

Planning Committee

2.00pm, Wednesday 8 June 2022

Proposed Extension to Leith Conservation Area

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	12– Leith Walk
Council Commitments	<u>15</u>

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- 1.1.1 Notes that the proposed extension to the Leith Conservation Area boundary, as amended following public and stakeholder consultation to ensure alignment with the Leith Walk/Halmyre Street Place Brief and to reinforce its focus to preserve and enhance the area's unique railway history, was approved on [23 February 2022](#);
 - 1.1.2 Acknowledges that concern has been raised by Leith Central Community Council, Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council, Leith Links Community Council and a local resident regarding the decision to amend the originally proposed boundary extension which was presented as part of the consultation;
 - 1.1.3 Accepts the further detailed justification provided in this report confirming the reasoning for the proposed amendment to the originally proposed Leith Conservation Area extended boundary extension; and
 - 1.1.4 Agrees to proceed with formal conservation area designation procedures and update the Leith Conservation Area Character Appraisal to reflect the boundary extension as approved on 23 February 2022.

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Executive Director of Place

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Report

Proposed Extension to Leith Conservation Area

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides further justification for the extension to the boundary of the Leith Conservation Area, which was approved by the Planning Committee, on 23 February 2022, following a period of public and stakeholder consultation last year. It enables Committee to make a decision on the proposed extension with the benefit of more complete information in relation the rear of the Bingo Hall on Manderston Street.
- 2.2 On conclusion of the consultation process, the proposed boundary extension was amended to respond to feedback confirming that it did not fully align with the approved Leith Walk/Halmyre Street Place Brief with respect to the rear of the Bingo Hall, and that the area should be removed from the extended boundary. The focus of the extended conservation area is to help to preserve and enhance the area's unique railway history, and the rear of the Bingo Hall has no immediate connection to that history. The rear of building would also not make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 2.3 This report reiterates and provides further detail regarding the reasoning for the decision to remove the rear of the Bingo Hall, in response to the concern raised by Leith Central Community Council, Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council, Leith Links Community Council and a local resident.

3. Background

- 3.1 It is a statutory requirement, in terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, for local authorities to periodically review conservation area boundaries and consider whether new conservation area designations are appropriate.
- 3.2 The Leith Conservation Area was reviewed in 2015. Since that time, there have been enquiries concerning the potential inclusion of the former railway arches on Manderston Street and Jane Street.

- 3.3 On 23 February 2022, Committee approved an extension to the Leith Conservation Area to include areas to the east and west of Leith Walk, on Manderston Street and Jane Street. The buildings involved comprise the railway arches associated with the former Leith Walk West Goods Yard and the abutment of the former railway bridge over Leith Walk. It was considered that this would assist in securing the long-term future of Stead's Place and protect the railway heritage of Leith.
- 3.4 The proposed boundary extension was the subject of consultation with the public and stakeholders in November and December 2021. The consultation was based on a boundary extension which included the rear section of the Bingo Hall on Manderston Street (Appendix 1). However, it was noted that the Leith Walk/Halmyre Street Place Brief, which was approved in September 2020, proposed two indicative layouts, one with and one without the redevelopment of the rear of the bingo hall. The layout showing the redevelopment of the rear of the bingo hall captures the aspiration to retain access to/from Thorntree Street, supporting greater permeability into and through the site (Appendix 2). It was, therefore, recommended that Committee approve a revised boundary (Appendix 3) which did not include the rear of the Bingo Hall so as not to potentially preclude the delivery of this important aspect.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Leith Central Community Council, Leith Harbour and Newhaven Community Council, Leith Links Community Council and a local resident consider that there is merit in including the rear of the Bingo Hall within the extended Leith Conservation Area so that it is afforded the same level of protection as the rest of the area.
- 4.2 The decision to remove the rear section of the Bingo Hall on Manderston Street from the proposed extension to the Leith Conservation Area was based on the need to align with and support the delivery of the approved Place Brief for Leith Walk/Halmyre Street. The removal of the rear of the Bingo Hall also reinforces the focus of the designation which is based on conserving and enhancing the area's unique railway history.
- 4.3 The Place Brief was approved in September 2020 and sets the framework for the future development of the area. The Place Brief was consulted upon within the local community before its approval.
- 4.4 Section 5.3 of the Place Brief demonstrates how a series of active travel routes can traverse the site on both a north/south and east/west axis. It also notes that the only vehicular access will be from Halmyre Street, with a potential connection to the rear of the Bingo Hall and onto Thorntree Street (Appendix 2). The benefit of having a singular vehicular access and one-way system is that it reduces conflict between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists within the site. However, this vehicular access also must provide access for waste vehicles and other delivery/emergency vehicles, making the geometry within this constrained site challenging.
- 4.5 The decision to remove the rear of the Bingo Hall is also considered acceptable because the strong focus of the extended boundary is to help preserve and enhance the area's unique railway history. The rear section of the Bingo Hall has no immediate connection to that history. As noted in the Committee report presented

