

15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Chief Planning Officer  
PLACE  
Planning Office  
Waverley Court  
4 East Market Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 8BG

Case Officer: Lesley Porteous  
Application number: 22/00210/FUL  
Application address: 20 (3a) Woodburn Terrace, Edinburgh

Dear Lesley

We are writing to you in relation to the planning application reference 22/00210/FUL (20 (3a) Woodburn Terrace, Edinburgh).

We are neighbours to this property which the new owner is looking to change the existing single storey garage and office or residential space into a two storey two-bedroom dwelling. Regrettably we would like to register our strong objections to the development plans submitted on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022. We are not architects or urbanists and do not have any experience in objecting to a planning application but as you will see we have done some research to help support our case and hopefully convey clearly and convincingly our objections to this proposal. We live on the ground floor right next door to the proposed development so will be the most affected by this proposal.

We have listed below factors which we feel are not acceptable to the plans and which we hope the Council will take into considerations when determining the planning application. We are very happy to discuss our objections with you and/or any Committee before any decision is made.

**Our grounds for objection:**

**Objection one – material objection on the ground that the proposal affects the character or appearance of adjacent conservation areas;**

It is our understanding that LDP Policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas – Development) states that development within a conservation area or affecting its setting will be permitted only if it preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and is consistent with the relevant conservation area character appraisal.

At the core of what the Council should consider is the fact that the application for the development of this property is in the Morningside Conservation Area. It is our view that the proposed development does not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In particular:

- The proposed development design in terms of its height, positioning and choice of treatment finish would not preserve the setting of the conservation area. The proposed treatment finish overall would not read as a high-quality development that is appropriate for its setting. The development design does not respect the wider setting of the site. The proposed development is

contrary to the Edinburgh Design Guidance (January 2020) and Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas in terms of the design principles of development in conservation areas.

We live in the beautiful area of Morningside whose history and beautiful character are well known to all who live in Edinburgh and even beyond. Anyone walking around Morningside will be struck by how well preserved the character of this area has been over the years.

The area is described as having '*substantial Victorian housing composed of individual, semi-detached and terraced housing that exhibit continuity through their uniform heights, massing and use of stone and slated roofs*'. The '*Essential Character: Architectural Character*' of the area is summarised as follows:

- '*High quality stone built architecture of restricted height, generous scale and fine proportions.*
- '*The significant degree of unity resulting from the predominant use of traditional building materials: local sandstone for buildings and boundary walls and Scots slate for roofs.*'

(Source:

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/1104/morningside\\_conservation\\_area\\_character\\_appraisal.pdf](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/1104/morningside_conservation_area_character_appraisal.pdf))

These special and precious characteristics of Morningside (including Woodburn Terrace) can be seen in the pictures below. It is difficult to reconcile these with the plans that have been submitted (see photos below). It is also impossible to understand how such plans could be considered acceptable in light of the fact that it is recognised and accepted that '*the scale, design and materials of new developments should reinforce and protect those features that give the conservation area its special character.*' (Source: *ibid*)



Proposed plan

## 05 Proposed materials palette



None of the proposed materials (above) are in any way consistent with existing materials in the area so do not in any way *'...protect those features that give the conservation area its special character.'*

We also object to the plans on the basis of **their design and appearance**, which are not consistent with the architectural characteristics of the street/the area. Whilst we can understand that time moves on and architectural style/fashions change (there are some examples in the centre of town), the plans above represent a building that is completely incongruous to the very nature of our area. This **new 1<sup>st</sup> floor structure** in interlocking Zinc (overlooking our private front garden) is simply – in our view – shocking in design. It does not fit with the adjoining sandstone Victorian building, with anything in our street or anything in the immediate conservation area. In addition to the incongruous shape of the proposed structure, we would like to call out the fact that the grey finish and wooden and zinc material that is being proposed within the plans are not in line with the following requirements: *'traditional materials should be used in repair and new build'* and *'alterations or additions should be sympathetic to the original style and of an appropriate scale'*. (Source: *ibid*).

