

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 6 February 2019

**Application for Listed Building Consent 18/02725/LBC  
At Royal Hospital For Sick Children, 9 Sciennes Road,  
Edinburgh  
Internal and external alteration to Category A- listed  
Mortuary Chapel building to convert to public and  
residential use; conservation and repair of murals in situ;  
removal of 20th century hospital extensions with  
associated fabric repairs and reinstatement.**

|                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Item number</b>   | 6.1(f)                    |
| <b>Report number</b> |                           |
| <b>Wards</b>         | B15 - Southside/Newington |

## Summary

---

The proposed development accords with the guidance set out within Historic Environment Scotland's document "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" and the non-statutory guidance. The need to ensure that appropriate conservation and management of the Traquair Murals can be delivered through the attached conditions and the associated planning application. There are no material considerations which outweigh this conclusion.

## Links

---

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <a href="#"><u>Policies and guidance for this application</u></a> | LDPP, LEN02, LEN05, LEN06, NSG, NSLBCA, CRPMAR, OTH, |
|---|--|

# Report

## **Application for Listed Building Consent 18/02725/LBC At Royal Hospital For Sick Children, 9 Sciennes Road, Edinburgh**

**Internal and external alteration to Category A- listed  
Mortuary Chapel building to convert to public and residential  
use; conservation and repair of murals in situ; removal of  
20th century hospital extensions with associated fabric  
repairs and reinstatement.**

### **Recommendations**

---

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

### **Background**

---

#### **2.1 Site description**

The application refers to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Sciennes Road. This listed building consent application concerns the mortuary chapel building, which is located to the immediate south of the main hospital building and was built at the same time as the main hospital building (1895). Both buildings were designed by George Washington Browne.

The mortuary chapel building is Category A listed (reference LB52347, listing date 26 May 2015) and contains the first complete mural scheme by Phoebe Traquair, one of only three in Scotland. The mortuary chapel building was extended in footprint (1904) and height by an additional storey (1931). The building has been heavily altered since its initial construction.

The building is designed in a Jacobean style and is constructed from red Corsehill sandstone as part of Washington Browne's design for the main hospital building. It is a small, rectangular, four-bay building. At the left of the principle elevation at ground floor level is a pair of stone doorways, in a slightly advanced double bay. To the right is a mullioned, tripartite window. The rear elevation is a plainer brick construction. The west elevation is largely obscured by later development that abuts the chapel building, and the eastern elevation contains gable fenestration in the form of a leaded quad-partite window and ground floor level and a c1931 tripartite window above.

The building has an irregular mansard roof to the front elevation, within which three box dormers (two of which are double dormers) are positioned. This roof extension is not original to the building, dating from the 1930s.

The western most bay creates an intimate lobby into the chapel which has, as described in the list entry description, an "outstanding decorative scheme with richly symbolic Arts and Craft murals by the artist Phoebe Traquair." The small chapel room is dominated by the mural panels which sit above a timber dado rail, which depict angels singing the Sanctus on a background of horizontal bands representing the days of creation. The coombed ceiling is also painted with murals.

This application site is located within the Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area.

## **2.2 Site History**

13 June 2018 - Planning Application submitted for mixed use development comprising residential (8 houses and 118 flats), student accommodation 323 beds, communal space, cycle/car parking provision, public realm enhancements, associated works and infrastructure. Development involves partial demolition of existing buildings, erection of new buildings and change of use/conversion of retained buildings. Application currently pending determination. (Application reference 18/02719/FUL).

20 June 2018 - Application for Conservation Area Consent submitted for substantial demolition in a Conservation Area, currently pending determination. (Application reference 18/02720/CON).

20 June 2018 - Application for listed building consent submitted for internal and external alterations of Category B-listed Main Building of the Royal Hospital for Sick Children to convert to residential use including rear extensions, minor alteration, including sensitive reinstatement and repair of the building. Application pending determination. (Application reference 18/02722/LBC).

20 June 2018 - Application for listed building consent submitted for Internal and external alterations of Category C-listed Nos. 11-21 (inclusive) Millerfield Place to convert to residential use including rear extensions; minor alteration, including sensitive reinstatement and repair of garden boundary walls. Application pending determination. (Application reference 18/02723/LBC).

## **Main report**

---

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

The proposed alterations to the exterior of the mortuary chapel include the refurbishment/ replacement of windows where necessary, removal of redundant unnecessary services and penetration holes and clearance of redundant signage. A rear glazed extension will also be replaced.

