

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 5 December 2018

**Application for Listed Building Consent 18/03413/LBC
At 20, 21 And 22-23 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh,
Demolition of existing non-original rear extensions and
dormers to front elevation, construction of new rear
extensions and new mansard roof at rear, installation of
new rooflights, slim double glazed windows and internal
alterations (as amended)**

Item number	7.1(b)
Report number	
Wards	B11 - City Centre

Summary

The proposed works have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting, will have no adverse effect on any feature of special architectural interest. The works observe the non-statutory Guidance for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, and will not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the listed building. There are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

Links

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

Report

Application for Listed Building Consent 18/03413/LBC At 20, 21 And 22-23 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, Demolition of existing non-original rear extensions and dormers to front elevation, construction of new rear extensions and new mansard roof at rear, installation of new rooflights, slim double glazed windows and internal alterations (as amended)

Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

The site constitutes four town houses on the west side of the street fronting Charlotte Square, plus a rear courtyard and car parking area accessed off Randolph Place Lane. The site forms part of the original First New Town Plan laid out in accordance with James Craig's famous design of 1766. The buildings were designed by Robert Adam in 1791 and were listed category A on 3 March 1966 ref: LB28504. They were built largely between 1803 and 1807 with later 20th century attics.

The development is within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site - First New Town.

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

2.2 Site History

The pre-1990 history of the four townhouses can be seen in the applicant's Design Statement. The post 1990 history is as follows:

27 August 1991 - No.19-20: Listed building granted for alterations.(Planning reference 91/1437/LBC).

22 May 1992 -No.19-20: - Listed building consent granted in retrospect for internal alterations (as amended). (Planning reference 91/2524/LBC).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The proposals, as amended, are to refurbish the buildings for office use and construct a glass box in the rear courtyard to provide an auditorium, a raised courtyard garden with extra office space below it, and a rectangular pavilion/function room with green roof which will complement the office space.

The auditorium - 10m x 6m (60m²) will replace the existing pyramidal glazed extension to the rear of No.23 at lower ground level and will span over two levels with a glazed atria link access from the townhouses being at lower ground and ground floor levels. On the south boundary, a louvred metal fence will be installed in the gap between the auditorium and the office block to the west (Randolph House).

The pavilion to the rear of No.20-21 will measure 18m x 6m (108m²), have a green sedum roof and a green wall on the west side. The large elements of glazing and mirrored rainscreen cladding allow tenants to have a stronger connection with the green amenity space whilst protecting privacy.

The vertical outshoots at the back of the buildings will be extended laterally and in rubble stone to allow for tea prep areas and toilets for each floor. A lift will be installed in the small rear room of each townhouse in the former toilet and secondary areas.

The dormers on the front elevations will be removed and the roof re-instated with conservation style rooflights. To the rear, the mix of dormers will be removed and a linear, slated mansard fillet with two tripartite mansard windows per feu, will be built between each boundary skewput to house the lift lobbies and toilets.

The windows are to be replaced with slimline double glazed units.

Internal Alterations

At ground floor, the non-original inner lobby entrance screen is to be removed in no.20 and replaced with a replica of the original at no.21. The earlier proposals to demolish the walls between the lobbies themselves has been omitted. Removal of part rear walls and some sash and case windows to gain access to the pavilion and allow the toilets to be created will be required.

At first floor, the central two properties are to be linked by creating a slapping through both sides of the small office situated behind the central porticoed part of the building. The gaps have been reduced in width and nibs left to mark the line of the walls removed. The opening up of the dummy window in the arched glazed centre piece is omitted.

At second floor, two partition walls are to be removed at the front which intersect with piers of the large arched window.

Scheme 1

Originally, the front first floor windows were to have their cills raised back to above the band course to match the others in the terrace.

The proposed raised front window cills are deleted. Demolition of the wall between the front vestibule of Nos.20-21 are deleted. Opening up of the 1st floor dummy window has been omitted. There has been a reduction in the wall slapping width between Nos.20 and 21 at first floor, with retention of nibs to each side of each opening.

Supporting Documents

A Design Statement has been submitted by the applicant which is available to view on the Planning and Building Standards on-line services.

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.

In determining applications for listed building consent, the Development Plan is not a statutory test. However the policies of the Local Development Plan (LDP) inform the assessment of the proposals and are a material consideration.

3.3 Assessment

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

- a) the design of the proposals have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the listed building and the conservation area;
- b) the internal alterations to the listed building adversely impact on the character of the listed building;
- c) public comments have been addressed; and
- d) there are any equality or human rights issues.

a) Impact on Listed Building and Conservation Area

In determining applications for listed building consent, the Development Plan is not a statutory test. However, the policies of the Edinburgh Local Development plan (LDP such as Env4 and Env6) inform the assessment of the proposals and are a material consideration.

