

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 22 February 2017

**Application for Listed Building Consent 16/05293/LBC
At 64 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2DJ
Internal and external alterations to existing listed building
and partial demolition at 64 Princes Street, and relocation of
existing police box on Rose Street.**

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Item number | 7.3 (b) |
| Report number | |
| Wards | A11 - City Centre |

Summary

The application complies with the Local Development Plan and non-statutory planning guidelines. The proposals seek to retain the key elements of the listing building whilst repurposing the building for a long term future use. The proposals do alter and challenge the composition and integrity of the building but, overall, represent a positive redevelopment of the building having no adverse impact on its special character. On balance, the proposals will protect the special interest of this 1960s modernist building, whilst giving it a new, sustainable future.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#) LDPP, LEN04, LEN06, NSG, NSLBCA,

Report

Application for Listed Building Consent 16/05293/LBC At 64 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2DJ Internal and external alterations to existing listed building and partial demolition at 64 Princes Street, and relocation of existing police box on Rose Street.

Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

The application site extends to approximately 0.24 hectares in total and is situated in the heart of Edinburgh's New Town. It is bounded by Princes Street Gardens to the south and Rose Street to the north with a mix of retail and office use in surrounding buildings.

The site is located within a vibrant part of the City Centre with links through to George Street and provides good access for delivery vehicles to Rose Street South Lane. The building benefits from tremendous open views to the South of the city.

This purpose-built store for the multiples retailer British Homes Stores was designed as the first flagship store of the chain in Scotland and represents bespoke 1960s modern design for the latest development in retailing. Much thought has been given to the integration of the entire plan (including the rooftop) and interiors and the sensitivity of the external materials. The building was meant to be viewed not only as integral component of the existing streetscape but also from many vantage points in the city centre, including Edinburgh Castle. The building is category B listed and was listed on 26.11.2008 (LB Ref: 51249).

The building is one of only two listed Panel buildings, following the comprehensive redevelopment of Princes Street proposed in the Abercrombie Plan of 1949. In 1958 the Princes Street Panel, taking heed of suggestions going back to the 1930s, instigated a policy of introducing 1st floor walkways to all new buildings on Princes Street, with the ultimate intention of creating a continuous 2nd street. BHS, along with the category A listed New Club are the only two surviving listed Panel buildings on Princes Street.

The design of the building championed a new era for British retail with the open floor plans and central circulation space representing a pioneering new approach to the design of large scale city centre retail stores. The character of the space and heritage value is, therefore, defined not purely by the architectural expression and composition but also by the experience that this approach offered to customers. The lack of elaborate architectural detail present in no way diminishes the significance of the space as it is the space itself, as a whole, the proportions and design ethos that creates the significance in this instance. Buildings are often listed for reasons beyond architectural composition but in this instance it is a combination of both the tangible architectural design along with the intangible experience offered by such a design philosophy that combine to create the significance and special character of the listed building.

The Princes Street element comprises four full floors of accommodation and a set back partial 5th floor. The Rose Street element comprises three storeys.

The enclosed walkway at second floor over Rose Street South Lane and the extension facing Rose Street are later additions to the listed building, constructed in 1971.

Being located in the New Town the building is in close proximity to a large number of listed buildings. The majority of these buildings are category B or category C listed. The only A listed building near the site is the Dome.

This application site is located within the World Heritage Site.

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

2.2 Site History

22 January 2009 - Change of use application of 3 existing uppermost levels of Princes Street building to hotel use withdrawn (application number 08/03456/FUL).

06 September 2016 Pre-Application Notice approved for the refurbishment and redevelopment of existing premises to form retail (class 1) and restaurants (class 3) at Princes Street and Rose Street levels and at basement levels below with Hotel (Class 7) restaurants (Class 3) above (within underused upper floors of premises and at new rooftop levels) together with associated works (application number 16/03655/PAN).

28 October 2016 - Planning application submitted for refurbishment and redevelopment of existing premises to form retail (class 1) and restaurants (class 3) at Princes Street and Rose Street levels and at basement levels below, with hotel (class 7) / restaurants (class 3) above (within underused upper floors of premises and at new rooftop levels) together with associated works (application number 16/05292/FUL).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The application proposes the redevelopment of 64 Princes Street including:

- The sub-division of the listed building;
- The construction of a roof top extension;

- The demolition of the existing extension and bridge link on Rose Street and construction of a new extension and bridge link; and
- The removal of the original BHS signage and the moving of the existing police box on Rose Street.

