall. New trees will be planted at the west boundary. The trees in the rear garden area are largely garden trees and non-native specimens and do not make a contribution to the public treed environment. The major contribution in this area is from the trees along the bank to the Water of Leith, these will remain. The trees which will not be replaced or compensated for are at the entrance, due to the widening of the access at this point. However, substantial trees will remain at the site frontage, the loss of two trees is considered acceptable.

4/5 Photomontage material has been provided to respond to that provided by representators. Plans have also been submitted to facilitate clarification of overshadowing and privacy issues. There is no photomontage from number 12 Wester Coates Garden as the applicants were unable to gain access to this property.

It is recommended that the Committee approves this application, subject to the conditions already stated plus an additional condition requiring a footway to be provided into the site.

Alan Henderson

Alan Henderson
Head of Planning and Strategy

Contact/tel	Kingsley Drinkwater on 0131 529 3648 (FAX 529 3717)
Ward affected	15 - Murrayfield
Local Plan	Central Edinburgh Local Plan
Statutory Development Plan Provision	Housing and Compatible Uses
Date registered	15 January 2003
Drawing numbers/ Scheme	27-35, 1,14,17,19,21 Scheme 4

Advice to Committee Members and Ward Councillors

The full details of the application are available for viewing on the Planning and Building Control Portal: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planning.

If you require further information about this application you should contact the following Principal Planner, Ian Dryden on 0131 529 3464. Email: ian.dryden@edinburgh.gov.uk.

If this application is not identified on the agenda for presentation, and you wish to request a presentation of this application at the Committee meeting, you must contact Committee Services by 9.00a.m. on the Tuesday preceding the meeting on extension 4229/4239. Alternatively, you may e-mail blair.ritchie@edinburgh.gov.uk or sarah.bogunovic@edinburgh.gov.uk

Application Type Full Planning Application
Application Address: 14 Wester Coates Gardens
Edinburgh
EH12 5LT
Proposal: Demolition of existing house and erection of flatted development with 6 flats, and 2 mews houses (as amended)
Reference No: 03/00036/FUL

Consultations, Representations and Planning Policy

Consultations

Education

This site is located within the catchment of Roseburn Primary School, Craigmount High School, St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School and St Thomas of Aquin's Roman Catholic High School.

Roseburn Primary School is currently at capacity and is expected to remain in this position for the forecast period. In line with Council's Developer Contributions Policy a contribution of £6,762 should be sought towards alleviating accommodations pressures at this school.

Craigmount High School is currently operating. The capacity of this school will be increased with refurbishment under the Council's Education Public Private Partnership Project. However, it is anticipated that the roll may rise to the revised capacity within the next few years. In line with Council's Developer Contributions Policy a contribution of £3,760 should be sought towards alleviating accommodation pressures at this school.

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School is currently operating below capacity and is expected to remain in this position for the forecast period. It is anticipated that the effect of this development would be negligible on this school role.

St Thomas of Aquin's Roman Catholic High School is currently operating above capacity and is expected to remain in this position for the forecast period. However, it is anticipated that the effect of this development would be negligible on this school role.

The forecasts are based on 2001 Start of Sessions School Rolls and housing completion identified in the Draft Housing Land Audit 2001. Revised child to house ratios have been applied.

Further comments, 2nd June 2005

Planning Application No 03/00036/FUL: 14 Wester Coates Gardens, Edinburgh

This site is located within the catchment areas of Roseburn Primary School, Craigmount High School, St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School and St Thomas of Aquin's Roman Catholic High School.

Due to the small scale of this development, this development is unlikely to generate additional children for the catchment schools. The Education Department would have no objection to this application.

Transport Planning

The application should be continued for the developer to submit a revised layout with regards to access and related issues.

Further comments, 3rd June 2005

Consent should not be issued until the Developer enters into a legal agreement to contribute £10,000 to the City of Edinburgh Tram Scheme.

Consent should not be issued until the Developer enters into a legal agreement to contribute £4,500 to the Safer Routes to School scheme.

The application is to be continued for the submission of a revised drawing showing the following features.

- 1. Dropped kerb access to be used at the access to the development*
- 2. Detail of access to be as shown in Drawing 3 on page 37 of the City of Edinburgh Council Movement and Development Guidelines*
- 3. One extra space to be provided in the underground car park.*
- 4. Nine secure and undercover cycle spaces to be provided.*

Representations

The application was first advertised on 22/01/03, and again on 9/07/03. 77 letters of representation were been received, 28 from residential neighbours in Wester Coates Gardens, 15 in Wester Coates Avenue, 4 in Wester Coates Place, 8 in Wester Coates Road, 5 in Wester Coates Terrace and 8 others from addresses outwith the Wester Coates area. Letters were also received from The Cockburn Association, Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland, Sarah Boyack MSP, Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, Margo McDonald MSP, Robin Harper MSP, and Alistair Darling MP. The issues raised are;-