The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal states (that) "The grid hierarchy of grand streets, lesser streets, lanes and mews throughout the conservation area" form part of the essential spatial character; and in terms of building forms, "The consistent massing of buildings retaining the original building proportions." As regards architectural character, the following items form part of the essential character: "Original design form..... and the standard palette of materials including blonde ashlar sandstone, timber windows and pitched slated roofs." It says that "...flexibility of use of original townhouses" is also part of the essential character.

The new auditorium to the rear of No. 23 replaces an existing glazed pyramidal roofed room and this will be a similar sized structure. This extension will provide a mix of traditional stone and glazing. The areas of glazing will provide a visual separation between the rear of the townhouse and the new build.

The Pavilion makes use of a barren parking courtyard, which runs the whole length of the four townhouses and has no traces of town house feu walls. It is centred away from the rear elevation of the listed buildings and is not overdevelopment of the site. In some ways, it represents a modest form of the overarching glazed atrium treatment carried out on the rear of the townhouses on the south side of Charlotte Square by the same developer. The pavilion is sufficiently detached (small glazed link only) from the rear elevation of the listed building that it respects its setting and character and utilizes an otherwise visually poor car park/courtyard which detracts from the character of the listed building.

The new pavilion will be clad in buff ashlar sandstone, mirror glazed curtain walling and a living wall system on the rear (west) elevation. The materials are of a quality finish and appropriate to the enclosed courtyard context at the rear of the building. Despite a mainly glazed appearance, it will have a sandstone base which will ground it visually in relation to the listed buildings. The proposed pavilion will be set within the enclosed courtyard and will have no adverse impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. The modern intervention will make a positive contribution to this space.

Outshots

The outshots are later, but early additions to the back of the buildings. Increasing these laterally and sympathetically in rubble stone will not detrimentally impact on the character of the buildings. They will be seen as typical rear bay/ tower elements which traditionally house the likes of servants' sculleries and toilets. The top part of the extension will be seen in restricted views from Randolph Place and Melville Street, but otherwise will be obscured from view within the conservation area.

Roof Alterations

The rear elevation has traditionally been less of a public elevation and has had tower elements and dormers added to the roof over time. On the adjacent part of the terrace to the north, mansard fillets have been added. The replacement of the dormers on the rear roof with similar mansard fillets achieves the toilet and lift lobby spaces required. It is the most effective way of encapsulating the required spaces without building several awkward looking individual dormers in close proximity to each other.

The proposals represent a significant alteration to the fabric of the rear roof but one which complements its character and reflects changes made to the roof of the north range of townhouses. The mansard will be seen in limited views and will otherwise match the massing and appearance of the rear of this terrace. By providing the facilities within the rear outshots and the roof alteration, this allows the listed building to be retained internally as considered within the concurrent listed building application. The removal of the dormers of the front elevation and replacement with conservation rooflights restores the profile of the important historic roof with the conservation area.

Conclusion

The external alterations are measured and appropriate to the special character of the listed building and its appearance within the conservation area.

b) Character of Listed Buildings - Internal

The proposed alterations to the properties at 20 – 23 Charlotte Square retain the plan form of these townhouses and introduces minimal interventions to the principal rooms across all properties. The proposals have been revised to retain the entrance hallways at Nos 20 and 21 to ensure the individual characteristics of the townhouses are retained.

The alterations on the second floor of these buildings will restore the intended Adam design appearance of the central window at 20 and 21 whilst allowing circulation space at this level of the building.

Previous connections between numbers 22 and 23 are removed and these buildings are restored as standalone properties. A connection is made at upper levels between 20 and 21 to allow circulation between these two properties. Overall the internal alterations are minimal and any interventions, i.e slappings are away from the significant rooms and detailing. Facilities such as toilets and lifts have been positioned to the rear within architecturally unimportant, secondary area. The character of the four individual townhouses is retained across the proposals.

Due to the potential presence of original glass/frames, a condition is recommended to require a window survey before any alterations are carried out to ensure any historically important fabric is retained. This condition addresses their concerns.

Conclusion

Internally, the principal rooms, stairs and lobbies remain intact and this a fundamental benefit of the proposed works. The internal works will not adversely impact on the character of the listed buildings.

c) Public comments

Material Comments

- Concerned about proposed slappings across several floors – addressed in 3.3 b) of the assessment;

- Level of original fabric that will be lost - wall loss on several floors to rear - addressed in 3.3 a) of the assessment.
- Proposed mansard roof to rear - addressed in 3.3 a) of the assessment.
- Overdevelopment - new pavilion. Need to maintain subtle separation between the fues - addressed in 3.3 a) of the assessment.
- Windows are to be replaced - addressed in 3.3 a) of the assessment.
- Opening up of (original) dummy window to the centre of nos. 20 and 21 at front first floor – the dummy window is being retained as part of the proposals.

d) Equalities and Human Rights

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

Overall Conclusion

The proposed remodelling of the buildings to serve a re-use as high quality offices with up-to-date facilities and total refurbishment of the listed fabric will enhance the buildings. The extensions are relevant and well placed and will be built in quality materials which complement the location and the listed building.