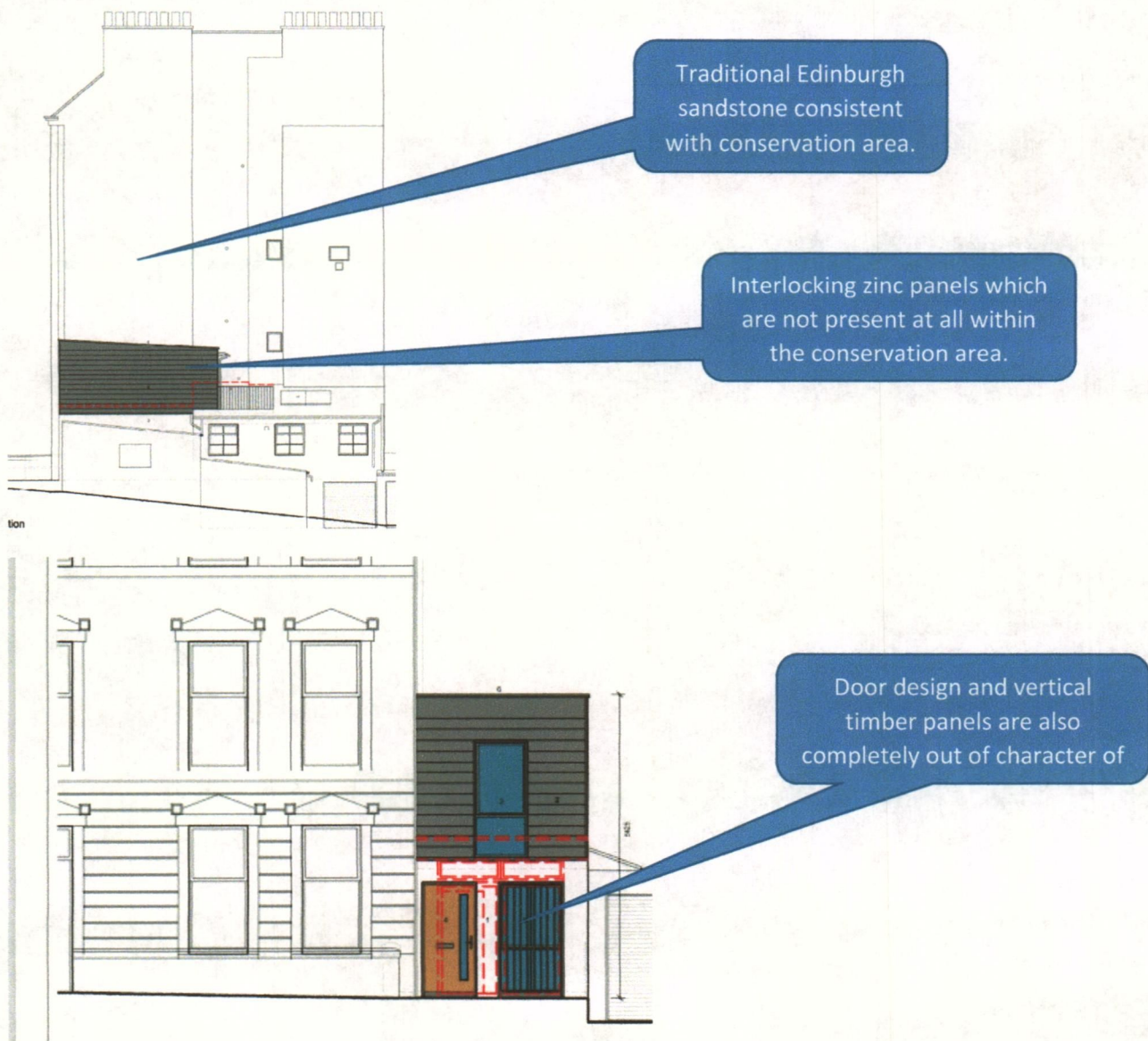
We hope that the Council will duly consider the above objections and continue to be committed to *'safeguard[ing] existing residential character'* and only allowing developments that *'contribute to the special character and appearance'* of an area. (source: *ibid* + see Extensions and Alterations section on [http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/430/conservations\\_areas](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20065/conservation/430/conservations_areas)).

### **Objection two – material objection on the ground that the proposal is not an appropriate development design**

It is our understanding that Design Quality and Context (LPD Policy Des 1) requires development proposals to create or contribute towards a sense of place. It is clear that the design of the proposed development is not based on an overall design concept that draws upon the positive characteristics of the surrounding conservation area. Permission should not be granted for the proposals as they are inappropriate in design and would be damaging to the character and appearance of the area.

We have found that Incorporating and Enhancing Existing and Potential Features (LDP Policy Des 3 Development Design) states that planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that existing characteristics and features worthy of retention on the site and in the surrounding area, have been identified, incorporated and enhanced through its design. This has not been achieved in the design of the proposed development.

