

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 23 September 2020

**Application for Planning Permission 20/02524/FUL
at 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh.
Change of use from student accommodation to Class 1
(Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services)
and / or Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Hotel / Class 7 uses,
proposed alterations, erection of shopfronts and associated
works (as amended).**

Item number

Report number

Wards

B11 - City Centre

Summary

The principle of the proposal has been established through the previous permissions and broadly complies with the policies within the Edinburgh Local Development Plan and section 59 and 64 of the Act. The Class 1 (Retail), Class 2 (Financial, professional and other services), Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Class 7 (Hotel) uses will form part of a broad mix of uses within the St James Quarter. The conservation and restoration will significantly enhance the external appearance of the listed building and character and appearance of the New Town Conservation Area. The changes will contribute towards the comprehensive regeneration of the St James Quarter and deliver significant enhancements to the public realm.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

LDPP, LDEL01, LDEL02, LDES01, LDES02, LDES03, LDES04, LDES05, LDES07, LDES08, LEMP10, LDES12, LEN01, LEN03, LEN04, LEN06, LRET02, LTRA02, LTRA03, SUPP, SGDC, NSG, NSGD02, NSLBCA, OTH, CRPNEW,

Report

Application for Planning Permission 20/02524/FUL at 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh. Change of use from student accommodation to Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services) and / or Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Hotel / Class 7 uses, proposed alterations, erection of shopfronts and associated works (as amended).

Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

27 - 31 James Craig Walk is a five-storey tenement block located on the west side of the site of the St James development. The building sits on a south east to north west line with James Craig Walk, a pedestrian walkway linking Leith Street and Elder Street, passing along its front elevation. To the rear of the building are the gardens of Register House.

The building is a category B listed building and was listed on 27 January 1992 (LB Ref: 30027).

The building is located within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

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

2.2 Site History

13 July 2018 - planning application for stone cleaning and other minor alterations was granted and is being implemented (planning reference: 18/03770/FUL).

13 July 2018 - listed building consent for stone cleaning and other minor alterations was granted and is being implemented (planning reference: 18/03771/LBC).

15 September 2016 - Approval of following matters specified in condition 23 of outline planning permission 08/03361/OUT relating to amendments to the approved design of Edinburgh St James: i) number of units ii) location & extent of uses iii) design of external features & materials iv) cycle parking v) showers & lockers vii) pedestrian & cycle access viii) car parking ix) roads & footways x) cp venting xi) servicing xii) external lighting xiv) waste xvi) surface water & drainage xvii) hard & soft landscaping was granted and is being implemented (planning reference: 16/02791/AMC).

22 July 2016 - planning permission for the change of use from student accommodation to Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services), and/or Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Class 7 (Hotel) uses, proposed alterations and ancillary works was granted and is being implemented (planning reference: 16/03662/FUL).

22 July 2016 - listed building consent for Internal and external alterations and ancillary works was granted and is being implemented (planning reference: 16/03663/LBC).

4 June 2009 - Redevelopment and refurbishment including demolition works and new buildings to provide mixed use development comprising retail (Class 1), leisure and culture (Class 10 and Class 11), hotel (Class 7), offices (Class 4), food and drink (Class 3), residential, and other related ancillary uses (including Financial, Professional and other Services - Class 2), car parking, servicing, access arrangements, provision of new public realm and refurbishment of existing department store, detailed approval of siting and maximum height of building blocks, points of vehicular access and egress and location of pedestrian routes at the St James Centre, Edinburgh was granted (planning reference: 08/03361/OUT).

Main report

3.1 Description of the Proposal

The application is for detailed planning permission for the redevelopment of the B listed building forming a change of use from student accommodation to form Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services), Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Class 7 (Hotel) uses within the building, with associated public realm works. Retail and catering units will occupy the lower and upper ground floors, with hotel accommodation on the upper levels.

The proposals include the conservation and restoration of the building, including the re-introduction of original features such as:

- reinstatement of slated mansard roof and chimney stacks to original height;
- reinstatement of porticos to upper ground floor level;
- raising of the external ground floor level and
- reinstatement of traditionally styled entrance stairs.

The main change from the previously consented scheme is the introduction of four, two storey projecting shopfronts on the north east elevation. The shopfronts are of a traditional design, grouped in double or quadruple arrangement across the facade and utilise traditional building materials.

Scheme One

Amendments have been made during the assessment of the proposals. The main changes relate to:

- alterations of the internal layout.

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.

Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, a planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states - special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

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 principle of development is acceptable
- b) the proposals have an adverse impact on the setting of the listed building or character and appearance of the conservation area;
- c) the design, scale and layout is acceptable;
- d) the proposals will result in an unreasonable loss to neighbouring amenity;
- e) the transport, access and parking arrangements are acceptable and
- f) comments raised have been addressed.

a) Principle

The site is within the City Centre as identified in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP). LDP Policy Del 2 (City Centre) supports a mix of uses appropriate to the location of the site and proposals that are comprehensively designed, considering relevant development briefs and guidance. LDP Policy Emp 10 (Hotel Development) supports proposals for hotel accommodation as part of mixed-use schemes and in locations with good public transport access to the City Centre. LDP Policy Ret 2 (City Centre Retail Core) supports proposals within high quality, commercially attractive units that will strengthen the role of Edinburgh as a regional shopping centre and contribute to the appearance of the city centre and public realm. Ret 11 (Food and Drink Establishments) permits changes of use in areas where the use will not lead to an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

27 - 31 James Craig Walk forms part of the wider comprehensive redevelopment of the St James Quarter that will provide a broad mix of uses. The proposed uses are compatible with LDP Policies Del 2, Emp 10 and, Ret 2 and Ret 11. The proposed mix of uses is consistent with the previously consented uses being implemented through planning permission ref: 16/03662/FUL. Therefore, the principle of the proposed uses has been established and consistent with what is being implemented. Accordingly, the uses are acceptable, subject to compliance with other relevant LDP policies.

b) Built Heritage

Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 require proposals to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the character of these buildings or their settings, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess. Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area. LDP Policy Env 3 (Listed Buildings - Setting) permits development if not detrimental to the architectural character, appearance or historic interest of the building or its settings. LDP Policy Env 4 (Listed Buildings - Alterations and Extensions) permits alterations where they are justified; there is no unnecessary damage to historic structures or diminution of its interest and should be in keeping with other parts of the building. LDP Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas - Development) supports development which preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and demonstrates a high standard of design utilising appropriate materials for the historic environment.

The current building is in poor condition, with many of its original features lost as the building was significantly altered in the early 20th century, both internally and externally. The setting of the building detrimentally changed through the wholesale clearance of St James Square to make way for the St James Shopping Centre and the external ground levels were reduced, losing some of the traditional features of the building. This proposal is for the conservation and restoration of the listed building, including the repair and reinstatement of original features. The proposal forms part of the wider comprehensive redevelopment of the St James Quarter area and the emerging context will increase the prominence of the building, fronting the new St James Square public space and change its relationship with the street. The proposal represents a significant conservation gain and forms an integral heritage asset within the wider St James Quarter and links the new development with Edinburgh's built heritage.

This proposal will reinstate the original features, as previously granted permission, and significantly enhance the setting of the listed building and adjacent public realm.

The proposed modifications to the building would be undertaken in a sensitive manner, with much of the work being historic restoration. The proposals must also be considered in terms of the level of change to the building, including conservation benefits of the reintroduction of original features, such as the mansard roof and chimney stacks, porticos, entrance stairs and improvements to the public realm. These changes are a significant conservation gain of the scheme and align with the aspirations of the HES Managing Change Guidance.

The main changes from the previously consented scheme is the addition of four projecting shop fronts to the principal elevation. The shopfronts are required for retail display and will provide a distinct public face to address the new St James Square. The shop fronts will utilise traditional materials, proportions and colours, referencing examples of traditional shopfronts added in other parts of the New Town Conservation Area. Shopfronts will change the character of the building from a plain domestic tenement. However, it must be considered as part of the wider regeneration of the St James Quarter and the building's changing relationship with the new St James Square, hotel and shopping centre. Shopfronts will provide animation to the façade of the building and provide an attractive setting, that embraces the changing nature of this part of the city from domestic residential tenements to a vibrant component of the city centre retail core.

The traditional design will sit comfortably with the listed building and retains a traditional character of this built heritage asset within the wider St James Quarter. This provides a contrast with the contemporary St James Square and creates an attractive juxtaposition. The shopfront changes are reversible and can be removed later if no longer required and the original window fenestration will be retained and maintain the original fabric of the building. The inclusion of shopfronts contributes towards the building's sustainability and securing a long-term future for the building that can adapt to different uses. The restored building, including shop fronts, will provide an attractive setting to St James Square and provide an appropriate commercial presence that reflects the changing character of the area. An active frontage will contribute to the successful regeneration of this area and engage with the new public square to provide an attractive pedestrian environment. Therefore, in this exceptional circumstance the addition of shopfronts to a traditional building is acceptable.

