

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 21 June 2017

**Application for Planning Permission 17/01129/FUL  
At Royal Botanic Garden, 20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh  
Amendment to planning permission 13/00645/FUL, "Re-  
erection of Botanic Cottage", incorporating a reduction in  
the building footprint, increase in ridge height to the east  
and west wings, alterations to toilets and disabled access  
arrangements, landscaping changes (in retrospect).**

<b>Item number</b>	4.4
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	A05 - Inverleith (Pre May 2017)

## Summary

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The proposals comply with the development plan policies, preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area, and have no detrimental impact on road safety. Residential amenity will not be adversely affected. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

## Links

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<a href="#"><u>Policies and guidance for this application</u></a>	LDPP, LDES01, LDES05, LEN06, LEN12, LEN15, NSG, NSGD02, NSLBCA, CRPINV,
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# Report

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At Royal Botanic Garden, 20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh  
Amendment to planning permission 13/00645/FUL, "Re-erection of Botanic Cottage", incorporating a reduction in the building footprint, increase in ridge height to the east and west wings, alterations to toilets and disabled access arrangements, landscaping changes (in retrospect).**

## Recommendations

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

## Background

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### 2.1 Site description

The application relates to the site occupied by the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh (RBGE). The gardens are bounded to the north by Inverleith Place, to the south by Inverleith Terrace, to the west by Arboretum Place and to the east by Inverleith Row. The proposals relate specifically to the north part of the gardens, formerly in use as the demonstration garden, located on the boundary with Inverleith Place.

The boundary wall and railings around the garden site are category C listed. They were listed on 4 June 2003, (LB Ref 49217).

This application site is located within the Inverleith Conservation Area.

### 2.2 Site History

21 March 2013- Listed building consent granted to alter the boundary railings to create a new controlled pedestrian access gate to the new Botanic Cottage (application reference 13/00423/LBC).

29 August 2013 - Planning application granted for the re-erection of Botanic Cottage, a two-storey 18th century building on north edge of Botanic Gardens, re-using salvaged materials to its previous design with single storey connected outshots east and west of cottage behind flanking walls (application reference 13/00645/FUL).

## **Main report**

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### **3.1 Description Of The Proposal**

Planning application 13/00645/FUL was granted for the erection of the 'Botanic Cottage' on the site. As constructed, the development has seen a number of material changes from the approved drawings. As a result, this current application seeks to regularise the building as constructed in planning terms.

This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of the Botanic Cottage with the following material changes from the original approved scheme:

- Increase in height of the flanking walls and single storey wings by an additional 650 mm;
- Alterations to landscaping proposals;
- Small reduction in the footprint of the building;
- Alterations to the toilet arrangements;
- Alterations to fenestration pattern;
- Alterations to materials palette; and
- Erection of a metal access ramp.

The cottage is being used as an educational facility.

### **3.2 Determining Issues**

Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states - Where, in making any determination under the planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

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

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?

### **3.3 Assessment**

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

- a) the proposed use is acceptable in this location;
- b) the proposals have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- c) the design and materials are of appropriate quality;

- d) there is any adverse impact on residential amenity;
- e) comments raised have been addressed; and
- f) any impacts on equalities or human rights are acceptable.

a) The acceptability of the proposed use in this location

The siting of an educational facility in this part of the RBGE site is ancillary to the main use of the gardens and is acceptable in principle. This part of the gardens historically provided outdoor educational space. The proposed rebuilding of the Botanic Cottage will not result in the introduction of any inappropriate uses in this area.

b) Impact on Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The Inverleith Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the essential character of the area as being; *'layered with playing fields, a public park and the Royal Botanic Gardens. This substantial amount of open space allows panoramic views across the city. The architectural character is dominated by rows of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian villas and terraces which form boundaries to extensive blocks of public and private open space. The villa streets are complemented by the profusion of mature trees, extensive garden settings, stone boundary walls and spacious roads'*.

The rebuilt Botanic Cottage will present a well designed reconstruction of an historic structure that mixes the original salvaged materials with contemporary features such as solar panels and timber cladding to modern extensions. The materials will not detract from the character of the conservation area and are appropriate to the style of the building.

This part of the garden is visible from Inverleith Place which is characterised by substantial stone built villas set in mature garden grounds on the north side and the Botanic Gardens on the south. The cottage appears as an object building within a large landscape and emphasises the difference in character of both sides of the street.

Only one tree has been retained along the boundary on Inverleith Place within the application site with two trees removed. This has been necessitated as a result of storm damage to one existing tree. The other has received separate tree works consent for its removal. A new replacement tree has been planted to the northwest boundary which is currently in its infancy. The loss of these two trees did not adversely impact on the green appearance of the area and a significant number of mature trees remain within the RBGE site, just outwith the application boundary.