Internally, basement, lower ground and upper ground floors would be sub-divided to create a mix of retail and class 3 uses. First and second floors would be significantly re-configured to create hotel accommodation. Third floor would be completely altered to create new hotel accommodation and allow for the construction of a new roof top extension, which would accommodate a new roof level restaurant with outdoor seating area.

The new roof level would be of contemporary design but would use materials to reflect those used in the existing structure, such as copper cladding.

The existing two and a half storey extension on Rose Street would be demolished and replaced with a new 5 storey structure that would remain connected to the listed building by virtue of a high level walkway over Rose Street South Lane. This walkway would replace the existing walkway and would be a light weight double glazed structure with copper cladding and fins. This would provide access from the new extension to the listed building. This link is repeated on 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors. The new build on Rose Street would be constructed of sandstone with a copper standing seam roof and detailing.

Access to the primary retail space is taken from Princes Street. The hotel and top floor restaurant are accessed via entrances on Rose Street. Similarly, the proposed new commercial units are accessed from Rose Street with Unit A occupying two storeys and Unit B single storey.

Scheme 1

The scheme has been amended to setback the fifth floor to Rose Street by 2.9 metres

3.2 Determining Issues

In considering whether to grant consent, special regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. For the purposes of this issue, preserve, in relation to the building, means preserve it either in its existing state or subject only to such alterations or extensions as can be carried out without serious detriment to its character.

Do the proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area? If they do, there is a strong presumption against granting of permission.

3.3 Assessment

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

- a) the alterations have an adverse impact on the character of the listed building;
- b) equalities and human rights issues have been addressed; and

c) representations have been addressed.

a) Listed Building

The proposals to convert this B listed building and bring it back into long term, sustainable use is supported in principle and Historic Environment Scotland states that *"on balance we consider the scheme will protect the special interest of this 1960s modernist building, whilst giving it a new, sustainable future."*

The special interest of this building not only encompasses its modernist architectural quality, but also the cutting-edge retail function, layout and circulation. The proposals seek to retain these vital components of the listed building repairing and maintaining the principal facade whilst retaining the primary retail space within the listed building.

Internally, the majority of the work takes place at upper levels to accommodate the new hotel and restaurant uses. However, the existing retail space is also sub-divided to accommodate the range of uses proposed, along Rose Street, as part of the scheme.

At basement level, minor sub-division is proposed. These alterations have no adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

At lower ground floor, the existing retail space will be sub-divided. The retail space within the original building will be retained. These alterations have no adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

At upper ground floor, minor alterations have no adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

At first and second floor, the existing open storage space will be transformed into hotel accommodation. Though an interesting element of the original design and use, the sub-division of this space would have no adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

The third floor of the building is of historic and architectural value both in terms of layout and architectural detail with fine 1960s panelling throughout. The architectural integrity at this level is high and the loss of this floor has an impact on the character of the listed building. However, it is accepted that the reconfiguration of this space to accommodate a new use within a major redevelopment is not something that can be easily achieved and its removal and replacement unlocks significant advantages in terms of the function, use of the building, and its long-term sustainability. As such, the loss of this floor and its redevelopment as hotel accommodation is acceptable in this instance. A condition is attached to ensure that a full photographic survey of the building, with particular reference to this floor, is undertaken prior to work commencing on site.

Externally, the main alterations are the new roof top extension and the demolition of the existing extension on Rose Street to accommodate a new, larger extension.

Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement (HESPS) states:

Where a proposal involves alteration or adaptation which will have an adverse or significantly adverse impact on the special interest of the building, planning authorities, in reaching decisions should consider carefully:

- a. the relative importance of the special interest of the building; and*
- b. the scale of the impact of the proposals on that special interest; and*
- c. whether there are other options which would ensure a continuing beneficial use for the building with less impact on its special interest; and*
- d. whether there are significant benefits for economic growth or the wider community which justify a departure from the presumption set out in paragraph 3.38 above.*

As stated previously, the loss of the existing copper roof and 3rd floor of accommodation has an impact on the character of the listed building. However, it is accepted in the context of the wider proposals to be a necessary alteration to ensure the long term use of the building. The proportions, materiality and quality of detailing of the principal facade are an integral part of the building's listing and the new rooftop extension reflects the existing structure both in design philosophy and materials. While the new roof structure will be visible from long views, the proposals maintain the low level roofline from local views, positioning the top storey to sit back and stop it from becoming visible from street level. Whilst affecting the composition and integrity of the building, it does not have an adverse impact on the special character of the building representing a high quality addition.

