

Development Management Sub Committee

Report returning to Committee - Wednesday 7 December 2016

Application for Approval of Matters Specified in Conditions 16/03321/AMC

**At Site 60 Metres South Of 199, Fountainbridge, Edinburgh
AMC specified in conditions 1, 2 (a-m) and (i)-(v), 3, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20 relating to plots W1-W4 including residential/commercial/retail units; detail of height/massing/ground floor levels/design of external features and materials including public realm/pedestrian/cycle access arrangements, treatment to adopted roads or footways, car parking venting/servicing, surface water + drainage/lighting, waste management/hard + soft landscaping details.**

Item number	5.1
Report number	
Wards	A09 - Fountainbridge/Craiglockhart

Recommendations

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

Background information

The application was presented to Development Management Sub-Committee on 9 November 2016. Committee continued consideration of the application to allow officers to have further discussions with the applicants on design and sizing of the proposed flats and to allow elected members to further review the design policies as set out in the Edinburgh City Local Plan and Local Development Plan.

In response, the applicant has changed the proposals so that 53 of the formerly one bedroom flats are now proposed as studios. The mix of dwellings in the proposal is now as follows:

	Studio	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	Total
Block W1	23	38	79	8	148
Block W2	10	42	53	6	111
Block W3	20		41	2	63
Block W4	<u> </u>	<u>69</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>112</u>
Total	53	149	208	24	434
% of total	12%	34%	48%	6%	

In respect of the 2 bedroom flats, 23 of these are Colony style. This is 5% of the overall total.

The studios range between 41sqm and 45sqm in size. In comparison with the one bedroom flats these have been redesigned to be more open-plan, with bedroom areas being screened from living areas. Previously there were partition walls separating the spaces.

In addition, the applicant has submitted a Supplementary Information Document (dated 21 November 2016). This sets out an explanation for the design change and provides further information on the following topics:

- Build to Rent / PRS housing and Planning;
- Demand for built to rent / PRS housing;
- Mix of Dwellings;
- Typical floor plan representing mix;
- Drawings and images showing a comparison between one bedroom flats and studios;
- 3D drawings showing the internal arrangement of the proposed studios;
- A commentary on dwelling sizes and Council standards;
- Information on the local market context (flat sizes of one bedroom flats in Edinburgh);
- Information on shared amenities; and,
- Examples of developments with shared amenities in the UK and Europe.

Drawings have been changed with the following drawing numbers being substituted for the numbers set out in the 9 November 2016 report:

01, 02b, 03A - 07A, 08, 09A, 10 - 21, 22A, 23, 24, 25A - 30A, 31, 32A, 33, 34, 35A, 36A, 37 - 41, 42A - 49A, 49 - 51, 52A, 53, 54, 55A, 56, 57, 58A - 62A, 63 - 65, 66A, 67, 68A, 69 - 83, 84A, 85A and 86 - 89.

Main report

Change to Studio Flats

The change from one bedroom to studio flats for 53 of the units provides an increase in mix of dwelling types. The studios are primarily design to be occupied by single people, although it would be possible for couples to live in them.

The studios all exceed the 36sqm set out in the Edinburgh Design Guidance as a minimum floor area for studios, by at least 5sqm.

Two options have been presented for the internal layout of the studios. In option (1), the architect has designed a free standing unit that allows the ceiling to be seen as a single element within the space and allows the window onto the bedroom area to be seen from the living area. As a result, it creates a greater sense of spaciousness in comparison with the previous one bedroom flat of the same floor area.

The alternative option (2) is similar in that it has a unit to separate the living and bedroom areas. In this instance, it is a floor to ceiling unit. It has sliding doors that the bedroom space to be closed off. While this may not be open as option (1) it does potentially offer more flexibility for the use of the space by the occupant.

The applicant intends to deliver half of the studios to the design of option (1) with the remainder as per option (2).

All of the studio flats will have full height glazing and Juliette type balconies with 11 of them having full balconies. The studios will all have 2sqm built in storage space / cupboards within them.

These two designs will help ensure that the studios can meet the needs of a range of different types of occupants. The designs will cater for people who like completely open plan space and those who prefer a little more separation, from time to time.

Justification of flat sizes

The information the applicant has supplied in its Supplementary Information (21 November 2016) provides further explanation and justification for the proposed flat sizes.