Finally, Impact on Setting (LDP Policy Des 4 Development Design) also requires development proposals to have a positive impact on its surroundings, including the character of the wider townscape, having regards to its height and form; scale and proportions, including the spaces between the buildings, position of buildings and other features on the site; and the materials and detailing. The proposed development does not achieve this. The development design, including the height, its treatment finish and the nature of the windows are very clearly (even to untrained eyes) completely incongruous to the townscape character of the surrounding area and do not respond to the positive characteristics of the surrounding area. The proposal would adjoin the gable wall of a four-storey building made of traditional sandstone that is consistent with the character of the conservation area. In view of the prevailing height of surrounding/adjacent buildings the proposed two-storey building would be visually jarring with the adjoining tenement block.



**Objection three – material objection on the ground that the proposal will impact on neighbouring amenity**

It is our understanding that Amenity (Policy Des 5 Development Design) requires development proposals to demonstrate that neighbouring amenity will not be adversely affected as a result of a development and will have acceptable levels of amenity in relation to noise, daylight, sunlight, privacy or immediate outlook. The Edinburgh Design Guidance states that the pattern of development in an area will help to define appropriate distances between buildings and consequential privacy distances. It is considered that the height of the proposed development will result in harmful levels of overshadowing to the adjacent garden grounds of the flats located to the east of the site.

We have a private front garden which we are very attached to and spend a lot of time in because it's lovely and sunny/bright. The proposed structure will increase the height of the building adjacent to, and immediately South of, our flat/garden by one storey (basically double the height – see image below).



Height doubled immediately adjacent to our private front garden in front of our windows shown to the left. This structure is South of our garden so sunlight would be restricted all morning until the sun finally comes round far enough. Currently, our garden gets plenty of sunlight.

This will, without any doubt, significantly impact the amount of light and sunshine our garden will receive. This is another significant consideration that we urge you to duly take into account when reaching a decision. We really do hope that obstructing light and overshadowing an existing garden is something that carries some weight. Please note that all the other buildings to the South of our property that are higher than the current garage are much further away and therefore do not affect light in the same way this new two-storey building would.

Any such application should, in any event, be accompanied by a *Sunlight Analysis* for a detailed assessment. We do not believe this has been included within the planning application.

#### **Objection four - risk of creating precedent in Woodburn Terrace with the other garages adjacent to the garage at issue**

Whilst we are not experts in the matter of precedent in the context of planning applications, we – as concerned neighbours – are worried that if this proposed wooden and zinc structure (which in itself is a disfigurement to our street/the conservation area) goes ahead it will open the possibility for the other garages to develop into further incongruous buildings, further ruining/damaging the area. This is something we cannot accept and therefore object to.

#### **Objection five: overlooking our private garden**

We have hesitated before listing this objection as we clearly live in a terraced building with flats above us and a terraced building across the street. However, we would still like to raise concerns and register our objection on the ground of 'overlooking our private garden'. One of the key features of our property and of our terraced building is that our front garden isn't enclosed on the South side with no house, flat or regular comings and goings. The proposed plan would fundamentally and irretrievably change this. Again this is something we cannot accept.

#### **Objection six - material objection on the ground of inadequate drainage**

We are keen to point out to you that the existing drainage is already under massive strain and regularly overflows in our back garden (communal garden). It requires **regular interventions** which we can provide you with the records of if needed. We have been told by the Council representatives who help with this known issue that **the regular and unhygienic discharge** is caused by the fact that we are the last group of flats on a slope (Woodburn Terrace). We have been told by the same representatives that no additional pressure should be put on the drains, which are old and clearly struggling. The proposal to add an 'en-suite bedroom and balcony, forming a two-bedroom dwelling' to replace a garage (with minimal water discharge) will clearly increase the amount of waste and aggravate this known issue further, thereby exacerbating the potential health hazard to all residents of the block including children playing in the communal back garden.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to the fact that our boiler is vented through the wall above the garage at number 20. This has been the case for many years, certainly well before we bought the property – 10 years ago. This is obviously a concern to us as we could not see the vent on the proposed plan.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to our objections and would be happy to make a verbal representation if required as part of this process. We have also sent this objection in a letter so we can include photographs that don't appear to be possible on the online portal.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel and Gaëlle Batey  
19 Woodburn Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 4SJ  
Mobile: 077135 69019 / 07971 268 650