

Development Management Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee

10.00 am Thursday 17 December 2015

Present:

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dixon (Vice-Convener), Bagshaw, Balfour, Blacklock, Cairns, Child, Heslop, Howat, Keil, McVey, Milligan, Mowat, Ritchie and Robson.

1. New Parliament House, 5-7 Regent Road, Edinburgh

The Sub-Committee had agreed to hold a hearing for consideration of the following applications at 5-7 Regent Road, Edinburgh. Change of use, alterations to and restoration of principal former Royal High School building and pavilions (original Thomas Hamilton designed school buildings), and demolition of ancillary buildings including the former gymnasium block and lodge. New build development, new/improved vehicular, service and pedestrian accesses, landscaping, parking, public realm and other works to create a world class hotel of international standing with associated uses (including publicly accessible bars and restaurants (Class 3) - Application Number 15/03989/FUL. Also, refurbishment (external and internal), alteration and extension of principal former Royal High School building and pavilions, demolition of two cartilage buildings (former classroom block and luncheon hall), demolition of existing gates, wall (in part) and formation of new service access – Application Number 15/03990/LBC.

(a) Protocol Note by the Head of Legal and Risk

A note setting out the procedure for the hearing had been circulated.

Decision

To note the protocol note.

(Reference – protocol note by the Head of Legal and Risk, submitted.)

(b) Report by the Head of Planning and Transport

The Head of Planning and Transport provided details of the proposals and advised that the existing building had not been used for a considerable length of time and was on the Buildings At Risk Register. In terms of a number of aspects such as neighbouring amenity, transport, archeology, geology, culture, environmental health, and infrastructure the development was either acceptable, or its impact could be successfully mitigated by planning conditions or legal agreements.

However, the site's prominence within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site and New Town Conservation Area, plus the category A listing of a number of the buildings meant the proposed extensions and alterations required careful consideration to determine that their impact did not outweigh the benefit of bringing the building back into use. While the architectural design did mitigate, to a degree, the effect of the size of the extensions, it was considered that the proposals would have a significant adverse impact on the character and setting of listed buildings, the character of the Conservation Area and the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the World Heritage Site, and did not meet the requirements of Policy Des 3 a) of the Edinburgh City Local Plan or Policy Des 4 of the Local Development Plan (LDP). The proposals did not comply with Policies Env 3 and Env 4 of the Edinburgh City Local Plan (ECLP), Policies Env 3 and 4 of the Second Proposed Edinburgh Local Development Plan or the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP).

The demolition of two listed buildings within the site (the gymnasium building and the lodge) could not be justified. The proposal did not comply with Policy Env 2 of the ECLP, Policy Env 2 of the LDP or SHEP.

In addition, the proposal's effects were deemed detrimental to the character of the New Town Conservation Area and to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Edinburgh World Heritage Site, and therefore not compliant with Policies Env 1 and Env 5 of the ECLP and Env 1 and Env 6 of the LDP.

The development did not comply with the Princes Street Block 10 Development Brief, due to the impact on the setting of the Royal High School, which was of exceptional architectural and historic interest.

The Head of Planning and Transport recommended that the Sub-Committee refuse the application.

(c) Sarah Boyack MSP and Alison Johnstone MSP

Sarah Boyack indicated that she had received representations from many constituents and organisations, they were of the view that the proposals constituted overdevelopment of the site and did not respect the architectural significance of the building. The landscape setting of the building was paramount and the proposals would irrevocably damage this and also the city's world heritage status.

The Royal High School was one of the finest examples of Greek revival architecture in Scotland and was also set within one of Edinburgh's most important views. This development would ruin the skyline from the Old Town to the New Town. This is an A listed building and part of the defining character of the city. The proposals were contrary to the Local Development Plan and many of the Council's own Planning Policies, in particular environment policies and policies that aimed to protect the built heritage. The proposed new build would significantly impact on New St Andrew's House and Calton Hill, and the scale and massing of the new wings would dwarf the existing façade and the setting and character of the existing building. There has also been no justification advanced for the demolitions proposed. In conclusion she asked that the application be

refused.