The proposed works have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting, will have no adverse effect on any feature of special architectural interest. The works observe the non-statutory Guidance for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, and will not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the listed building.

There are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions:-

1. Sample/s of the proposed materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work commences on site.
2. Details of a window survey plus slimline double glazing cross-sections/elevations at not less than 1:20 scale shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work is commenced on site.

Reasons:-

1. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.
2. 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:

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 20 July 2018. One letter has been received from the Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland.

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 allocated as City Centre in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) where mixed uses are acceptable subject to complying with other policies in the LDP.

Date registered

4 July 2018

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01-08; 09A,;

Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Duncan Robertson, Senior Planning Officer

E-mail:d.n.robertson@edinburgh.gov.uk Tel:0131 529 3560

Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:

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.

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

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Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

The 4 terraced houses at numbers 20 to 23, form part of the west side of Charlotte Square, built by Robert Adam, 1791. The properties form part of a neo-classical palace block formed of 6 individual houses, one of pair that flank the former St George's church.

Proposals to alter a listed building must be informed by, and respond to an understanding of the building's special architectural interest, and preserve or enhance its character and appearance. The proposals would see alterations, upgrading and extensions to the listed buildings to provide office accommodation. The scheme would include reworking of some internal spaces, removal of east facing dormers along with down-takings and extensions to the rear. Our views on the revised proposals are as follows:

Internal alterations

The significance of a listed building's interior, or part of its interior, is usually derived from a number of factors, including the degree to which an interior remains intact from key periods in its history. The plan form, that is the arrangement and division of internal spaces into rooms and circulation spaces such as halls and corridors is a key component of the character and special interest of any building. Historic features such as doors, windows, fireplaces, cupboards and decorative plasterwork also make a significant contribution to the building's special interest.

We note and welcome the revised proposals for the entrance hallways for the Nos 20 & 21, and for the street facing rooms directly above at first floor level.

Works to rear elevation

The existing form of the townhouses' rear elevations contribute to the buildings' character and appearance. The proposed works to create additional provision of toilet and tea preparation facilities would see the loss of the historic 2-storey outshot at Nos 20 & 21, loss of six original windows and the construction of new full-height, broad masonry extensions. The form of these 3 rear extensions would, in our view significantly diminish the historic character and appearance of the terraced houses.

We would ask that the proposed loss of the outshot and the addition of broad, masonry, full height extensions be reconsidered. Furthermore, consideration should, in our view, be given to retaining the external form of the existing outshots and externally expressing the additional service accommodation by the use of a contrasting, cladding material, perhaps lead or zinc. We do not consider rebuilding them in masonry is the best approach, either historically or architecturally.

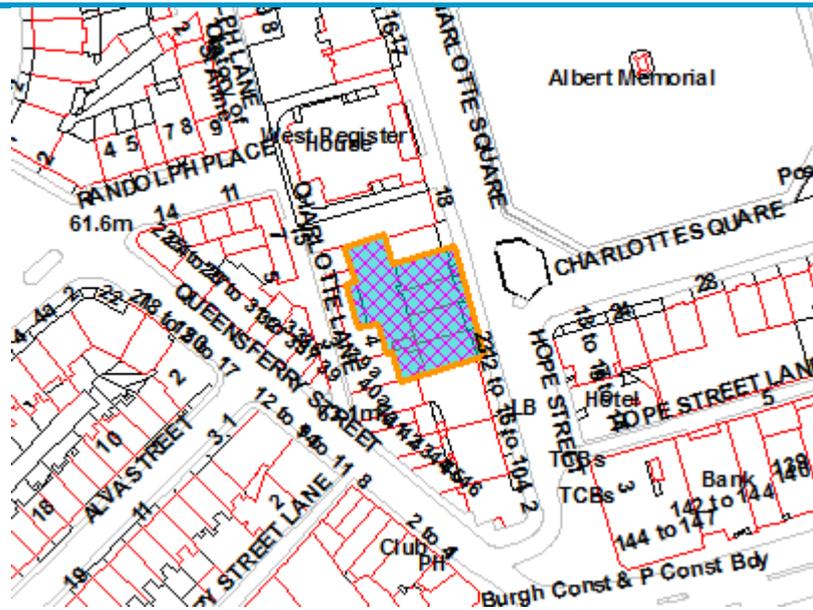
Rear roof proposals

The complete loss of the existing, sloping rear roofs to Nos 20, 21 & 22 and their replacement with mansard roofs would in our view have a significant detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the rear of the properties. This element of the scheme should be given further consideration to enable a greater retention of the historic form of the rear roofs.

Windows

We note the proposed replacement of all windows. There is a presumption in favour of retention, overhauling and upgrading of historic windows. A window survey would enable an assessment of the age and condition of each window and inform an appropriate retention overhaul or replacement strategy. Many of the windows are original and contain historic Crown glass. Without a survey we would suggest this part of the proposals is not consented, or is appropriately conditioned.

Location Plan



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