With reference to Sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the proposals preserve the character and setting of the listed buildings and the character or appearance of the New Town Conservation Area. The proposal complies with LDP Polices Env 3, Env 4 and Env 6.

c) Design, Scale and Layout

LDP Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) supports development that will contribute towards the sense of place and draws upon the positive characteristics of the surrounding area. LDP Policy Des 2 (Co-ordinated Development) supports development that will contribute towards the comprehensive regeneration of the wider area. LDP Policy Des 3 (Development Design - Incorporating and Enhancing Existing and Potential Features) supports the retention of existing characteristics and features worthy of retention and LDP Policy Des 4 (Development Design - Impact on Setting) supports development that has a positive impact on its surroundings regarding height, scale, form and materials.

The overall design of the existing building will remain, as granted by planning permission ref: 16/03662/FUL. The reinstatement of original features and enhancements to the public realm will return the building mostly to its original design intent and significantly enhance its external appearance, providing an attractive setting to the public square. The restoration and conservation will contribute towards the comprehensive regeneration of the St James Quarter and Edinburgh's role as a regional shopping centre.

The proposed traditional shopfronts will provide a contrast within the new contemporary St James Square. A traditional approach to the shopfront design of James Craig Walk will create a pleasing juxtaposition with the square that is reminiscent of examples across the New Town Conservation Area. The two storey shop fronts will maintain an appropriate space below the first-floor window cills, the top is delineated by cornice to provide a visual break between the shopfront and building above. The proportions are reminiscent of Victorian shopfronts, a prevalent style on Georgian buildings in the New Town. Shopfronts are grouped in double or quadruple arrangements across the façade to fit between the new upper ground porticos and provide a sense of unity across the elevation. Their placements have been aligned with window bays and maintain acceptable solid to void proportions vertically up the façade. The external finish will utilise traditional paint colours and their final colour is subject to a condition.

The scheme changes the design intent of the original proposal from appearing as a domestic tenement. However, the change will form an attractive façade that enhances the setting of the listed building and integrates with the new public realm, complying with LDP Policies Del 1, Des 3 and Des 4.

d) Amenity

LDP Policy Des 5 (Development Design - Amenity) supports development where it can be demonstrated that neighbours will have an acceptable level of amenity in relation to noise, daylight, sunlight, privacy and outlook.

The proposal forms part of a mix of uses and will be within a busy area within the city centre. Associated noise from the use of plant and equipment will be controlled using a condition. Environmental Assessment was consulted on the original application and raised no objections. There are no material changes relating to this matter from the previously consented scheme and accords with LDP Policy Des 5.

e) Transport

The scheme has been assessed against LDP Policies Tra 2 (Private Car Parking) and Tra 3 (Private Cycle Parking). The policies support development on suitable sites in the City Centre that are accessible. Zero car or cycle parking will be delivered as part of the restoration and conservation of the tenement. In terms of car parking, there is no minimum requirement to provide car parking on the site. Whilst no cycle parking will be delivered as part of this planning application, significant car and cycle parking is being delivered as part of the wider St James Quarter, including cycle parking within the new St James Square, that will compensate for the lack of provision through this application. There are no material changes from the original consent relating to this matter and the proposal complies with LDP Policies Tra 2 and a minor infringement on Tra 3.

Transport contributions are secured as part of the wider redevelopment of Edinburgh St James through planning permission ref: 08/03361/OUT.

f) Public Comments

Neighbours were notified of Scheme 1 on 24 July.

Material Representations - Objections

- Uses; this is addressed in section 3.3 a)
- Built heritage; this is addressed in section 3.3 b)
- Privacy; this is addressed in section 3.3. d)
- Transport, parking and access; this is addressed in section 3.3 e)

Non-Material Representations

- Flooding; the changes relate to an existing building
- Internal works; internal works will be considered in the associated listed building consent and
- Covid-19.

Conclusion

The principle of the proposal has been established through the previous permissions and broadly complies with the policies within the Edinburgh Local Development Plan and section 59 and 64 of the Act. The Class 1 (Retail), Class 2 Financial, professional and other services), Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Class 7 (Hotel) uses will form part of a broad mix of uses within the St James Quarter. The conservation and restoration will significantly enhance the external appearance of the listed building and character and appearance of the New Town Conservation Area. The changes will contribute towards the comprehensive regeneration of the St James Quarter and deliver significant enhancements to the public realm.