Alison Johnstone indicated that she had received representations from many constituents who had stressed the importance of the building to the city and the nation, highlighting the building's architectural, cultural and historical importance.

New Parliament House was one of the finest examples of Greek revival architecture in Scotland, cementing Edinburgh's reputation as the Athens of the north. The proposal to develop the site did not maintain or enhance the character of the area nor maximise its potential. Existing policies did not support these proposals which would block the existing views of the building and surrounding area. The reasons given in the Head of Planning and Transport's report to refuse the application, show how detrimental to the existing building these proposals are. The proposed extension would dominate the existing building and diminish the building's impact and prominence on the site, and have a negative impact on the relationship the existing building has with the monuments on Calton Hill and the surrounding area. There was a need to get the building back into use but this proposal was not the way for this to be undertaken.

In conclusion, she asked that the Sub-Committee support the view of the Head of Planning and Transport and refuse the application.

(d) New Town/Broughton Community Council (NTBCC)

Ian Mowat and Richard Price outlined the concerns of New Town/Broughton Community Council in relation to the proposals and commended the Head of Planning on his report. The NTBCC was unanimously opposed to the proposal, but remained supportive of a new, sustainable use for the building, given its deteriorating condition.

NTBCC also accepted that to accommodate any new use in the listed building, change and alteration on the site would be required. The key determining issue was whether the building and the site could accommodate the changes and the quantum of development required for a prestigious hotel without detrimental impact on the building, its setting and the wider conservation area, and the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

The NTBCC agreed that in the second proposal some parts of the design were a slight improvement but overall the development was considered detrimental. It was not accepted that this scheme was the only way of preserving the building as an alternative scheme had been proposed.

The NTBCC were disappointed that their comments submitted to the developers as part of the Planning Application Notification (PAN) process consistent with the Edinburgh Concordat had not led to a continued dialogue between NTBCC and the developers. Nor had they been acknowledged or included in the Pre- Application Consultation (PAC) report submitted with the above applications, it was fully understood that the applicant may want to solicit additional comments through the PAN process directly via simpler, high level questionnaires but NTBCC endeavoured to provide more in-depth community views through their representations. However at no time did the NTBCC refuse to enter into dialogue with the developer.

Mr Price summarised the views of the NTBCC on the development as follows:-

1) Proposed Demolition of Buildings

The demolition of some of the later building additions to the site may be necessary. Demolition of the single storey luncheon hall and classroom block which it could be argued already detract from the main Hamilton building could be supported.

However, the proposed demolition of the entrance lodge, although the building was not original, was very much regretted and, did not meet any of the required SHEP tests. It made a significant contribution to the vista at the foot of the access road to Calton Hill and was currently occupied so, the condition of the building was not beyond repair. It occupies a small floor area to the west of the site and therefore its demolition was not necessary for viable economic development of the site and the wider public benefits would be achieved by retaining this building not demolishing it. New, viable, economic uses could be found for this building preserving the viewpoint from Waterloo Place towards Calton Hill, either by being incorporated into a new development or a separate, standalone function, perhaps as Calton Hill Visitor's Reception / Interpretation area as previously mooted.

2) Setting of Listed Building

NTBCC believe the proposed hotel development, in particular the redevelopment of the western playground, would have a significant adverse impact on the setting of the Category A listed former Royal High School, including views to and from the main building and associated structures (pavilions, screen walls, gateways and railings) which all contribute to the present integrity of the original concept. The proposed extensions to the listed building, by their height, scale and massing, would dominate and overwhelm the listed building, challenging its primacy on the site and diminishing significantly the building's status as an internationally acclaimed example of Greek revival architecture, contrary to policy Des 11.

The hotel development as proposed was therefore contrary to both LDP policies Env 3 and Env 7 because the scale of the proposals would have a negative impact on the setting of the main listed building, blocking key views of the Thomas Hamilton Royal High School, the Nelson Monument and the landscape of Calton Hill.

In addition, the proposal blocks key views of the school and of the remaining neighbouring buildings and views from within the site to the city and Holyrood Park , damaging the building's setting and sense of place (contrary to LDP policy Des 10). The relationship of the building to its surrounding landscape was fundamental to its setting and its architectural philosophy.