on 23 February 2022, the Bingo Hall was also submitted to Historic Environment Scotland for consideration for inclusion on the Statutory List, however it did not meet the criteria for listing. The rear section of the bingo hall is a plain brick structure with a small area of residual stone and, if included in the Conservation Area, it is unlikely that it would be concluded that its demolition would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 4.6 Any future planning applications for the area will be required to demonstrate compliance with the statutory policy framework, principally Edinburgh's Local Development Plan, along with the approved Place Brief and other relevant material considerations.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 If Committee accepts the recommendations in this report the proposed extension to the Leith Conservation Area will be initiated through formal designation procedures and the current Character Appraisal will be updated.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 There are no immediate financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The originally proposed extension to the Leith Conservation Area was the subject of an online consultation and 29 local owners were informed of the proposal by letter.

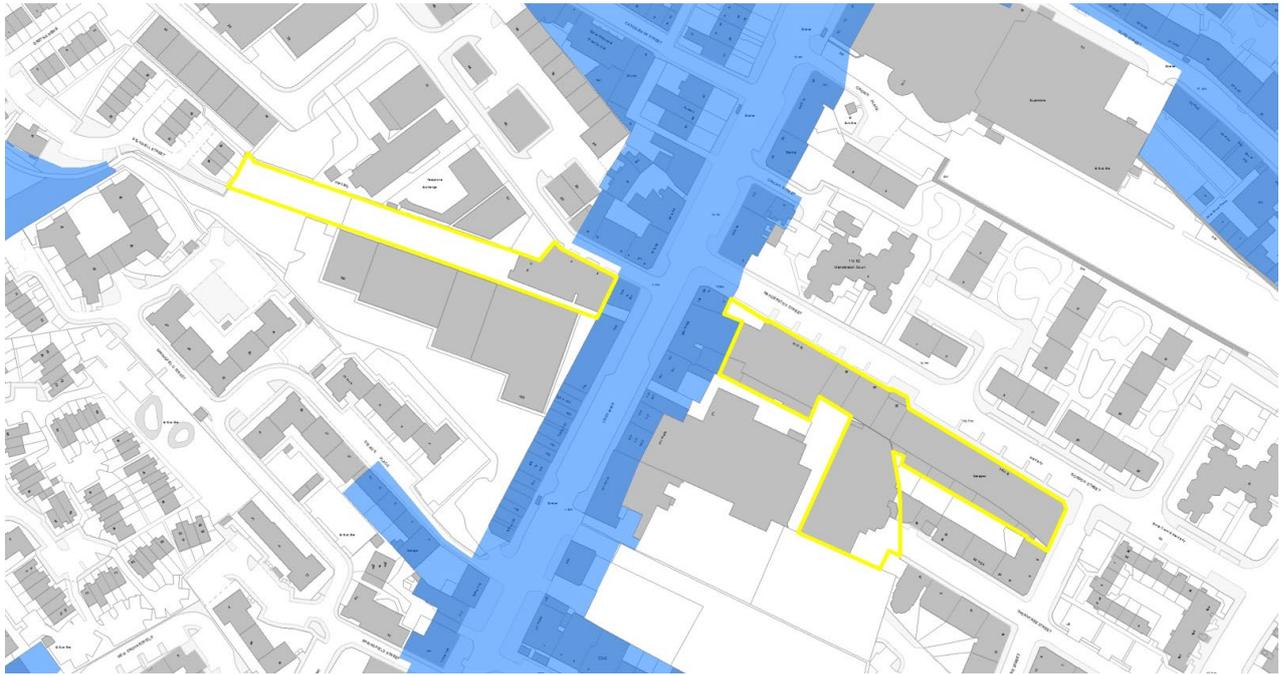
8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [Report to Planning Committee of 22 August 2018, Review of Conservation Area Character Appraisals.](#)
- 8.2 Report to Planning Committee of [23 February 2022](#), Proposed Extension to the Leith Conservation Area.
- 8.3 [Place Brief for Leith Wall/Halmyre Street.- September 2020](#)

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - Plan of originally proposed extension to the Conservation Area.
- 9.2 Appendix 2 - Leith Walk/Halmyre Street Place Brief - Indicative Layouts.
- 9.3 Appendix 3 - Recommended revised boundary of the extended Conservation Area.

APPENDIX 1 - PLAN SHOWING ORIGINALLY PROPOSED EXTENSION TO LEITH CONSERVATION AREA



Existing Leith Conservation Area shown in blue.
Originally proposed extension outlined in yellow.

APPENDIX 2: LEITH WALK/HALMYRE STREET PLACE BRIEF - INDICATIVE LAYOUTS



APPENDIX 3 - RECOMMENDED REVISED BOUNDARY OF THE EXTENDED CONSERVATION AREA



Existing Leith Conservation Area shown in blue.

Proposed extension outlined in yellow.