The demolition of the existing extension on Rose Street does not have a negative impact on the character of the listed building. While this extension reflected the design philosophy and materials of the original listed building it is not an essential component of the buildings special character. Therefore, the removal of this element of the building has no adverse impact on the character of the building. The new building on Rose Street, though significantly higher, remains an extension to the listed building. The design of this building and its impact on the townscape is assessed in the corresponding planning application (ref: 16/05292/FUL). The materials proposed reflect those used in the principal listed building. While the size, scale and massing of the building is significantly greater than the existing extension, and fails to be subservient, in this City Centre context, and with the wider benefits provided by the overall scheme, it is considered that the new extension has no adverse impact on the character of the listed building.

The original British Home Stores signage would be replaced as part of the proposals. Though of real value, it would be unreasonable to expect new occupiers to operate without signage. The proposals seek to ensure that any new signage would be designed to replicate the original by way of design and materials. As such, whilst the name will change, the integrity of the building will be retained having no adverse impact on the character of the building.

The windows on the principal facade are to be replaced with new metal framed windows to match existing in terms of detail.

The police box on Rose Street is not listed and therefore listed building consent is not required to move the structure.

Overall, the proposals provide an opportunity to offer an important listed building a long term sustainable future. In this instance, the benefits of providing a viable use outweigh any adverse impacts to the character of the listed building. The areas of most architectural and historic value have been retained. The proposals comply with LDP policy Env 4 and the Historic Environment Scotland Policy Statement.

b) Equalities and Human Rights

The development would improve the accessibility of the building. Although there are significant challenges to providing direct access to historic buildings, the building would be easily accessible for all both at Princes Street and Rose Street. The development would:

- Embrace the policies of inclusive design.
- Ensure safe, easy and inclusive access for all people regardless of disability, age or gender, both into the building or site and to local amenities such as shops, hotel and restaurant facilities.
- Provide hotel accommodation suitable or readily adaptable for mobility impaired guests by ensuring the needs of wheelchair users have been addressed. Accessible accommodation is enhanced by the proximity of the building to routes to local amenities and public transport.

Impacts on equalities and rights are acceptable.

c) Representations

- Loss of original BHS signage - this is addressed in sections 3.3a).
- Loss of horizontal window bars in the vertical glazing to the second and third floors. - this is addressed in section 3.3a).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposals comply with the development plan and relevant non-statutory guidelines. Though the loss of the upper floors is unfortunate, it is acknowledge that such an intervention is necessary to allow for the future long term sustainable use of the building. A condition requiring the undertaking of a photographic survey of the building is attached.

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions:-

1. Prior to work commencing on site, Historic Environment Scotland should be allowed access to undertake a full photographic survey of the building.

Reasons:-

1. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.

Informatives

It should be noted that:

1. The works hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.

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 04 November 2016. One letter of objection was received from the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland who objected on the following grounds:

The incised 'British Home Stores' lettering in the polished granite fascia. The original fascia and lettering should be retained. The quality of this element, in material, lettering and spacing, is an integral part of the composition of the front façade, and it should not be replaced.

The horizontal window bars in the vertical glazing to the second and third floors. These align with the joints of the white granite panels, and are part of the overall grid design. These bars should be retained to maintain the existing grid design.

Scheme 2 was advertised on 06 January 2017. No further letters of representation were received.

Background reading/external references

- To view details of the application go to
- [Planning and Building Standards online services](#)
- [Planning guidelines](#)
- [Conservation Area Character Appraisals](#)
- [Edinburgh Local Development Plan](#)
- [Scottish Planning Policy](#)

**Statutory Development
Plan Provision**

The application property is located in the City Centre and City Centre Retail Core within the Local Development Plan.

Date registered

28 October 2016

Drawing numbers/Scheme

1-32 and 33, 34-35, 36A and 37-41,

Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Euan Mcmeeken, Planning Officer
E-mail: euan.mcmeeken@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel: 0131 529 3989

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

LDP Policy Env 4 (Listed Buildings - Alterations and Extensions) identifies the circumstances in which alterations and extensions to listed buildings will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas - Development) sets out criteria for assessing development in a conservation area.

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

Non-statutory guidelines 'LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS' provides guidance on repairing, altering or extending listed buildings and unlisted buildings in conservation areas.

Appendix 1

Application for Listed Building Consent 16/05293/LBC At 64 Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 2DJ Internal and external alterations to existing listed building and partial demolition at 64 Princes Street, and relocation of existing police box on Rose Street.

Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

Thank you for the above consultation which we received on 04 November. We have considered it for our historic environment interests.

Our Advice

We offer the following advice.

Heritage Asset

Commissioned in the early 1960s to be the flagship store of British Home Stores (BHS) in Scotland, the building at 64 Princes Street was listed at Category B in 2008. Its special interest not only encompasses its modernist architectural quality, but also the (at the time) cutting-edge retail function, layout and circulation.

Robert Matthew, Johnson-Marshall and Partners (RMJM) provided their client with an offering the like of which had not been seen in Edinburgh. Clearly influenced by the socio-economic changes taking place on the post-war high street, not only in Britain, but globally - very spacious and large floor-plates, curtain-glazed shop fronts, and a centralised circulation core where uninterrupted views of the shop floors could be viewed.

Furthermore whilst RMJM answered the brief put forward by the Council in regard to post-war proposals to redevelop Princes Street, known as the 'Panel buildings', their design by way of its massing, materials, and detailing skilfully integrates the BHS building as an integral component of the existing Princes Street streetscape.

The Proposal

We have welcomed the opportunity to attend a number of pre-application meetings with your council and the design team to discuss the proposal to retain the buildings retail presence, reconfigure its upper levels as hotel accommodation, and remodel the roof to include a top floor restaurant and terrace.

This early engagement has allowed us to give a clear steer in identifying the special interest of the building, and to discuss ways in which we believe the building could be meaningfully repurposed without adverse impact to this special interest.

It has also allowed us to identify at an early stage proposed changes not readily absorbed by the building without affecting a significant adverse impact to its special interest. Your Council and ourselves established a succinct baseline to guide the design team, particularly in regard to elements that need to be revised to protect the intrinsic special interest of the building.

In particular we welcome the following;

- . The retention and sensitive refurbishment of the floating 2-storey central granite and aluminium section. We would recommend that further clarification is given in regard to any new proposed window units and their subdivision.*
- . The Princes Street flanking York stone Towers are to be kept clear of clutter and signage. We would welcome confirmation that the painted stone will be cleaned and exposed within the building.*
- . The reinstatement of the bronze street level shop front. We would suggest that appearance replicates the division pattern in-existence.*
- . Retention of the granite faced walkway. Any new granite should closely match the existing. In regard to incising the letters of any new shop on this walkway frontage, given the high turn-around of shop occupancy, we would strongly recommend that new signage would be best kept below the granite walkway either hanging, on or behind the glazing.*
- . Retention of the original centralised circulation core, particularly in regard to its location and area.*
- . Maintaining the original design concept, experience, and understanding of the 'expansive' shop floors at ground and 1st floor.*
- . Opportunity to enhance the public realm. We would recommend high-quality materials and streetscape suitable for the New Town.*

Roof

In regard to the reworking of the roof, we note the rationale put forward if the building is to have a sustainable and guaranteed new use. We understand that the design-specific layout of the rooftop canteen and associated staff and manager's accommodation cannot be easily retrofitted or adapted. We have not accepted the loss of this element of the building lightly, particularly given its detailing and external expression. We do however understand that its reworking will unlock significant advantages in terms of the function and use of the building, and its long-term sustainability. We also note that the replacement structure has been influenced and guided by the contextual architectural quality of the existing structure. We thus welcome the use of standing seam copper at this level, and would urge its further use where possible here.

Rose Street Elevation

In regard to the later extension to Rose Street, we have been clear that we believe its loss and redevelopment of the block is acceptable. We would note that the scale and massing of the new block, from the wider city views, appears particularly visible and dominant,

crowding the primacy of the Princess Street building. The two large service pylons which anchor the BHS building are subsumed into a large mass of skyline articulation. We would therefore suggest there is scope to reduce its height by a storey. This would be particularly beneficial in allowing the BHS building to regain its breathing space and primacy.

Conclusion

We realise that shopping patterns have changed and it would be difficult to reuse the building and its interior as existing. With this in mind we welcome the new use for the building and its upper floors. The loss of the distinctive roof structure is unwelcome but we

welcome the echo of its design in the use of copper. We also welcome the retention of the frontage structure, materials and detailing. On balance we consider the scheme will protect the special interest of this 1960s modernist building, whilst giving it a new, sustainable future.

Our advice can be used by you to inform your decision. The proposals do not raise issues of national significance. Our letter is advisory and is not an objection.

This response applies to the application currently proposed, an amended scheme may require another consultation with us.

Location Plan



© Crown Copyright and database right 2014. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey License number 100023420
END