The former Royal High School and Calton Hill both sit within the New Town Conservation Area and the buildings within this wider landscape form a significant element of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The landscape character of Calton Hill is significant in its own right, reflected by its SSSI status and

its inclusion in the New Town Gardens Historic Garden / Designed Landscape inventory.

This interaction of landscape and architecture is what makes Edinburgh unique, Thomas Hamilton took full cognisance of the Calton Hill setting for his magnificent Greek revival temple of learning, the building that more than any other realises Edinburgh's ambition to be the Athens of the North. The resultant stunning set piece, topped by the unfinished National Monument, is a work of art and one appreciated by tourist and residents alike and in many ways encapsulates the Outstanding Universal Value of The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site. Introducing large new structures into this set piece, be they uncompromising slabs as initially proposed, or stepped back blocks reminiscent of a Inca temple as now proposed, would unacceptably diminish this heritage.

3) Alterations

Regarding the proposed interventions to the remaining listed building, NTBCC accepts that alterations would be required for any new use. However, such changes should be sensitive, sympathetic and above all necessary. Clearly the building(s) would need to evolve and change and it was recognised that some of the interventions would be necessary to improve connectivity both within and external to the building(s) consistent with the new use, including that of a hotel, NTBCC remained concerned that the unblocking of the currently blind door on the southern façade from the main debating chamber would spawn additional architectural features on the main façade, including the so-called winter terrace as the design progresses.

4) Scale of Development

The scheme involved significant new development within the site, consistent with the aims of creating a prestigious hotel. It was understood that the commercial viability of the hotel development, was a key requirement, however the minimum floor space that had been set was arguably above the maximum that the current site could support.

The site was not large for a development of this nature and the location for any new development was restricted with little scope to push development significantly back from the listed building without prejudicing other aspects of the overall vista.

NTBCC supported Historic Scotland's view that the western terrace should remain undeveloped so as to afford a side view of Hamilton's building. Both the current proposal for the development on the western terrace, and that presented at the March Public Exhibition would destroy the view of the Royal High School site and Calton Hill and, severely compromise the current spatial arrangement between all of these buildings, including St Andrews' House to the south.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the stepped backed blocks in muted colours designed to blend into the hillside, crowd the Hamilton building less, they draw attention to the problems of accommodating a hotel of the size required to be economically viable

on the site, as the stepping back leads to an overhang at the western end which ruins Hamilton's oblique approach from the city centre.

The proposed new development on the western terrace was far too prominent and visible within the site context, the setting, landscape, architectural composition of the listed building and key views. In summary, the proposal was neither respectful of, nor compatible with the listed building (contrary to LDP policy Des 11) and, as such, is both unviable and unacceptable.

5) Proposed Justification

NTBCC acknowledged that a key benefit of the proposal and main justification was in preventing further damage to the existing buildings from the less than adequate maintenance over the past few decades by the current owner of the buildings. Given that there are other potential schemes and uses being developed, NTBCC did not accept the primary justification for accepting this scheme.

6) Public Access

NTBCC share the Cockburn Association's assertion stated in their PAN response that a hotel was not a public building; access depended on management policies, which could change. Although the development team had put forward suggestions on how some of these aims could be achieved within the development proposed, this would not be a public building. The presumption would be that visitors were consumers. The current plans stated that an exclusive hotel could bring significant economic benefits to Edinburgh, NTBCC was unclear that this hotel development would bring enough to the wider Edinburgh community versus the select few.

7) Sustainability

It was noted that the proposal was for a high end, prestigious hotel. However, from a planning perspective, it was not possible to guarantee that this would be the case even by applying strenuous conditions. Although it was understood that a major, high-end hotel operator had expressed strong interest in the development, concern that the commercial viability of the proposed prestigious hotel had not been demonstrated and may not be achieved, by which time the current buildings would have been either modified or worse, demolished with inappropriate additions. This again leads NTBCC to not support the proposed, significant and irreversible changes contained within this application.