Internally, the chapel room will remain unchanged, beyond works required for the conservation, repair and monitoring for the preservation in situ of the Traquair murals. Appropriate environmental monitoring and management is proposed to ensure that the murals are preserved appropriately. Alternative uses for the chapel space are extremely limited and none to date have come forward. Access to the murals will be managed by the applicant as long term operators of the student block.

The remainder of the mortuary chapel building will be reconfigured to provide two one-bedroom flatted apartments, one at ground floor level and one at first floor. These will be accessed via a separate access from the chapel room. The layout of the residential accommodation has been designed to avoid kitchen and bathroom areas above the murals to prevent damage that may be caused by accidental flooding.

### *Supporting information*

The applicant has submitted the following document in support of the application which are available to view via the Planning and Building Standards Online Services;

- Design and Access Statement.
- Heritage Statement.
- Mortuary Chapel Condition Report and Supplementary Addendum Report.

## **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 proposals will impact on the character of the listed building;
- b) the proposals will preserve or enhance the conservation area;
- c) any impacts of equalities and human rights have been addressed; and
- d) any comments raised have been addressed.

### **a) Character of Listed Building and its Setting**

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.

LDP Policy Env 4 permits proposals to alter or extend a listed building where the alterations or extensions are justified; there will be no unnecessary damage to the building's historic structure or diminution of its interest; and any additions are in keeping with other parts of the building.

Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) document "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" notes that the majority of listed buildings are adaptable, and that "change should therefore be managed to protect a building's special interest while enabling it to remain in active use. Each case must be judged on its own merits but in general terms listing rarely prevents adaptation to modern requirements but ensures that work is done in a sensitive and informed manner."

Historic Environment Scotland's document, "Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting" defines setting as "*...the way the surroundings of a historic asset or place contribute to how it is understood, appreciated and experienced.*" Contributory factors can include views to, from and across or beyond the historic asset and key vistas that give the historic asset a context.

#### *Character of listed building*

The chapel building has been significantly altered, including a new roof extension in 1931 which introduced three dormer windows (two of which are double windows) to the first floor level. The building has a network of pipework and ducting on its exterior, which is particularly prevalent on its east elevation.

The proposed alterations to the exterior of the chapel building are restorative in nature and will have a positive impact on the exterior of the building. The replacement of the rear glazed extension covers the same footprint as the existing glazed extension and is appropriate in form and materials. These proposals are acceptable and will have no detrimental impact on the external character of the listed building.

The proposed alterations to the interior of the chapel building includes the development of two one-bedroom apartments. This will include re-structuring the internal floorspace of the eastern part of the ground floor and all of the first floor of the building to form residential accommodation. No development is proposed within the chamber containing the Traquair murals. It should be noted that the murals are contained within a small space (a single bedroom size) within an independent unit to the adjacent spaces. The size of the chapel therefore restricts its potential for any future re-use.

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) has identified in their consultation response the need for a sustainable, publicly accessible long-term future for the Traquair murals. The need to conserve the heritage value of the murals and to maintain public access to them has been considered in this application and is addressed through the related planning application.

A Condition Report and Supplementary Addendum Report has been prepared for the Mortuary Chapel by the Scottish Wall Paintings Conservators, and submitted with this application. Generally, the murals are found to be in very good condition with only minor deterioration since the previous condition survey was undertaken by HES in 2008. The Supplementary Addendum Report takes account of the proposed use of part of the mortuary chapel building for two residential apartments and sets out recommendations for protection of the murals before, during and following building works. A condition is attached to this consent with respect to this.

HES has commented that they would prefer only one residential unit to be included in the building alongside the chapel room. This is to allow the additional space to be used for ancillary space for the chapel, to facilitate and support ongoing community and potential uses. The applicant has engaged with several heritage groups including HES, National Museum of Scotland, The Mansfield Traquair Trust and the Scottish Redundant Churches Trust to discuss the potential future management of the mortuary chapel building. To date, there has been no approach from any of these parties to formalise involvement in the management or ownership of the chapel building. These discussions and a review of the updated condition survey of the murals has concluded that the best conservation option for the murals is for them to remain in situ within the chapel building.

It is proposed that Downing Group will be responsible for the ongoing conservation and maintenance of the buildings. This will allow for access from interested members of the public to view the murals at pre-arranged times and during public events such as Doors Open Days. A management agreement will require to be prepared to this effect and a condition to deal with this is attached to the related planning application. The listed building consent relates to the physical works being carried out to the building and the need for protection during those works.