1. Out of keeping with the spatial character of the area
2. Inaccurate description of proposals
3. Loss of trees
4. Inadequate green open space/landscaping
5. Access is too wide, and out of character with area
6. Too close to number 12, not in compliance with villa guidelines
7. Pastiche design
8. Loss of daylight sunlight and privacy
9. Overdevelopment of the site

Further public consultation was carried out on 11/01/05 following major revisions to the scheme. 51 letters of representation were been received, 22 from residential neighbours in Wester Coates Gardens, 10 in Wester Coates Avenue, 4 in Wester Coates Place, 5 in Wester Coates Road, 4 in Wester Coates Terrace and 10 others from addresses outwith the Wester Coates area. A letter was also received from Alistair Darling MP. The issues raised are;-

1. Scheme no better than previous and worse in some respects
2. Loss of privacy due to increase in number of windows facing boundary
3. Out of keeping with the spatial character of the area
4. Inaccurate description of proposals
5. Loss of trees
6. Inadequate green open space/landscaping
7. Access is too wide, and out of character with area
8. Too close to number 12, not in compliance with villa guidelines
9. Pastiche design
10. Loss of daylight sunlight and privacy
11. Overdevelopment of the site.

Full copies of the representations made in respect of this application are available in Group Rooms or can be requested for viewing at the Main Reception, City Chambers, High Street.

Planning Policy

The site is identified by the **Central Edinburgh Local Plan** as being within an area allocated for housing and compatible uses.

Relevant Policies:

Policy CD4 (CONSERVATION AREAS) requires that developments in a conservation area retain all features which contribute to the area's character and appearance.

Policy CD5 (CONSERVATION AREAS - REDEVELOPMENT) sets out the criteria against which new development in conservation areas will be assessed, and seeks to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.

Policy CD10 (NEW DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVE) encourages new development of the highest possible architectural and urban quality.

Policy CD16 (NEW DEVELOPMENT IN VILLA AREAS) sets out the essential requirements of approved guidelines which seek to regulate the form and layout of new development in the garden grounds of villa properties.

Policy CD17 (MATERIALS) sets out requirements for materials in new developments and seeks a greater use of stone, roofing slate and other traditional materials in appropriate cases.

Policy H1 (HOUSING DEVELOPMENT) encourages the provision of new residential accommodation, in conjunction with other land uses if necessary to maintain the mixed use character, its locality, and sets out criteria for assessing development proposals in predominantly residential areas.

Policy T15 (PRIVATE CAR PARKING) requires all new development to comply with car parking standards set out in the Development Control Handbook, including provision for people with disabilities, and requires car parking to be designed to minimise visual intrusion.

Non-statutory guidelines on 'VILLA AREAS AND THE GROUNDS OF VILLAS' provide guidance on development, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of villa areas.

Non-statutory guidelines 'DAYLIGHTING, PRIVACY AND SUNLIGHT' set criteria for assessing proposals in relation to these issues.

Non-statutory guidelines on 'TREE PROTECTION' supplement local plan green environment policies, and support the retention of healthy trees of landscape or amenity significance, encourage new tree planting wherever appropriate within new development and promote a substantial renewal of the city's woodland resource.

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

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Conditions/Reasons associated with the Recommendation

Recommendation

It is recommended that this application be **GRANTED**

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than five years from the date of this consent.
2. The waste management facilities, as shown on the approved plans, shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development to the satisfaction of the Head of Planning and Strategy.
3. All rainwater goods shall be metal, painted to a colour agreed by the Planning Authority.
4. A detailed specification, including trade names where appropriate, of all the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Strategy before work is commenced on site; Note: samples of the materials may be required.
5. A fully detailed 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 & Strategy before work is commenced on site, and shall be fully implemented within six months of the completion of the development, and thereafter maintained by the applicants and/or their successors to the entire satisfaction of the planning authority; maintenance shall include the replacement of plant stock which fails to survive, for whatever reason, as often as is required to ensure the establishment of the approved landscaping scheme.
6. Before any part of the development is brought into use, secure, covered cycle parking shall be provided within the site to meet the standard required by City

of Edinburgh Council policy, to the satisfaction of the Head of Planning & Strategy.

7. The access to the development should be by means of a dropped kerb, detail of this access to be in accordance with the City of Edinburgh Council's guideline "Movement and Development" with reference to advice on 'transitions to shared surface roads'.

Reasons

1. In order to accord with the statutory requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts.
2. To ensure timeous provision of waste management facilities.
3. In order to safeguard the character of the conservation area.
4. In order to enable the Head of Planning & Strategy to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
5. In order to ensure that a high standard of landscaping is achieved, appropriate to the location of the site.
6. In order to ensure that the level of off-street parking is adequate.
7. In order to safeguard the interests of road safety.

INFORMATIVES

It should be noted that:

1. The applicant shall enter into a suitable legal agreement to contribute £4,500 to the Safer Routes to School scheme.

End

PLANNING APPLICATION

Address
14 Wester Coates Gardens, Edinburgh, EH12 5LT

Proposal
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Application number: 03/00036/FUL

WARD

15- Murrayfield

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THE CITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT - PLANNING & STRATEGY

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