NTBCC believes that the quantum of development which the building and site can accommodate without detrimental impact on the building, its setting and the wider conservation area and World Heritage Site is significantly less than the proposed development.

In conclusion, they requested the Sub-Committee accept the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Transport that the application be refused.

(e) Edinburgh World Heritage

Adam Wilkinson of Edinburgh World Heritage referred to the wide range of organisations which had concerns about the proposed development and indicated that they were from civic and heritage standpoints.

He illustrated the difference in objective with regard to proposals for some other sites in the city-centre, such as the St James Centre, where the goal was to replace an existing architectural blight. He suggested that the hotel option was not the only one which could save the building, which was not in as bad condition as previously thought, and indicated that grants had been offered towards repairs.

There were other sites in the city which could provide 5 star hotel space and give the regenerative and economic benefits promised by this development whilst transforming unused sites.

It was the view of Edinburgh World Heritage that the proposals would so impair the character of the building as to damage the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the site. Edinburgh World Heritage had been involved in discussions about proposals for the site, for a lengthy period, but concerns about the height of any proposed buildings on the site, which had been aired early on, had not been taken onboard by the developers. Additionally, the sheer size of the development was insensitive to the setting, and injurious to existing views.

Mr Wilkinson summarised the impact the development would have on the Outstanding Universal Value of the site thus:-

- The topography of the site had been ignored
- The silhouette and skyline would be urbanised
- The classical buildings would be dwarfed
- Calton Hill would be despoiled
- The juxtaposition of the Old and New Towns would be confused
- The existing picturesque and romantic wilderness would be lost
- Those buildings of international acclaim in a landscape of exceptional drama would be swamped

In conclusion, he reiterated that to grant the development would send out a negative message about the value placed on the city, its heritage and the World Heritage site, and urged the Sub-Committee to accept the recommendation of the Head of Planning and Transport that the application be refused.

(f) Cockburn Association

Marion Williams reported that the proposals for the site and buildings of the former Royal High School had generated an unprecedented level of response from residents concerned about the development.

She pointed to the well documented insecurity of the hospitality industry, citing recent examples of high-end independent and chain hotels which had failed to succeed in the city, and queried whether this development, with an untested (in Edinburgh) business model would fare better. In the event that it did not prove viable, the operator and

possibly function of the building may change hands, so the proposals failed to provide a permanent solution.

Additionally, she asked whether a high-end hotel was an appropriate use of a civic asset. When the high school was built, the site was deliberately chosen as being accessible from all over the city, and the building was an icon of the Enlightenment aspiration of greater equality of access to education.

There was, she stated, a fundamental discord in adapting a building with no windows to a view, into a hotel. The former High School building was an international example of architecture of its kind. The fact that the proposed number of rooms in the development had been upped, validated previously stated concerns about the viability of the high-end business model. She concluded by reiterating that the building and site should be protected for Edinburgh residents and visitors.

(g) Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland

Dr Elizabeth Graham outlined the chief concerns the Architectural Society of Scotland had about the proposed development, namely:-

- 1) The picturesque landscape- the way that the buildings and topography were carefully arranged so as to look elegant from every angle.
- 2) The neo-classical environment; an accident of when they were built. The proposal was for a 1930's inspired art deco building, completely at odds with the current architecture. The existing buildings had architectural features which contributed to and evidenced the national narrative.
- 3) Calton Hill and the Royal High School's important role in spelling out the narrative of Scotland's identity.

Dr Graham concluded by illustrating how the proposed building would impact on the skyline, and how existing views would be diminished.

(h) Regent, Royal, Carlton Terraces and Mews Association

Carol Nimmo, Chair of the association, explained that they neighboured New Parliament House, and together with other residents' associations and community councils in the area, were vigorously opposed to the development.

The proposed architecture was too big and would, she argued, overwhelm both the Thomas Hamilton building and Regent Terrace. She asked that the Sub-Committee consider the residents and the heritage of the city over the financial benefits to developers.

Ms Nimmo indicated that she felt the developer's consultation process had been misleading and was of little value. The developers had claimed their engagement process had shown 90% backing for their plan, but investigation had shown that the questions had been heavily skewed so that respondents were given the choice of the

developer's proposed luxury hotel, or utter collapse of the building.

