

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 9 November 2016

**Application for Conservation Area Consent 15/03913/CON
At 63 Calton Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8DP
Proposed demolition in a conservation area.**

Item number	5.1
Report number	
Wards	A11 - City Centre

Summary

The proposed demolition of the garage is acceptable on the basis that its removal will not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Outcome of previous Committee

This application was previously considered by Committee on 12.10.2016.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#) LPC, CITE5, LDPP, PLDP23,

Report

Application for Conservation Area Consent 15/03913/CON At 63 Calton Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8DP Proposed demolition in a conservation area.

Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

The application site is located between Calton Road and the pedestrian walkway leading to Regent Road. The ground level of the site significantly rises from the front to the rear of the site. The site currently comprises an existing single storey stone building which is currently utilised as a car park.

The site is bounded by four storey residential properties to the west. There are offices and student residences to the south. To the north is a wooded embankment which forms part of the wider New Town Gardens. These recent developments are in a variety of architectural styles and utilise a range of materials. The Studio 24 nightclub is also directly opposite the site. The Royal High School, a category 'A' listed building is located to the north on an elevated position overlooking Regent Road.

The Canongate Kirk sits on an elevated position to the south and the application site is visible from within the grounds of the Kirk.

The site lies within the World Heritage Site.

The New Town Conservation Area is immediately to the north.

The land to the north of the site lies in the New Town Designed Landscape.

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

2.2 Site History

14 May 2009 - Planning application refused for a change of use to a car park (09/00434/FUL).

29 July 2009 - Planning application granted for a change of use to a car park (09/01431/FUL).

25 August 2015 - Planning permission for demolition of existing garage and erection of a mixed use development comprising commercial space and student accommodation. (15/03912/FUL). This is the conservation area consent application associated with this application.

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The proposal is for the demolition of the single storey building on the site. A further application for the erection of a mixed use development comprising commercial space and student accommodation has also been received.

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

The Old Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the *essential architectural character as the consistent and harmonious height and mass of buildings and the limited palette of building materials; stone and pitched slate roofs, provides unity. The character appraisal recognises a mix of uses, including important residential and tourism functions. With regard to new development the character appraisal directs new development to be sympathetic to the spatial pattern, scale and massing of the traditional four/five storey form, proportions, building lines and design of traditional buildings in the area. One of the characteristics of the Old Town is its continuous development with examples of every era of architecture throughout it since medieval time.*

The demolition of an unlisted building within a conservation area, in accordance with policy Env 5: Conservation Areas - Demolition of Buildings, will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The proposal must be considered against the tests set out in policy Env 2: Listed Buildings - Demolition, in conjunction with Env 5, essentially meaning that it is assessed in the same manner as the demolition of a listed building. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2016) sets out that such applications for demolition will be assessed against:

- a) the importance of the building;

- b) the condition of the building;
- c) the economic viability of reusing the building; and
- d) the wider public benefits.

To obtain consent for demolition the proposal will need to meet at least one of the above tests.

While the building to be demolished has a stone frontage, it does not make a significant contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. It is of little architectural merit with a lean-to tin roof with small square windows which does not add to the character of the area. The building is therefore not of sufficient importance that it should be retained. Provided the proposed new building preserves or enhances the conservation area, demolition of the existing building is justified.

Historic Environment Scotland has raised no objections to the demolition.

Replacement Development

The proposed redevelopment of the site is the subject of a separate application for planning permission (reference 15/03912/FUL). The assessment of the relevant full planning application addresses the issues of the principle of the proposed use, the developments impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area, the setting of the listed building, and its scale and design. To summarise, whilst student accommodation is not seen to be of direct benefit to the community it is acceptable in principle in this location where a mixture of uses exist and purpose built student accommodation will contribute to a balanced community. The redevelopment is of a modern contemporary design which will not adversely impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area, or on the setting of the listed building.

In summary, the demolition and redevelopment will not result in the loss of any features which contribute to the character of the conservation area. Demolition is acceptable subject to a suitable replacement building which enhances and preserves the character of the conservation area.

b) Equalities and human rights

The demolition of the existing building will not have an adverse impact on equalities or human rights.

c) Public comments

Material comments in objection

- If the building is considered for demolition then it should be for something that is a community benefit- addressed in section 3.3a).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed demolition accords with the development plan. The loss of this building is necessary for the related redevelopment proposals that will enhance this part of the conservation area. The associated benefits from the redevelopment of the site outweigh any townscape or heritage loss. 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

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:

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

7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:

This application meets 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

The application was advertised on the 15 September 2015. One letter of objection was received. The main grounds of objection are:

- If the building is considered for demolition then it should be for something that is a community benefit.

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**

Edinburgh City Local Plan - The site is designated as the Central Area and the World Heritage Site.

Date registered

26 August 2015

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01,

John Bury

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PLACE
City of Edinburgh Council

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Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Edinburgh City Local Plan.

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

Relevant policies of the Proposed Local Development Plan.

Second Proposed LDP Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas - Demolition of Buildings) sets out criteria for assessing proposals involving the demolition of buildings within a conservation area.

Appendix 1

Application for Conservation Area Consent 15/03913/CON At 63 Calton Road, Edinburgh, EH8 8DP Proposed demolition in a conservation area.

Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland does not object to this application and we do not have any comments to make on the proposals.

Note

Historic Environment Scotland has a national remit for the Historic Environment, and as such does not provide detailed comments on every application. We consider consultations in national terms, and will decide whether to provide detailed advice depending on the scale, nature or complexity of the proposals.

A decision not to provide detailed comments or not to object should not be taken as support for the proposals by Historic Environment Scotland, and the application should be assessed as normal by your Council against local and national policy and guidance on the Historic Environment.

Detailed guidance on the application of National policy is set out in our 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series available online at <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes/> . Technical advice is available through our Technical Conservation website at <http://conservation.historic-scotland.gov.uk/> .