The proportion of single person households is expected to grow in Edinburgh. The National Records of Scotland predicts that in Edinburgh, the percentage of single adult households will rise from 40% in 2010 to 44% in 2035. It is accepted that there is therefore an increased need for accommodation suitable for this type of household.

The supporting drawings show that in order to provide a hallway within flats, 4sqm to 5sqm is needed. This space takes account of the space and dimensions required at doors to take account of the accessibility aspects of the Building Standards. Though, depending on the layout of the flat, it may be possible to reduce this area a little, the figures put forward are generally accepted for the type of layout shown. This layout has living room, bedroom and bathroom located off the hallway in a flat that is roughly square in its proportions.

The developer intends to omit the hallways within the flats. The Building Standards allows for this provided certain criteria for fire alarms and where necessary fire suppression (sprinklers) are used.

The applicant has provided a study of flat sizes in Edinburgh using information from the ESPC. The sample taken was of 27 flats which were predominantly in the Gorgie / Dalry / Dundee Street area. This shows an average one bedroom flat size for existing flats being sold of 37.3sqm. Plans provided show one bedroom flats rather than studios. The proposed studios are therefore larger than existing one bedroom flats in the area.

The applicant suggests that the build to rent market has evolved in the UK following the credit crunch to meet the growing demand from people who are disenfranchised from the private housing for sale market due to high costs and loan requirements. This type of housing, of purpose built privately rented flats, is new to Edinburgh. It will add to the mix of existing housing tenure types within the city.

The applicant highlights the Chief Planner's letter on PRS and the Scottish Government's Draft Planning Advice on Housing and Infrastructure as supporting its case for the development. The letter and the Advice are considered in section 3.3 a) of the Committee Report of 9 November 2016 on this application.

Common facilities

There is 625sqm of common amenity space in the three build to rent buildings (blocks W1, W2 and W3). This will be available to all of the blocks W1 to W3 tenants to use. Divided equally between the 286 built to rent flats, this equates to 2.2sqm per flat.

There is also 131sqm of storage space in the basement. This can be leased by tenants if they require additional storage space.

There is 596sqm of fitness space. It is intended that this will be operated by the build to rent operator for the use by tenants.

In addition to the cycle parking proposed, there will be a cycle washing station. This helps make it easier to maintain bicycles and in turn makes bike use more attractive and therefore likely.

The developer has provided information on communal facilities in existing private rental sector build to rent developments. Photos show communal spaces such as cafe, function room, residents' lounge and give the sense that these spaces are used and valued by the occupants of the developments.

Summary

Taking into account, the imaginative design for the studio flats, the omission of traditional hallways and the provision of common spaces and gyms within the development, the proposal is acceptable in relation to flat sizes. As is set out in the main report of 7 November 2016, the scheme will deliver 434 new homes including 148 affordable dwellings. There is a mix of flats which will meet the needs of a range of people and families of different sizes. The scheme delivers a mix of uses and will further consolidate the regeneration of the area. These factors outweigh any deficiency in relation to flat sizes, mix and amenity.

Links

Policies and guidance for this application

LPC, CITCA1, CITD1, CITD2, CITD3, CITD4, CITD5, CITD6, CITD7, CITD9, CITD10, CITE8, CITE9, CITE3, CITE16, CITE17, CITE18, CITH2, CITH3, CITH4, CITH7, CITR4, CITT1, CITT2, CITT3, CITT4, CITT5, CITT6, CITT13, CITE15, LDPP, PLDP01, PLDP02, PLDP03, PLDP06, PLDP12, PLDP08, PLDP09, PLDP10, PLDP11, PLDP12, PLDP13, PLDP15, PLDP16, PLDP20, PLDP21, PLDP26, PLDP27, PLDP33, PLDP34, PLDP39, PLDP40, PLDP51, PLDP52, PLDP54, PLDP56, PLDP64, PLDP72, PLDP73, PLDP74, PLDP78, PLDP81, NSG, NSDCAH, NSESBB, NSGD02, NSGESS, NSMDV, NSGSTR,

A copy of the original Committee report can be found in the list of documents at <https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idxpa-web/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=O9SC43EWGMM00>

Or Council Papers online

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