

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 20 June 2018

Application for Planning Permission 18/01303/FUL At Proposed Telecoms Apparatus 17 Metres East Of 2, South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh Installation of x1 InLink and the removal of x2 BT payphones

Item number	4.33
Report number	
Wards	B11 - City Centre

Summary

The proposals do not comply with the Edinburgh Local Development Plan and non-statutory guidelines, adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings and harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

The development has no detrimental impact on residential amenity, road safety or infrastructure. There are no identified impacts on equalities or human rights.

There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

Links

Policies and guidance for this application	LDPP, LEN06, LEN03, LEN01, NSLBCA, NSGSTR, NSGD02, CRPNEW, CRPWHS,
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Report

Application for Planning Permission 18/01303/FUL At Proposed Telecoms Apparatus 17 Metres East Of 2, South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh Installation of x1 InLink and the removal of x2 BT payphones

Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

Background

2.1 Site description

The application site relates to a pair of modern BT phone boxes located on the outer edge of the pavement on the west side of South Charlotte Street, opposite nos. 2 -8, close to the junction with Princes Street.

The majority of buildings on South Charlotte Street are category A listed.

The closest listed building to the site is as follows:

- 135 and 136 Princes Street and 2 - 8 (even numbers) South Charlotte Street - category B listed, listed on 12 December 1974 (ref: 29522).

South Charlotte Street connects Princes Street with Charlotte Square and contains a mix of uses including retail, office, leisure and residential. Currently there is no digital advertising on the pavements along the street, either associated with bus stops/shelters or freestanding.

The application site lies within the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

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

2.2 Site History

There is no relevant planning history on file for this site.

Related Planning History

1 May 2015 - advertisement consent refused for the erection of a freestanding forum structure with a digital 84" screen in Rose Street, Princes Street and two in George Street (application numbers 15/00594/ADV, 15/00595/ADV, 15/00668/ADV and 15/00669/ADV). Consent was refused on the grounds that the integral digital advertisements would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area and public safety.

9 December 2016 - advertisement consent refused for the erection of nine foster bus shelter units incorporating 1.9 square metre illuminated double-sided digital advertising screens along George Street (application numbers 16/05010/ADV, 16/05012/ADV, 16/05013/ADV, 16/05014/ADV, 16/05015/ADV, 16/05016/ADV, 16/05017/ADV, 16/05018/ADV, 16/05019/ADV). Consent was refused on the grounds that the integral digital advertisements would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the location and would not accord with Regulation 4 (1) of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984 (as amended), or the Council's Guidance on Advertisements, Sponsorship and City Dressing, the Edinburgh Design Guidance, the Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and the Street Design Guidance.

27 April 2018 - advertisement consent granted for the erection of four replacement foster bus shelter units incorporating illuminated double-sided digital advertising screens in Leith Street (application numbers 17/05443/ADV, 17/05444/ADV, 17/05445/ADV, 17/05303/ADV).

25 May 2018 - advertisement consent granted to upgrade existing advert panels at one end of existing bus shelters with double-sided LCD display units: two in Hanover Street and two in Frederick Street (application numbers 18/01019/ADV 18/01023/ADV, 18/01024/ADV and 18/01027/ADV).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The application is for the replacement of the existing two phone boxes with a BT "InLink" unit comprising a 2900mm high by 890mm wide by 280mm deep structure (tapering at the lower section to 790mm) with an integral telecommunications interface on the side elevation and a digital advertisement display unit occupying the upper sections of the front and rear elevations. The main casing is in cast grey-coloured powder-coated aluminium with black coloured sections around and above the interface and digital display areas. The digital display panels measure 1210mm by 690mm.

The key features of the telecommunications interface are as follows:

- free ultrafast Wi-Fi;
- touchscreen tablets to access council services, BT's phone book, maps and directions;
- an accessible design, including hearing induction loops, braille embossed and TalkBack functionality;
- integrated lighting and "privacy wings";

- 100% renewable energy powered.

This application is one of 12 sites within the World Heritage Site (New Town) where InLink structures are proposed. These are the subject of advertisement consent applications and related applications for planning permission.

Supporting Documents

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application and are available to view on the Planning and Building Standards Online Services:

- Design and Access Statement; and
- Product Statement.

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 proposals adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area;
- b) the proposals adversely affect the setting of the listed buildings;
- c) the proposals harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site;
- d) the proposals are detrimental to residential amenity, road safety or infrastructure;
- e) any impacts on equalities or human rights are acceptable; and
- f) public comments have been addressed.

a) Character and Appearance of Conservation Area

South Charlotte Street is a principal north-south aligned street in James Craig's plan of the First New Town and connects Princes Street with Charlotte Square. Planned views north and south and form an essential part of the special and unique character of South Charlotte Street.

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal makes specific reference to the southern views from the First New Town across Princes Street Gardens.

Relevant extracts from the New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal are as follows:

The use of grid layout forms throughout the area provides a formal hierarchy of streets with controlled vistas and planned views.

