

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 20 February 2019

**Application for Listed Building Consent 17/05073/LBC
At 30 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, EH12 6HP
Alterations to stable block and removal of non-original
extensions to former Tor Nursing Home. Alterations to
Torwood House to facilitate conversion to residential use
(as amended).**

Item number	6.1(c)
Report number	
Wards	B06 - Corstorphine/Murrayfield

Summary

The proposals have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting and the proposals do not adversely affect any features of special architectural interest or the setting of the listed building. The proposals preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Outcome of previous Committee

This application was previously considered by Committee on 9 January 2019.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#) NSG, NSLBCA, OTH, CRPWMU,

Report

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Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

The site extends to approximately 0.77 hectares and is located on the north side of Western Terrace. The site contains a number of buildings, Tor House, a Category B listed building (Date of listing: 15/4/1991; LB ref:30256) which has significant later additions, a stable block located to the north of the site and a lodge house located to the south. The site was previously used as a care home.

The surrounding area is mainly residential. To the north of the site is the recently completed flatted development within the grounds of Westerlea on Ellersly Road. Large detached villas sit to the east and west of the site. Further west towards Ellersley Road, sites have been redeveloped with modern developments.

The site is bounded by a high stone wall. Landscaped gardens sit to the front of the site with a variety of trees and shrubs. The ground gradually slopes upwards towards the rear of the site where the main buildings are located.

Vehicular and pedestrian access is taken from Corstorphine Road adjacent to the lodge house.

This application site is located within the West Murrayfield Conservation Area.

2.2 Site History

24 October 2013 - Permission to fell two trees in the garden area (application reference 13/04259/TCO).

17 December 2013 Planning permission granted for the installation of a glazed door in each bay window. The installation of 3 new roof lights to line through with the existing two in the adjacent room (application reference 13/04737/FUL).

17 December 2013 - Listed building consent granted for conversion of the existing room at the Tor Nursing Home to form two new en-suite bedrooms, including the installation of a glazed door in each bay window. An existing store room on the floor above is to be converted to form a staff room including the installation of 3 new rooflights to line through with the existing two in the adjacent room (application reference 13/04738/LBC).

November 2017 - Conservation area consent pending consideration for demolition of non original extensions (application reference 17/05074/CON).

November 2017 - Planning permission pending consideration for conversion of the former nursing home and gate lodge to residential use (including demolition of non-original extensions and stable block), erection of two residential blocks comprising 29 residential units, associated landscaping and ancillary works (application reference 17/05071/FUL).

Main report

3.1 Description Of The Proposal

The proposal is to alter Tor House, stable block and vehicular entrance to the site.

Tor House

The building will be converted to residential use and divided into two residential units.

A series of internal partitions will be removed to reinstate a number of rooms back to their original proportions. The modern additions on the east elevation of the building and an external fire escape stair on the west elevation will be removed.

The existing windows on the south elevation will be retained and on the north elevation new timber glazed screens are proposed at the ground floor level.

Stable Block

This is being retained and converted into two dwellings. A boundary wall and non original extension to the building will be removed. The proposed alterations include increasing the height of the roof by 1.5 metres to allow accommodation to be created at the first floor level. This new roof extension will be finished in a zinc cladding. On the south elevation new timber sash and case windows at first floor and new screens on the ground floor are proposed. The infill on the west elevation will be stone to match existing.

Lodge House

This will be retained as a single dwelling and no external or internal changes are proposed to this building.

Scheme 1

The stable block was to be demolished and the height of the north block has been reduced by one storey.

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 adversely affect the character of the listed building;
- b) the proposals adversely affect the character or appearance of the conservation area; and
- c) comments raised have been addressed.

a) Character and Setting of Listed Building

Policy Env 4 in the Edinburgh Local Plan (LDP) states that proposals to alter a listed building will be permitted where those alterations are justified; will not result unnecessary damage to historic structures or result in a diminution of the buildings interest; and any additions would be in keeping with other parts of the building.

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.

Tor House has been altered significantly and unsympathetically both internally and externally in the later 20th century. The most imposing addition is the large two storey pitched roof extension and conservatory to the side and rear of the building. The removal of these structures is a significant conservation gain and will allow the main building to sit once again in its own space.