The addendum report sets out a number of key recommendation to prevent damage to the murals from the creation of residential accommodation within the building. This includes environmental monitoring, and a range of conservation treatment proposals prior, during and after building works. Kitchens/ bathrooms within the building will be located at the eastern side of the building only to minimise any risk from flooding of the domestic properties. For further prudence, a protective membrane is recommended to be fitted between the chapel ceiling and the floor of the bedroom above. These recommendations are aligned with guidance set out by Historic Environment Scotland in their comments on the application.

It is noted that the rooms outwith the chapel itself have been used historically for mortuary purposes and office space without any restrictions on these uses for fear of risking damage to the murals. There has therefore been an active use in these parts of the building for the duration of its occupancy. The proposals will require that regular surveys of the murals are undertaken by a conservator to monitor any changes in the murals (twice annually in the first post-construction year, followed by annual surveys), which goes beyond any current management scheme in place for the murals. On balance, it is considered that the management actions set out within the supplementary addendum report provide adequate assurances that the murals will not be put at risk as a result of the development.

### *Setting of listed building*

The mortuary chapel building is ancillary in nature and sits to the north east of the main hospital building. It has a group architectural value with the main hospital building, however the later additions to the chapel diminish the architectural relationship between the mortuary chapel and the main hospital building.

The immediate setting of the mortuary chapel will be significantly improved through the removal of the later extensions to the main hospital building which currently adjoin the western elevation of the building. In addition, the creation of a new area of public realm around the mortuary chapel building will improve access to the chapel building and create a stronger and more attractive interface between the chapel, main hospital building and the new public space. The group relationship between the main hospital building and the mortuary chapel building will be unaffected by proposals, as these will both remain in situ. The proposals are acceptable, and will have no detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building.

### **b) The proposals will preserve or enhance the conservation area**

*The Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the essential architectural character of the Marchmont area as "well-proportioned tenements planning in long blocks that take advantage of the gently sloping site. Scots Baronial style is noted as the principal architectural style, and tenemental front gardens provide setting to buildings. The area is characterised by Victorian and Georgian tenemental perimeter blocks that are of uniform height, massing and use of stone and slated roofs. There is a predominance of residential uses within the area, and the mature landscape of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links with its rich historical background forms the core of the Conservation Area".*

The main hospital building is identified as a focal point within the Conservation Area. The mortuary chapel building is ancillary to the main hospital building and is largely hidden from the surrounding street network. Architecturally, the building is already much altered and the proposed further external alterations which are restorative in nature will improve the quality of the listed building in terms of its setting within the conservation area. The introduction of residential apartments to this building is in keeping with the mix of residential properties in the surrounding area and will not impact adversely on the conservation area setting. The proposed changes to the building will incorporate it into the proposed new public realm, and will also for easier public access for any visitors to the mortuary chapel. The proposal is acceptable.

### **c) Any impacts of equalities and human rights have been addressed**

There are no impacts in relation to equalities or human rights.

### **d) Any comments raised have been addressed**

- Proposed works are inappropriate for listed building/ listed art work due to flood or fire risk from domestic use. Residential accommodation should not be provided within this building (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Impact of development on the Traquair murals (addressed in section 3.3(a)).

- Change of ownership of Mortuary Chapel building threatens its future. Lack of clarity of future management of scheme (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Concern over future conservation of murals if the development was to be sold to another party in the future (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Murals should be removed and permanently sited elsewhere (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Murals should be conserved and consolidated, and remain protected and made accessible to the public in the long term (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- External access to the murals could cause climatic change impacts (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- The mortuary chapel building should be used as tribute to the heritage of the hospital (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- The proposals do not include any interpretation/ information on the murals or the history of the hospital (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Building should be brought back to its original rectangular block by demolishing the existing conservatory/ extension (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Ownership and management of murals should be by a heritage organisation suitable experienced in this area. If not, murals should be moved off-site. (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Conservation report provides limited recommendations for protection before and during building works. (addressed in section 3.3(a)).
- Further ancillary accommodation to support public access to the building should be included in the Mortuary Chapel building. (addressed in section 3.3(a)).

