

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 17 March 2021

**Application for Listed Building Consent 20/03382/LBC
at Melville Statue, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.
A new A3 brass plaque on the Melville Monument.**

Item number

Report number

Wards

B11 - City Centre

Summary

The development complies with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Scotland Act 1997 as it preserves the character and setting of the listed building and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

HES, LEN04, LEN06, NSLBCA,

Report

Application for Listed Building Consent 20/03382/LBC at Melville Statue, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh. A new A3 brass plaque on the Melville Monument.

Recommendations

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

Background

2.1 Site description

The monument is category A listed by William Burn, dating from 1820-3 and constructed in polished cream ashlar sandstone. A Cubic pedestal with eagles at each corner supports the fluted Greek Doric column with laurel wreath base and egg and dart torus at the capital. Surmounted by a drum pedestal and statue of Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville by Robert Forrest, from a model by Francis Chantrey, the structure contains a spiral stair, exiting at the drum. Listing date: 13 January 1966; listing reference: LB27816.

The site is within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site.
This application site is located within the New Town Conservation Area.

2.2 Site History

There is no relevant planning history for this site.

Main report

3.1 Description of the Proposal

Listed building consent is sought to attach an A3-sized, brass information plaque to the north elevation of the monument.

3.2 Determining Issues

Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states - 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.

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.

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 works will adversely impact on the character of the listed building;
- b) the proposal will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and
- c) public comments have been addressed.

a) Listed Building

Section 59 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas)(Scotland) Act 1997 states:

"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, a planning authority or the Secretary of State, as the case may be, 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"

The proposal would be formed of a high quality material that would respect the architectural integrity of the building. It would cover an ashlar stone block and would sit comfortably between a decorative moulding and an architrave panel above.

The siting of the plaque would ensure that no significant architectural elements would be concealed or impacted upon, thereby protecting the architectural or historic interest of the building.

The proposal would be a modest and sympathetic addition to the building.

It should be noted that assessment of this application is restricted solely to the impact of the proposal on the character of the listed building and no regard can be had to the contents of the text that is displayed on the plaque.

b) Conservation Area

Section 64(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states:

"In exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions in subsection (2) , special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

The proposed plaque is of a modest scale and formed of appropriate materials. Given the scale of the monument and the proposed size of the plaque, it would not form an overly visible or intrusive addition, particularly when viewed from outwith the formal garden setting of the building's views. The proposal would not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

c) Public Comments

Material Comments - objection

- unsympathetic addition of a brass plaque to the listed building. This has been addressed in section 3.3(a).

Non-Material Comments

The majority of objections relate to the content of the plaque which is a non-material consideration in the assessment application.

Comments in support relate to the content of the plaque which, as above, are non-material considerations in the assessment application.

Conclusion

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

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

Conditions :-

1. Full details of the proposed fixing method shall be submitted to the Planning Authority for written approval prior to the erection of the plaque.

Reasons: -

1. 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

A total of 2297 comments have been received. Of these, 1285 were in support of the application, 1004 objected to the proposal and 8 were neutral comments.

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 within the City Centre, World Heritage Site and New Town Conservation Area.

Date registered

17 August 2020

Drawing numbers/Scheme

01-03,

Scheme 1

David R. Leslie

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

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Links - Policies

Relevant Policies:**Relevant Government Guidance on Historic Environment.**

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.

Appendix 1

Application for Listed Building Consent 20/03382/LBC At Melville Statue, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh A new A3 brass plaque on the Melville Monument.

Consultations

Historic Environment Scotland

The application is to install a A3-sized brass plaque, commissioned by your Council, on the base of the Category A listed Melville Monument, a fluted column topped by a statue of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville (1742-1811).

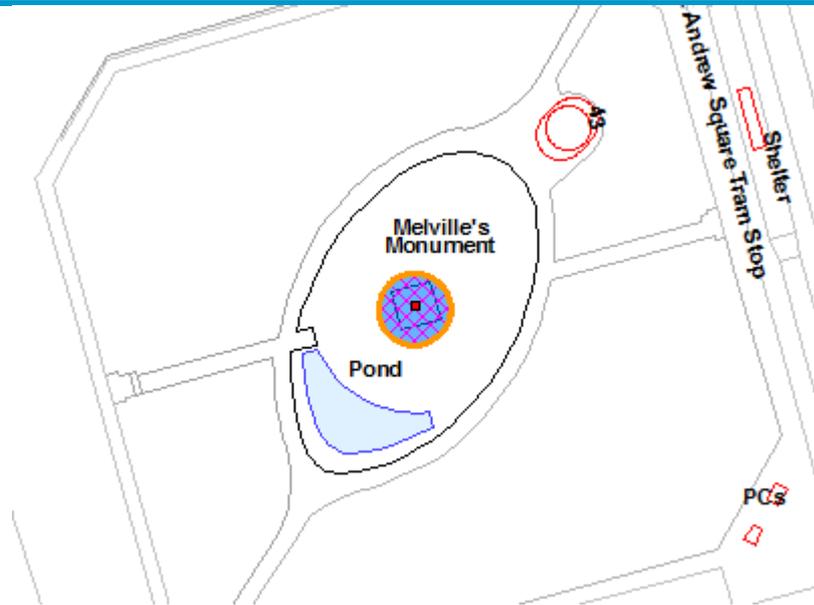
The plaque is proposed for the northern side of the monument between the plinth's decorative moulding and an architraved panel, approximately 1.8m (6ft) above ground level. There is already a small oval plaque in a similar position on the eastern side.

We would generally welcome interpretation that assists with the ongoing understanding and appreciation of listed buildings. However, our comments here are related to the Historic impact of the plaque on the listed building, rather than the detail and wording of the plaque itself.

Whilst we have no concerns with a plaque in the position shown, (subject to appropriate fixings), we consider a freestanding panel adjacent to the monument's base would be preferable. This approach would involve less intervention to the monument itself (fixings into ashlar stone) and would also be more accessible for viewing (the proposed plaque being A3 sized and 6ft off the ground).

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.

Location Plan



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