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions:-

1. A detailed specification, including trade names where appropriate, of all the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work is commenced on site; Note: samples of the materials may be required.
2. Details of the paint colour scheme of all shopfronts shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and implemented prior to occupation of the corresponding commercial units.
3. Prior to occupation, details of the extract flue and ventilation system, capable of 30 air changes per hour must be submitted, approved and implemented.

Reasons:-

1. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
2. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.
3. In order to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring residents and other occupiers.

Informatives

It should be noted that:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced no later than the expiration of three years from the date of this consent.
2. No development shall take place on the site until a 'Notice of Initiation of Development' has been submitted to the Council stating the intended date on which the development is to commence. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of planning control, under Section 123(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
3. As soon as practicable upon the completion of the development of the site, as authorised in the associated grant of permission, a 'Notice of Completion of Development' must be given, in writing to the Council.

Financial impact

4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:

The application is subject to a legal agreement for developer contributions.

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 publicised on the weekly list of applications on 29 June 2020. Neighbours were notified of the application on 25 June 2020 and the original 21 days were allowed for comment. The proposals received three objections.

Neighbours were re-notified on 24 July 2020 due to the submission of additional information. No further comments were received.

A full assessment of the representations can be found in the main report in the Assessment section 3.3.f).

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

Date registered

23 June 2020

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01 - 16, 17A - 20A, 21 - 46,

Scheme 2

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

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Links - Policies

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

LDP Policy Del 1 (Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery) identifies the circumstances in which developer contributions will be required.

LDP Policy Del 2 (City Centre) sets criteria for assessing development in the city centre.

LDP Policy Des 1 (Design Quality and Context) sets general criteria for assessing design quality and requires an overall design concept to be demonstrated.

LDP Policy Des 2 (Co-ordinated Development) establishes a presumption against proposals which might compromise the effect development of adjacent land or the wider area.

LDP Policy Des 3 (Development Design - Incorporating and Enhancing Existing and Potential Features) supports development where it is demonstrated that existing and potential features have been incorporated into the design.

LDP Policy Des 4 (Development Design - Impact on Setting) sets criteria for assessing the impact of development design against its setting.

LDP Policy Des 5 (Development Design - Amenity) sets criteria for assessing amenity.

LDP Policy Des 7 (Layout design) sets criteria for assessing layout design.

LDP Policy Des 8 (Public Realm and Landscape Design) sets criteria for assessing public realm and landscape design.

LDP Policy Emp 10 (Hotel Development) sets criteria for assessing sites for hotel development.

LDP Policy Des 12 (Alterations and Extensions) sets criteria for assessing alterations and extensions to existing buildings.

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

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 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.

LDP Policy Ret 2 (City Centre Retail Core) sets criteria for assessing retail development in or on the edge of the City Centre Retail Core.

LDP Policy Tra 2 (Private Car Parking) requires private car parking provision to comply with the parking levels set out in Council guidance, and sets criteria for assessing lower provision.

LDP Policy Tra 3 (Private Cycle Parking) requires cycle parking provision in accordance with standards set out in Council guidance.

Draft Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Delivery SG sets out the approach to infrastructure provision and improvements associated with development.

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

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.

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 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.

Appendix 1

Application for Planning Permission 20/02524/FUL At 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh, Change of use from student accommodation to Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services) and / or Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Hotel / Class 7 uses, proposed alterations, erection of shopfronts and associated works (as amended).

Consultations

Archaeology - response dated 20/07/2020

Further to your consultation request I would like to make the following comments and recommendations regarding this application for change of use from student accommodation to Class 1 (Shops), Class 2 (Financial, professional & other services) and / or Class 3 (Food and Drink) and Hotel / Class 7 uses, proposed alterations, erection of shopfront's and associated works.

This B-listed building constructed c.1870 building lies at the core of the UNESCO World Heritage Georgian New Town and represents the last significant survival of the James Square designed by James Craig. Designed originally as tenements for Walter Ferguson WS, the building was converted in to offices for HM Commissioners of Works in 1898.

Accordingly, this site has been identified as occurring within an area of archaeological potential and this application must be considered therefore under terms of Scottish Government's Our Place in Time (OPIT), Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), PAN 02/2011, HES's Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) 2019 and CEC's Edinburgh Local Development Plan (2016) Policies ENV 4, ENV8 & ENV9. The aim should be to preserve archaeological remains in situ as a first option, but alternatively where this is not possible, archaeological excavation or an appropriate level of recording may be an acceptable alternative.

The works will require significant internal alterations to this Georgian B-listed building including the removal of an original staircase, internal stripping, excavation of new basement levels, lift shafts and a new tunnel linking it with the adjacent St James development.