## **Conclusion**

The proposed development accords with the guidance set out within Historic Environment Scotland's document "Managing Change in the Historic Environment" and the non-statutory guidance. The need to ensure that appropriate conservation and management of the Traquair Murals can be delivered through the attached conditions and those attached to the related planning application. There are no 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. The existing stonework shall be repaired, and missing sections replaced, using natural stone chosen to match the existing stonework.
2. Prior to commencement of works hereby approved, a survey of the existing windows shall be undertaken to assess and record their condition. Where windows are to be replaced evidence shall be submitted to demonstrate that they are beyond reasonable repair and details of any replacement windows shall be submitted for the approval of the Council, as planning authority. Such details shall include size, depth, profile, materials, design of glazing pattern and method of opening.

3. The care and protection of the murals in the RHSC Mortuary Chapel Building, before, during and after building works shall be carried out in accordance with the supplementary addendum report "RHSC Mortuary Chapel (Edin.) - Phoebe Traquair Murals" dated 27 July 2018.
4. Details of the protective membrane between the RHSC Chapel Mortuary Building and the bedroom accommodation above shall be submitted and approved by the Council, as planning authority. The approved membrane shall be installed prior to occupation of the dwelling and maintained in perpetuity in relation to the residential use of the building.

**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.
3. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.
4. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.

**Informatives**

It should be noted that:

1. Any further internal or external alterations to the building will require listed building consent to ensure that due consideration is given to the ongoing conservation of the Traquair murals.

**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 26 June 2018.

Fourteen objections have been received, including one from the Mansfield Traquair Trust and Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland and twelve from members of the public.

## **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 Edinburgh Local Development Plan identifies the Royal Hospital for Sick Children site as lying within the Urban Area. The site is located within the Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area.

**Date registered**

13 June 2018

**Drawing numbers/Scheme**

01, 02, 03,

**David R. Leslie**  
Chief Planning Officer  
PLACE  
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Julie Ross, Planning Officer  
E-mail: [julie.ross@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:julie.ross@edinburgh.gov.uk) Tel: 0131 529 4468

**Links - Policies**

---

**Relevant Policies:**

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

LDP Policy Env 2 (Listed Buildings - Demolition) identifies the circumstances in which the demolition of listed buildings will be permitted.

LDP Policy Env 5 (Conservation Areas - Demolition of Buildings) sets out criteria for assessing proposals involving the demolition of buildings within a conservation area.

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.

The Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the well proportioned Victorian tenemental perimeter blocks with Baronial detailing and the substantial area of the open parkland formed by the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.

## **Other Relevant policy guidance**

# Appendix 1

## **Application for Listed Building Consent 18/02725/LBC At Royal Hospital For Sick Children, 9 Sciennes Road, Edinburgh Internal and external alteration to Category A- listed Mortuary Chapel building to convert to public and residential use; conservation and repair of murals in situ; removal of 20th century hospital extensions with associated fabric repairs and reinstatement.**

### **Consultations**

---

#### **Historic Environment Scotland**

##### *Our Advice*

*The Category A listed Mortuary Chapel at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children contains the first, of only three complete interior mural schemes in Scotland by the internationally renowned Scottish Arts and Crafts artist, Phoebe Anna Traquair. The chapel was designed in 1895 by George Washington Browne as an ancillary building to the main hospital, and it is understood that he designed the chapel to accommodate the murals which were to be installed.*

*The exceptional quality of Traquair's mural scheme gives the building its special interest and cultural significance. Externally, the structure has modest architectural form and the other interior spaces are of lesser significance. To ensure a sustainable, publicly accessible long-term future for this internationally significant interior the current proposals should be reconsidered. The provision of ancillary accommodation, such as a toilet, small kitchen and storage facilities should be included to facilitate and support ongoing community and other potential uses for the exceptional chapel interior. Otherwise, it risks being mothballed.*

*The proposed conversion of the building should, in our view, be reconfigured from two down to one residential unit that would occupy part of the building. This would allow space for additional support accommodation which would link through the existing doorway to the chapel. To protect the chapel, any revised proposal must ensure that the room space above it is kept free of water supply pipes, drainage or wet central heating pipework.*

*In conclusion, we cannot support the current plans for the A listed building. Allowing ancillary support and breakout space for the chapel will ensure it has the best opportunity of being reused in the future, either as a community space within the new housing development, or as a venue for Doors Open Day and other similar occasions. We would suggest that its future maintenance is guaranteed via conditions on any listed building consent.*

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 listed building/conservation area consent, together with related policy guidance.

### Further Information

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

Guidance about national policy can be found in our 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series available online at [www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes/](http://www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes/).

Technical advice is available through our Technical Conservation website at [www.engineshed.org](http://www.engineshed.org).

## Location Plan



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