The front elevation will remain unaltered and the glazed screen and glazed extension to the rear is of an appropriate design that is sympathetic to the character of the building. The internal alterations involve the removal of a number of non original partitions to allow the principal rooms to be reinstated to their original proportions.

The proposed new five storey blocks to the north and south of the site breaks the normal convention of being subservient in height to the original listed building. The location of this block is set away from the main frontage of the listed buildings ensuring there will be no impact to its setting. These blocks are of an appropriate scale and sit comfortably within the landscape setting of the site.

The alterations to the proposed boundary walls to increase the width of the vehicular access, relocate the gatepost and create a new pedestrian access will have no adverse impact on the basic design of the entrance.

The proposed alterations and extensions are therefore justified and will cause no unnecessary damage to the building's historic structure or diminution of its interest.

Stable Block

This block is being retained and limited alterations are required to convert the main stable block to residential. The interventions in the form of increasing the roof height are acceptable and will not dominate the original building as a result of its scale and location. The proposed zinc roof provides a suitable contrast to the traditional slate and is an appropriate material within this context. The removal of the wall will not adversely impact on the character or setting of the listed building and is acceptable.

In conclusion, the alterations and refurbishments safeguard, and will not adversely impact upon, the character of the listed buildings.

b) Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The site sits within the Country House Sub Area of the main West Murrayfield Conservation Area as identified in the conservation Area Character Appraisal. The essential characteristics are:

- The area is bound together by high stone boundary walls with houses less concerned with their relationship to each other, but more with their own design and layout within their grounds.
- The underlying spatial structure of the area is one of large 'country houses' in generous grounds close to main city access routes.
- Despite a gradual process of subdivision of the grounds, houses remain either free standing in generous plots or more uniformly laid out in smaller plots.
- Imposing gates set into boundary walls mark a transition from public to private, and retain an effect of privacy.
- A continuing interest and concern for landscaped gardens and woodland trees is clearly indicated by a high degree of maintenance.

These characteristics place emphasis on the retention of high boundary walls, creating a sense of privacy between private and public spaces, and concern for areas of landscaping.

The removal of the extension will have a positive impact of the character and appearance of the conservation area, as it removes a large non-original feature. Other alterations to the main listed building will be largely external and will have no impact on the conservation area. The new zinc roof on the stable block will be a small change to the listed building on the site and overall there will be no adverse impacts on the conservation area in terms of the works to the listed building.

c) Representations

Material Objections

- there is no justifiable reason to demolish the stable block - this is addressed in section 3.3(a).

Conclusion

The proposed alterations to the listed buildings are of an appropriate scale and will not have any adverse impact on the character of the buildings in accordance with non-statutory guidance on Listed Building and Conservation Areas.

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

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 meets the sustainability requirements of the Edinburgh Design Guidance.

Consultation and engagement

8.1 Pre-Application Process

There is no pre-application process history.

8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments

One letter of representation has been received and was from The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland (AHSS).

A full assessment of the representation 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**

Edinburgh Local Development Plan - The site is designated as an Urban Area.

Date registered

2 November 2017

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01A - 04A, 05 - 09, 11A -14A, 15-21,
,

Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

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Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:**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.

Other Relevant policy guidance

The West Murrayfield Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the range of high quality villas of restricted height enclosed by stone boundary walls, and the predominance of residential uses within the area.

Appendix 1

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Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 10 November 2017. The proposals affect the following:

Ref	Name	Designation Type
LB30256	30 Corstorphine Road Tor Nursing Home, including Gate Lodge, Gatepiers, railings and boundary walls	Listed Building

Our advice

This application proposes a range of interventions at the former Tor Nursing Home, Corstorphine Road. Built in 1866 (originally Torwood House) in a Neo-Jacobean style the building retains much of its original residential appearance and character, despite significant later twentieth century adaptations to a nursing home.

A lot, if not all, of the alterations and additions from its recent history as a nursing home will be undone. This includes the removal of the substantial extension and, in our reading of the floor plans, much of what appears to be modern internal partitioning. This is very much welcomed. The proposal to sub-divide the property into two residential units should not have a significant impact on its special interest.

