

Planning Committee

10am, Thursday, 27 February 2014

Proposed Renaming of 35 metres of Cambridge Street and 35 metres of Grindlay Street to McCrae's Place

Item number	6.1
Report number	
Wards	City Centre (Ward 11)

Links

Coalition pledges	P44
Council outcomes	CO19
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4

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Executive summary

Proposed Renaming of 35 metres of Cambridge Street and 35 metres of Grindlay Street to McCrae's Place

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval for the renaming of the sections of Grindlay Street and Cambridge Street located in front of the Usher Hall and fronting Lothian Road to McCrae's Place.

This request is as a result of an application from the Lord Provost's office to commemorate the centenary of the formation of the 16th Royal Scots (McCrae's Battalion) in 1914.

This is a departure from the Council's usual street naming procedure, as set out in the Statutory Addressing Charter guidelines, as the Council normally only considers renaming as a result of new development, or where there are public safety issues. However, in the circumstances, and with no re-addressing impact on neighbouring properties, it is considered an acceptable proposal.

Recommendations

It is recommended that 35 metres of Cambridge Street and 35 metres of Grindlay Street be renamed McCrae's Place.

Measures of success

The use of the name contributes to the commemoration of a significant piece of Edinburgh's history, in line with Council guidelines.

The location is more clearly defined with the use of a single name.

Financial impact

The cost of renaming including new signage (cast aluminium) will be met from the existing budget.

Equalities impact

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

Sustainability impact

No sustainability impact was identified.

Consultation and engagement

Consultation was carried out with the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership, the local Ward Councillors and the public via the local press in accordance with street naming and numbering procedures.

The Usher Hall was also contacted as it would be the only property potentially affected.

Background reading / external references

Statutory Addressing Charter for the City of Edinburgh Council 2013

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_McCrae_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_McCrae_(politician))

<http://www.scotlandinoils.com/klan/Clan-MacRae.html>

Some background information has been provided by Colonel Robert Watson of the Royal Scots Regimental Museum and Heritage Committee.

Proposed Renaming of 35 metres of Cambridge Street and 35 metres of Grindlay Street to McCrae's Place

1. Background

- 1.1 A request has been received from the Lord Provost's office to rename sections of Cambridge Street and Grindlay Street to commemorate the centenary of the formation of the 16th Royal Scots (McCrae's Battalion).
- 1.2 The area in question has undergone change over the last few years with the pedestrianisation of the area directly in front of the Usher Hall.
- 1.3 Historically the Usher Hall has always been numbered into Lothian Road. In terms of current practice and procedure, this is incorrectly addressed as all properties should be addressed into the street from which they take access. Prior to the redevelopment and pedestrianisation, vehicular and pedestrian access was from Cambridge and Grindlay Street. This is an historical anomaly which has remained.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 contains a location plan showing the existing streets with the proposed area to be renamed highlighted.

2. Main report

History of the Name

- 2.1 Sir George McCrae was a self-made Edinburgh business man, who made his mark in the textile trade. He became a member of Edinburgh Town Council in 1889. He was the City Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee from 1891–1899 and also served as a Justice of the Peace.
- 2.2 In 1899, Robert Wallace, the sitting Liberal MP for Edinburgh East, died causing a Parliamentary by-election. George McCrae was selected as the Liberal candidate and held the seat over his Liberal Unionist challenger with a majority of 1,980 votes.
- 2.3 In 1909, after a successful career as MP for Edinburgh East, he resigned from the House of Commons to take up a position in Scottish government service, accepting the appointment of Vice-President of the Scottish Local Government Board. He was knighted in 1908.

- 2.4 Sir George McCrae played a prominent role in the City's Volunteer and, from 1908, Territorial Force. Initially joining the 3rd Edinburgh Rifle Volunteers, later renamed the 4th and then the 6th Battalion. The Royal Scots, as a private, in 1878. By 1914 he held the rank of Colonel. Soon after the outbreak of the Great War, and before the introduction of conscription in 1916, he determined to raise a new battalion of volunteers.
- 2.5 On 27 November 1914 he gave the following speech at the Usher Hall-
- “This is not a night for titles: I stand before you humbly as a fellow Scot, nothing more and nothing less. You know I don’t speak easily of crisis. But that is what confronts us. I have received permission from the War Office to raise a new battalion for active service. It is my intention that this unit will be characterised by such a spirit of simple excellence that the rest of Lord Kitchener’s army will be judged by our standard. Furthermore, with the agreement of the authorities, I have undertaken to lead the battalion in the field. I would not – I could not – ask you to serve unless I share the danger at your side. In a moment I will walk down to Castle Street and set my name to the list of volunteers. Who will join me?”*
- 2.6 Within seven days over 800 men had signed up to what became the 16th Battalion: The Royal Scots. More locally, it was known as 'McCrae's' or 'The Sportsman's' battalion. The former because he not only raised it, but then commanded it through to November 1916, including at Contalmaison in the Battle of the Somme in July that year. The latter because among the initial volunteers were at least 30 professional footballers from a number of clubs including, the majority of the Heart of Midlothian team.