The previous hedge along the boundary with Inverleith Place has also been removed in its entirety. A replacement yew hedge has been planted which is also at early growth stage. The planting of yew species along the boundaries of the Botanic site is part of a wider scheme to increase biodiversity and conservation value at the RBGE site. It is anticipated that over the coming years similar planting will be carried out on over one kilometre of the RBGE boundary. It would therefore not be reasonable to condition the planting of a fast growing hedge along the boundary of the application site.

The rebuilt Botanic Cottage will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

#### c) Quality of Design and Materials

The exterior finishes are as true to the original design as possible with the masonry walls harled and limewashed. The single storey flanking elements have red brick walls with lime mortar. The roofs of the outshoots are salvaged clay pantiles. The increase in height of the single storey wings and flanking wall from the previous scheme (13/00645/FUL) is required to provide adequate pitch to the clay pantiles.

The disabled access ramp has a utilitarian appearance which contrasts with the traditional character of the building. This is a functional aspect of the proposals and utilises materials which tie in with the main building including brick pillars. In the longer term, the ramp will be screened by the yew hedging.

An air handling unit is also located on the Inverleith Place facing elevation against the single storey wings. This unit, although industrial in character is partially screened by the ramped access and is not in a visually prominent location when viewed from the street.

The design and materials are acceptable.

#### d) Impact on Residential Amenity

The cottage is set approximately 40 metres from the front elevation of the nearest houses across the street in Inverleith Place. The proposed development will not adversely impact on privacy to neighbouring residential properties. The cottage will be utilised for educational purposes and is ancillary to the main use of the RBGE site.

Neighbouring residential amenity will not be adversely affected and the development complies with Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) Policy Des 5.

#### e) Public Comments

##### **Material Objections**

- The wings and flanking walls from the main building should be screened from Inverleith Place by planting - assessed in section 3.3b;
- Loss of existing mature trees - assessed in section 3.3b;
- Industrial appearance of ramp and extractor fan detract from the appearance of the building and the character of the Inverleith Conservation Area - assessed in section 3.3c;
- Brick walls are of a poor design and appear disconnected from the main building - assessed in section 3.3c;
- Building is of an excessive scale - assessed in section 3.3c;
- Use of non-traditional materials and inappropriate colours - assessed in section 3.3b and 3.3c;
- Lack of landscaping to either side of the north access - assessed in section 3.3b; and

- Inaccurate drawings submitted, as constructed the ridge line of the single storey elements is 900mm higher than shown in application 13/00645/FUL not 600mm as shown on plan - the application has been assessed as submitted, any deviation from approved plans can be dealt with through the enforcement process.

### **Non Material Objections**

- Toilets should only be accessible from the interior of the building or have inward opening doors - not relevant to planning; and
- The previous scheme reference 13/00645/FUL should have been implemented and there is no justification for the current application - not relevant to planning, the principle of the scheme was found to be acceptable.

### **f) Impact on Equalities and Human Rights**

The proposed cottage provides equal access to all parts of the building through the provision of a lift and ramps.

The application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights. No impact was identified.

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

### **3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

## **Financial impact**

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### **4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council.

## **Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact**

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5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

## **Equalities impact**

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### **6.1 The equalities impact has been assessed as follows:**

The application has been assessed and has no impact in terms of equalities or human rights.

## **Sustainability impact**

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### **7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:**

This application meets the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

## **Consultation and engagement**

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### **8.1 Pre-Application Process**

There is no pre-application process history.

### **8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

Twenty-one letters of objection were received.

## **Background reading/external references**

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- 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**

LDP - Urban Area  
Inverleith Conservation Area.

### **Date registered**

21 March 2017

### **Drawing numbers/Scheme**

01A, 02A, 03, 04, 05,

Scheme 1

## **David R. Leslie**

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

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## **Links - Policies**

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### **Relevant Policies:**

#### **Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.**

LDP Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) sets general criteria for assessing design quality and requires an overall design concept to be demonstrated.

LDP Policy Des 5 (Development Design - Amenity) sets criteria for assessing amenity.

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

LDP Policy Env 12 (Trees) sets out tree protection requirements for new development.

LDP Policy Env 15 (Sites of Local Importance) identifies the circumstances in which development likely to affect Sites of Local Importance will be permitted.

## **Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines**

**Non-Statutory guidelines** Edinburgh Design Guidance supports development of the highest design quality and that integrates well with the existing city. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development, including buildings and landscape, in Edinburgh.

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

**The Inverleith Conservation Area Character Appraisal** emphasises the predominance of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian villas and terraces which form boundaries to extensive blocks of public and private open space. The villa streets are complemented by a profusion of mature trees, extensive garden settings, stone boundary walls and spacious roads. The villas are in a considerable variety of architectural styles, unified by the use of local building materials.