We know the house still retains rooms with significant decorative schemes. This includes the entrance hall, main stair and, perhaps most significantly, the dining room complete with embossed and gilded Tynecastle wall coverings. We welcome the commitment in the Design Statement to retain all the highly decorative rooms in full.

Having had the opportunity to assess the application on site, your Council will be able to assess the impact of the internal alterations in more detail. We would be happy to provide further advice if required.

The application also proposes the demolition of the former stables to help enable subsequent development in the garden grounds - although we do not view this as an enabling development case. As Torwood House is listed at Category B, we have no role in assessing new development in its setting. However, we view the removal of the stables to be the most damaging aspect of the proposals. Although not highlighted in the list description, we consider the building does contribute to the significance of Torwood House as an ancillary structure, and assume your Council will consider it is covered by curtilage. The surviving stalls also adds interest to the stables and we note that a radical 2010 approved scheme (along which lines we wouldn't have an issue with now) allowed for their retention.

The argument for demolition of the stables, as set out in the Planning Statement, is that the building is of less architectural interest than the main house and therefore will meet demolition test a) (as set out in the Historic Environment Policy Statement). If your Council decide to assess the loss of the stables against the demolition tests then this is a potentially reasonable conclusion to make. However, the stables do have some interest, as noted above, even if they might not merit listing in their own right.

Although, it is largely a building of more simple utilitarian design and does not appear to have been intended to be practically prominent, either from the house (with its now currently separated by the extension to the house) or Corstorphine Road, being located at the northeast corner of the site, they are of some interest. With this in mind, we would be happy to provide further advice on the significance of the stables if this would aid your own assessment. It may be worth investigating if the location of the new-build elements can be amended which may allow the retention and conversion of the stables, or even keeping the most important portion of the altered stables.

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 with national and local policy on listed building/conservation area consent, together with related policy guidance.

Further Information

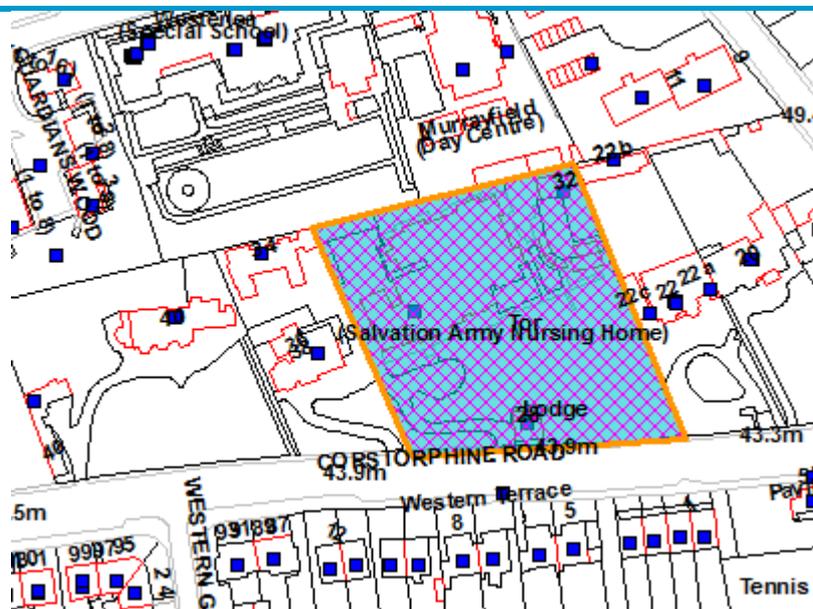
This response applies to the application currently proposed. An amended scheme may require another consultation with us.

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/. Technical advice is available through our Technical Conservation website at www.enginshed.org.

As this application involves the demolition of a listed building, if consent is granted there is a separate requirement through section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) to allow us the opportunity to carry out recording of the building. To avoid any unnecessary delay in the case of consent being granted, applicants are strongly encourage to complete and return the Consent Application Referral Form found at www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/what-we-do/survey-and-recording/threatened-buildings-survey-programme.

Please contact us if you have any questions about this response. The officer managing this case is Ian Thomson who can be contacted by phone on 0131 668 8076 or by email on ian.thomson@hes.scot.

Location Plan



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