The deputation displayed a number of slides throughout her presentation to demonstrate the association's concerns, and concluded by asking that the application be rejected.

(i) Gordon Dewar, Edinburgh Airport, and Graham Birse, Napier University

Gordon Dewar, Chief Executive, Edinburgh Airport, explained that he was also a board member of Visit Scotland and the Scottish Tourism Alliance, so was aware of the challenges of maintaining and increasing Edinburgh's profile in an increasingly crowded market.

Tourism was Scotland's biggest employment sector and an important area of economic activity. Scotland's Tourism Strategy up to 2020 had been adopted by stakeholders like the Council.

In order to meet the challenges posed by developing tourist destinations, Edinburgh had to ensure it was competitive. At present, the city lacked enough luxury accommodation to attract high-expenditure tourists and business visitors.

He acknowledged the existing beauty of the Royal High School's setting and the unique qualities of the building, but pointed out that it was unused. Bringing the building back into productive and self-sustaining use would prevent further deterioration.

The proposed operator Rosewood Hotel Group would undoubtedly find the site and iconic building an asset to its portfolio, and the development would remove the burden of upkeep from the public purse. The high-end hotel would attract people likely to spend, injecting money into the economy. Rosewood's brand being well-known and synonymous with luxury, would capture interest from high spend travellers. Having such a well known brand in the city may also be useful for the airlines trying to secure new routes. He concluded by suggesting that whilst changes to the building must be sensitive, it was imperative that the maintenance burden be removed from the Council. He believed that refusing the application would send the message that Edinburgh lacked ambition. Granting would, he argued, allow the city to take a step forward on the world stage.

Graham Birse, Director of the Edinburgh Institute of Leadership and Management Practice at Edinburgh Napier University, explained that he was representing the Edinburgh Business Forum, the Council's advisory body of business leaders on matters of economic development, who supported the application.

Their support was based on three component threads:-

- 1) The impact on Edinburgh's international reputation and its status as a destination. Tourism and hospitality currently supported 32,000 jobs and produced £1.2 billion of turnover in the city.

The arrival of Rosewood, a luxury brand, on the city's hotel scene would elevate Edinburgh's position as an international destination of choice. The group managed only 18 properties world-wide, and each of these was considered a signature destination in its own right.

There was an identified need for more high-end hotel space in the city, not just for recreational tourism but business visitors also. Edinburgh had slipped down the ICCA league table from 9th to 40th place as a desirable conference destination, which meant valuable business which mitigated the effect of seasonality was being lost out on.

- 2) The direct economic benefits to the city. Oxford Economics estimated that the hotel would generate 28.2 million GDP annually, and provide 750 jobs in the Edinburgh Economy alone. It was suggested £13 million tax revenues, excluding the construction phase, could also be raised.

Mr Birse referred to youth unemployment rates and the need to create and sustain jobs in sectors like hospitality, where entry level skills could lead to rewarding and fulfilling careers.

Luxury hotels, he indicated, maintained a 1:1 staff ratio. Rosewood was a Living Wage Employer who invested in staff training and development. This meant, following training, their staff were sought all over the world.

- 3) Sustainable economic use of much-loved building. In 2008 the Council made a commitment to find a sustainable use for the former Royal High School. Since then, substantial monies had been spent in keeping the building wind and water tight. This application followed 6 years of work to reach this point. The Council had been consistent in its view that a hotel would be the most appropriate use of the building. Following tender, DHP was currently the preferred contractor (until March 2021).

Mr Birse informed the Sub-Committee that he was unaware of any other proposition for the building which would remove the burden of running costs from the Council. He concluded by voicing his concerns that rejection of the application would involve many years of trying to find a viable alternative while the building continued to dilapidate, and urged the Sub-Committee to grant consent.