Within the grid layouts, terminated vistas have been planned, using churches, monuments, buildings and civic statuary, resulting in a plethora of landmark buildings.

Terminated vistas within the grid layouts and the long distance views across and out of the conservation area are an important feature.

The designed relationship of stone buildings, pavements and setted roads gives a disciplined unity and cohesion to the conservation area.

The streets of the New Town form a key component of the geometric hierarchy of the area. The public realm should be of the highest quality in terms of the materials used.

Street furniture and road markings can detract substantially from the public realm.

Strong efforts should be made to reduce the clutter that currently exists.

The Council's Street Design Guidance also reinforces the need to protect the special characteristics of streets such as South Charlotte Street. It seeks a high standard of coordinated place management and street design interventions which will enhance the special character of these streets.

The proposed InLink structure with integral double-sided digital advertising panel will be set perpendicular to the street. Views both north and south will be interrupted by the structure due to its height (2.9 metres) and visual impact. These views comprise both short and long distance views up and down South Charlotte Street to Old Town landmarks and Charlotte Square.

The proposed structure will also have a detrimental impact on the designed relationship of stone buildings, pavements and the road due to its visual prominence in the streetscene.

The proposals therefore have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area, contrary to Edinburgh Local Development Plan Policy Env 6.

b) Setting of Listed Buildings

The proposed InLink structure will be located adjacent to 135 and 136 Princes Street /2 - 8 South Charlotte Street, which is category B listed.

The structure will form part of the setting of this listed building if implemented, and will form an uncharacteristic and visually disruptive addition to the setting of this building and views to it.

The proposed structure will also disrupt views to the category A listed buildings within South Charlotte Street and on the east side of Charlotte Square.

The proposal will therefore have a detrimental impact on the setting of and views to the aforementioned listed buildings, contrary to the Council's Edinburgh Local Development Plan Policy Env 3.

c) Outstanding Universal Value of World Heritage Site

The Outstanding Universal Value of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is defined as the remarkable juxtaposition of two clearly articulated urban planning phenomena: the contrast between the organic medieval Old Town and the planned Georgian New Town which provides a clarity of urban structure unrivalled in Europe.

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan ('the Plan') refers specifically to major north-south axes such as South Charlotte Street which provide key views from the New Town to the Old Town. Southwards views from South Charlotte Street are punctuated by the spire of St Cuthbert's Church off Lothian Road and Edinburgh Castle to the south-east. The eastern edge of Charlotte Square and its central gardens demarcate views looking northwards from South Charlotte Street. These views are framed by the built frontages on either side of South Charlotte Street which add further focus to the views.

This proposed InLink structure will detract from these views, particularly at street level, and will therefore harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, contrary to Edinburgh Local Development Plan Policy Env 1.

d) Residential Amenity, Road Safety and Infrastructure

The InLink structure will be located in a busy city centre location and will therefore have no detrimental impact on residential amenity.

The Roads Authority raises no objection to the proposal on road safety grounds, subject to an informative regarding construction near the tramway, and there are no implications for infrastructure.

e) Equalities and Human Rights

This application was assessed in terms of equalities and human rights and no impact has been identified.

f) Public Comments

Material Objections

- the proposal is inappropriate for the World Heritage Site - this has been addressed in section 3.3 c).
- the proposed unit will add to street clutter and is visually intrusive - this has been addressed in sections 3.3 a), b) and c).

Conclusion

The proposals do not comply with the Edinburgh Local Development Plan and non-statutory guidelines, adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area and setting of the listed buildings and harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

The development has no detrimental impact on residential amenity, road safety or infrastructure. There are no identified impacts on equalities or human rights.

There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

It is recommended that this application be Refused for the reasons below.

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Reasons:-

1. The proposal is contrary to the Local Development Plan Policy Env 6 in respect of Conservation Areas - Development, as it will adversely affect the special character and appearance of the conservation area.
2. The proposal is contrary to the Local Development Plan Policy Env 3 in respect of Listed Buildings - Setting, as it will have an adverse impact on the setting of the listed buildings.
3. The proposal is contrary to the Local Development Plan Policy Env 1 in respect of Old and New Towns World Heritage Site, as it will harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site.

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:

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

Sustainability impact

7.1 The sustainability impact has been assessed as follows:

This application is not subject to 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 27 April 2018. Two representations were received objecting to the proposals.

A full assessment of the representations can be found in the main report in the Assessment Section.

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 site is located in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan, within the City Centre.

Date registered

18 April 2018

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01 - 03,

Scheme 1

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Clare Macdonald, Senior Planning Officer

E-mail:clare.macdonald@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel:0131 529 6121

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

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

LDP Policy Env 3 (Listed Buildings - Setting) identifies the circumstances in which development within the curtilage or affecting the setting of a listed building will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 1 (World Heritage Site) protects the quality of the World Heritage Site and its setting.

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

Non-statutory guidelines - EDINBURGH STREET DESIGN GUIDANCE - Edinburgh Street Design Guidance supports proposals that create better places through the delivery of vibrant, safe, attractive, effective and enjoyable streets in Edinburgh. It sets out the Council's expectations for the design of streets and public realm.