Consultation and Responses

- 2.7 Consultation was carried out with the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership and the local Ward Councillors in accordance with street naming and numbering procedures. The consultation period gave the three Ward Councillors 28 days to consider the proposal, with a note that no reply would be an assumption of support.
- 2.8 Two of the three Ward Councillors responded indicating their support. There was no response from the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership.
- 2.9 In accordance with Section 97 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, the proposed change was advertised in the Edinburgh Evening News on 11 November 2013. Comments concerning the proposal were invited to be lodged within 28 days of that date. No representations were received during the consultation period.

- 2.10 As all properties should be addressed into the street from which they take access, the Usher Hall was informed of the proposal, and offered the option of being readdressed into McCrae's Place. They have confirmed that their preference is to remain addressed into Lothian Road. This would mean no properties would use the new McCrae's Place address.

Summary

- 2.11 This is a departure from the Council's usual street naming procedure, as set out in the Statutory Addressing Charter guidelines, as the Council normally only considers renaming as a result of new development, or where there are public safety issues. However, in the circumstances, and with no re-addressing impact on neighbouring properties, it is considered an acceptable proposal.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee agrees to the proposed renaming of 35 metres of Cambridge Street and 35 metres of Grindlay Street as McCrae's Place.

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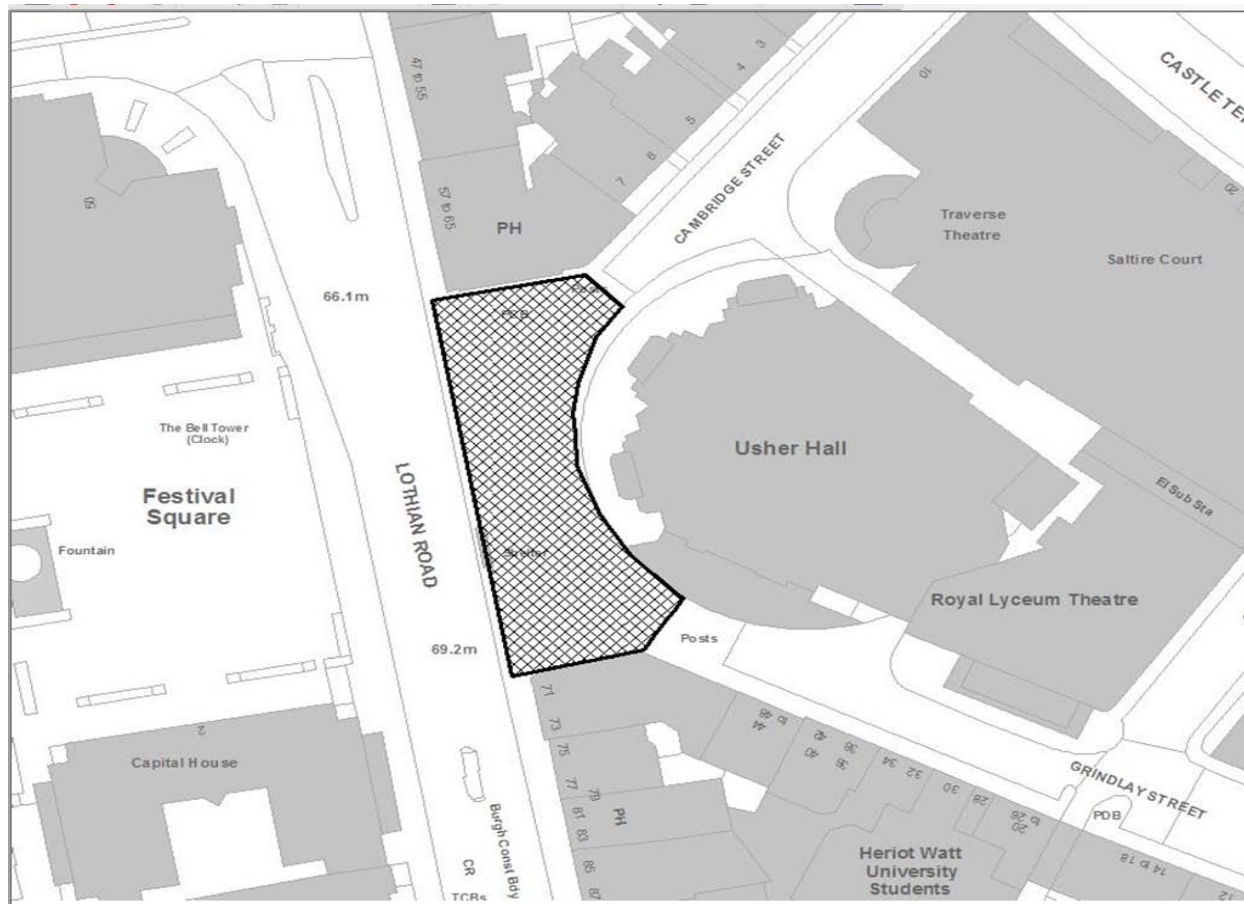
Director of Services for Communities

Links

Coalition pledges	P44 Prioritise keeping our streets clean and attractive
Council outcomes	CO19 Edinburgh remains an attractive city through the development of high quality buildings and places and the delivery of high standards
Single Outcome Agreement	SO4 Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric
Appendices	Appendix 1 - Location Plan

APPENDIX 1

Location Plan



Proposed area to be renamed

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