(j) Applicants

Bruce Hare - Duddingston House Properties, Radha Arora - President, Rosewood Hotel Group, Gareth Hoskins - Hoskins Architects and Gary Mappin - Mappin Consulting

Bruce Hare, Duddingston House Properties, described the competitive process which had led to their being appointed preferred development partners to develop a world class hotel at the former Royal High School, which had been judged by a distinguished panel of architects and council personnel. The appointment had been ratified by the Economy Committee in December 2013 and a contract up to 2022 (for the conclusion of missives) had been agreed.

Mr Hare stated his team understood the building and its location was unique and highly valued, along with its panoramic views of the city. Their aim was to create a design which would enhance the building and views, and celebrate the best of both Edinburgh and Scotland. A number of workshops were held with Planning, Historic Scotland and

Edinburgh World Heritage to try to establish where common ground existed amongst stakeholders.

To assist the process, the Head of Planning had, in conjunction with Historic Scotland, established seven key considerations against which the design principles would be tested. These became the team's rules in trying to develop a design solution which would be acceptable, and were followed diligently. When the final design was presented in January 2015, the general consensus seemed to be that the plan took cognisance of previously made comments, and had made amendments to our design to reflect this.

Mr Hare explained that two public exhibitions had taken place in the building in February and March 2015 and over 1000 people had attended. Feedback suggested high levels of concern about the deterioration of the building and the half a million pounds cost annually to the Council of maintaining it, as well as support for the proposed improvements to the public realm. He indicated the public feedback had been useful to the team in refining their design.

The team had also employed the services of an independent architectural arbiter to ensure that they had adhered to the seven key considerations established by the Head of Planning. Feedback from the exhibitions was also considered at these sessions and stakeholders were invited to attend. Some slight revisions were made to the plans as a consequence and at the conclusion of the forums, the arbiter stated the proposals were well considered and were supported.

He added that the hotel would be a fusion of the Enlightenment and modern day, and would reflect all that was best about Scotland – food, music, crafts and textiles, literature, poetry and the arts. Visitors from around the globe would be able to mix with emerging Scottish talent from all sectors. Only Rosewood, from the many hotel groups who had shown interest in developing on the site, had the experience to deliver this vision, with its track record of providing the best, individualized hotels in the world.

Radha Arora , President, Rosewood Hotel Group, explained that his company's hotels were found in the very best buildings in the very best locations in the world. Edinburgh was, he stated, one of those locations, and the Royal High School was one of those buildings.

He pointed out the economic benefits the hotel could generate for Edinburgh and Scotland as a whole through the wider supply chain. He suggested there was an unmet demand for high end hotel provision in the city, and if approved, it was likely that the hotel would have high occupancy rates.

The hotel itself would generate 260 full time jobs, and staff were trained to the very highest standards, with good career development opportunities and pay. The company had committed to a thirty year term which demonstrated faith in the hotels chances of success, and in the city. He believed the hotel would raise the profile of Scotland's capital and help it to compete on the world stage.

Other Rosewood hotels enjoyed high levels of non-resident patronage, and it was envisaged that the Royal High School site would be no different. He concluded by stating the firm already had a number of hotels based in listed buildings and heritage

sites around the world and had the aim of cherishing the building and bringing it back into sustainable commercial use.

Gareth Hoskins , Hoskins Architects, explained that a very good understanding of the building and the site had been built up over the considerable period leading to the final design, and immense thought had gone into ensuring both design and material choices had been guided by the seven key considerations.

He described the evolution of the design through reference to slides, available by viewing the webcast.

Gary Mappin, Mappin Consulting, summarised the reasons for approving the application, indicating the proposals were in accordance with the overarching aims of the Local Development Plan.

He reiterated the importance of tourism to Edinburgh, and the lack of top-end hotel provision. The hotel would bring economic benefits to the city.

No other viable commercial use had been suggested for the former Royal High School., and the application was a fully privately funded proposal which would remove the burden of maintenance from the public purse.

Having Rosewood operating in the city would be a boon to the Edinburgh economy, but no other building suggested itself as a viable opportunity for them to develop. The hotel would bring jobs and training and add to the arts and cultural scene in the city. That there were more rooms in the final application was due to the substantial capital costs of restoration.

He concluded by saying that the planning merits of the proposals should outweigh any remaining concerns and asked that the application be granted.