It is recommended therefore hat a programme archaeological historic building survey (level 2 annotated plans/elevations, photographic and written survey) of the existing building is undertaken prior to and during any alterations and ancillary works, to provide a permanent record of this important historic structure and understand its development history from James Craig Design through to Late Victorian Government Offices. This will continue from and incorporate the results from the Historic building survey

undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group (AOC 24323) in May 2018 prior to the undertaken of internal duntakings/demolitions.

In addition, a programme of archaeological excavation will be required to be of the interior of the buildings and route of the new tunnel, to fully excavate, record and analysis any archaeological remains, The results of this programme of evaluation will inform detailed secondary mitigation strategies to be drawn up to ensure the appropriate excavation, recording and analysis of any surviving archaeological remains prior to/during construction.

It is recommended that the following condition is attached in order fully record these important industrial buildings but also any associated buried remains as follows;

'No demolition/ development shall take place on the site until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work (historic building recording, excavation, recording and analysis, publication) in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority.'

The work must be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation, either working to a brief prepared by CECAS or through a written scheme of investigation submitted to and agreed by CECAS for the site. Responsibility for the execution and resourcing of the programme of archaeological works and for the archiving and appropriate level of publication of the results lies with the applicant.

Historic Environment Scotland - 30/07/2020.

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 29 June 2020. We have assessed it for our historic environment interests and consider that the proposals have the potential to affect the following:

| <i>Ref</i> | <i>Name</i> | <i>Designation Type</i> |
|------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>100018438</i> | <i>Edinburgh World Heritage Site Boundary</i> | <i>World Heritage Sites</i> |
| <i>LB29728</i> | <i>23, 24, 25 & 26 ST JAMES SQUARE</i> | <i>Listed Building</i> |

You should also seek advice from your archaeology and conservation service for matters including unscheduled archaeology and category B and C-listed buildings.

Our Advice

The development at the Category B listed Nos.27-31 James Craig Walk is adjacent to the Category A listed twinned tenement at Nos. 24-25. (The rear also overlooks the A listed New Register House and Dundas House). It is also within the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

Both blocks are surviving elements of St James Square, planned and designed by the New Town's architect James Craig (1739-95) as early as 1773, and largely built over the following decade.

We consider that the addition of two storey shopfronts onto Nos. 27-31 will cause some harm to the setting of No.24-25, by reducing its residential appearance in relation to the A listed tenement, which survives in near original condition. It could limit our understanding and appreciation of the two buildings as part of the same linked C18th development.

However, the harm would not be substantial.

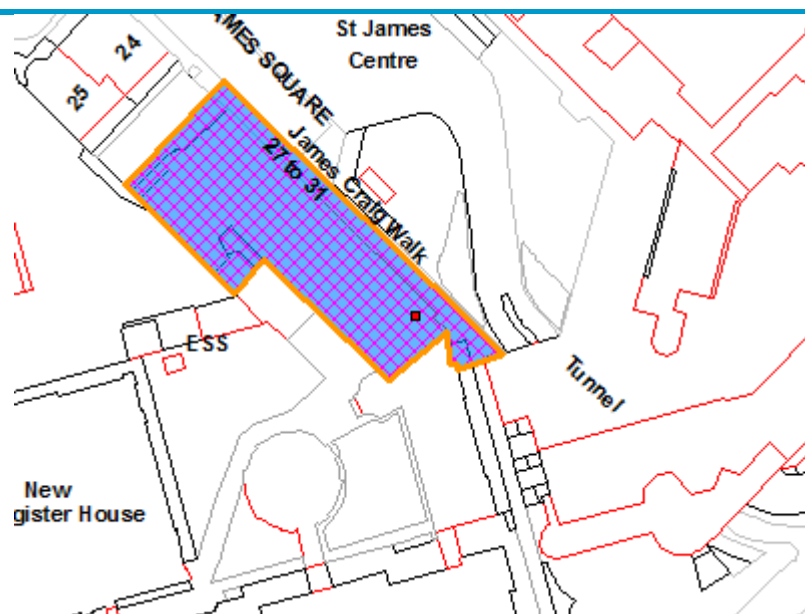
The block is the surviving SW side of St James Square, important as an early planned Square, and addition to the first New Town. The OUV of the Edinburgh World Heritage Site notes the New Town's survival of planned ensembles of buildings and the authenticity of surviving townscape. Although the proposals are intending to add new and inauthentic additions to a listed building, we do not consider that the development will impact significantly on the OUV of the WHS.

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.

Further Information

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

Location Plan



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