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, parking, streets and landscape, in Edinburgh.

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal states that the area is typified by the formal plan layout, spacious stone built terraces, broad streets and an overall classical elegance. The buildings are of a generally consistent three storey and basement scale, with some four storey corner and central pavilions.

World Heritage Site

The historic centre of Edinburgh, including the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town, was inscribed on the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO's) List of World Heritage Sites in December, 1995. This represents international recognition that the Site is of outstanding universal value.

The organic plan form of the medieval Old Town and the clarity of the geometrically planned neo-classical New Town together with the outstanding historic buildings are fundamental characteristics of the World Heritage Site. All proposals affecting the plan form or historic buildings, including their setting, will be considered for their impact on their design integrity.

Appendix 1

Application for Planning Permission 18/01303/FUL At Proposed Telecoms Apparatus 17 Metres East Of 2, South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh Installation of x1 InLink and the removal of x2 BT payphones

Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

This application is part of a package of 12 identical applications submitted to your Council.

We have been consulted due to the potential impact on the OUV of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

We welcome the removal of existing payphones that are no longer in use as this will reduce the street clutter. Whilst we consider the installation of the Inlink boxes proposed would not have a significant negative impact on the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site, the new boxes will inevitably have more localised impacts on the visual character of the streets - they are taller than the previous phone boxes (290cm) and would be visually more imposing because of the light coming from the digital display screens.

Planning authorities are expected to treat our comments as a material consideration, and this advice should be taken into account in your decision making. Our view is that the proposals do not raise historic environment issues of national significance and therefore we do not object. However, our decision not to object should not be taken as our support for the proposals. This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy on development affecting the historic environment, together with related policy guidance.

Roads Authority

No objections to the application.

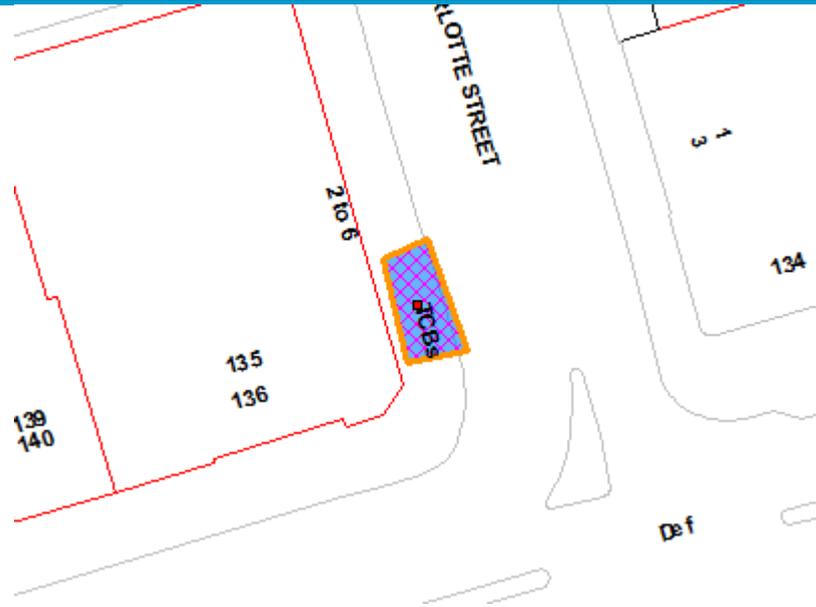
TRAMS - Important Note:

The proposed site is on or adjacent to the operational Edinburgh Tram. An advisory note should be added to the decision notice, if permission is granted, noting that it would be desirable for the applicant to consult with the tram team regarding construction timing. This is due to the potential access implications of construction / delivery vehicles and likely traffic implications as a result of diversions in the area which could impact delivery to, and works at, the site. Tram power lines are over 5m above the tracks and do not pose a danger to pedestrians and motorists at ground level or to those living and working in the vicinity of the tramway. However, the applicant should be informed that there are potential dangers and, prior to commencing work near the tramway, a safe method of working must be agreed with the Council and authorisation to work obtained. Authorisation is needed for any of the following works either on or near the tramway:

- Any work where part of the site such as tools, materials, machines, suspended loads or where people could enter the Edinburgh Tram Hazard Zone. For example, window cleaning or other work involving the use of ladders;*
- Any work which could force pedestrians or road traffic to be diverted into the Edinburgh Trams Hazard Zone;*
- Piling, using a crane, excavating more than 2m or erecting and dismantling scaffolding within 4m of the Edinburgh Trams Hazard Zone;*
- Any excavation within 3m of any pole supporting overhead lines;*
- Any work on sites near the tramway where vehicles fitted with cranes, tippers or skip loaders could come within the Edinburgh Trams Hazard Zone when the equipment is in use;*
- The Council has issued guidance to residents and businesses along the tram route and to other key organisations who may require access along the line.*

*See our full guidance on how to get permission to work near a tram way
<http://edinburghtrams.com/community/working-around-trams>.*

Location Plan



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