Bruce Hare concluded the applicants' presentation by making the following points:-

- The developers had been selected through a competitive process and rigorous planning procedures
- The plan secured a long term sustainable use for the Royal High School which would fully restore and conserve the Hamilton building
- A thorough and lengthy pre-application consultation exercise had been carried out, and the design team had responded to comments and amended the design accordingly
- They had adhered to the seven key considerations
- They had carried out the biggest public consultation of any major application in Scotland, resulting in overwhelming public support
- They had entered into a thirty year agreement with one of the best hotel chains in the world
- The hotel would boost the economy and create as many as 790 jobs through the hotel and supply partners

He asked that the application be granted.

(k) Local Ward member

Councillor Karen Doran spoke in her capacity as local ward member for the area and made reference to the volume of correspondence she had received voicing concern about the proposals. A plan to bring the building back into use was, she stated, needed, but it was essential to ensure that the right plan was chosen, one which respected the history and character of the building and its setting.

The former Royal High School was iconic, close to the hearts of the people of Edinburgh and had come to embody a sense of civic pride. The hotel plan was, in her view, insensitive to one of the most important buildings in the city. From the meetings she had attended and the correspondence she had received, she was in no doubt that the plan was unacceptable and would be detrimental to the building and would not enhance or protect the World Heritage Site.

She concluded that rather than the site being made into yet another high-end hotel, it could instead be used in such a way as to become a key part of the cultural fabric of Edinburgh.

Voting

Motion

To refuse planning permission for reasons 1 to 11 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

- Moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Mowat

Amendment 1

To approve the application subject to conditions, reasons and informatives to be determined in consultation with the Head of Planning and Transport:

- Moved by Councillor Howat, seconded by Councillor Heslop.

Amendment 2

To refuse planning permission for reasons 2, 4, 9 and 10 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

- Moved by Councillor McVey, seconded by Councillor Blacklock.

The Convener ruled in terms of Standing Order 8.1(b) that votes be taken on the motions and amendments in the following order:

Vote 1 – Motion against Amendment 2 = Vote 1 Outcome.

Vote 2 – Vote 1 Outcome against Amendment 1 = Final Decision

Vote 1

Motion

To refuse planning permission for reasons 1 to 11 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

- Moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Mowat

Amendment 2

To refuse planning permission for reasons 2, 4, 9 and 10 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

- Moved by Councillor McVey, seconded by Councillor Blacklock.

Voting

For the motion - 7 votes

For the amendment - 1 vote

Vote 1 Outcome

To refuse planning permission for reasons 1 to 11 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

Vote 2

Motion

To refuse planning permission for the reasons 1 to 11 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

- Moved by Councillor Perry, seconded by Councillor Mowat.

Amendment 1

To approve the application subject to conditions, reasons and informatives to be determined in consultation with the Head of Planning and Transport:

- Moved by Councillor Howat, seconded by Councillor Heslop.

Voting

For the motion - 8 votes

For the amendment - 7 votes

Decision

To refuse planning permission for reasons 1 to 11 detailed in section 3 of the reports by the Head of Planning and Transport.

(Reference – report by the Head of Planning and Transport, submitted.)

2. New Parliament House, 5-7 Regent Road, Edinburgh

Details were provided of an application for listed building consent for refurbishment (external and internal), alteration and extension of principal former Royal High School building and pavilions, demolition of former Lodge, Gymnasium Block, demolition of 2 curtilage buildings
Development Management Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee
17 December 2015

(former Classroom Block and Luncheon Hall), demolition of existing gates, wall (in part) and formation of new service access. Application Number 15/03990/LBC.

The Sub-Committee had heard representations on the proposals as detailed in item 1 above.

The Head of Planning and Transport gave details of the proposal and the planning considerations involved and recommended that consent was refused.

Decision

To refuse listed building consent for the reasons as detailed in section 3 of the report by the Head of Planning and Transport.

(Reference – report by the Head of Planning and Transport, submitted.)

The webcast of the meeting, including all presentations, can be viewed via the link below:-

Development Management Sub-Cttee 17.12.15