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**Decision date: 7 June 2024**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACTS  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2013**

Change of use to short term let (in retrospect).  
At Flat 5 20 Timber Bush Edinburgh EH6 6QH

**Application No: 23/06823/FULSTL**

**DECISION NOTICE**

With reference to your application for Planning Permission STL registered on 30 November 2023, this has been decided by **Local Delegated Decision**. The Council in exercise of its powers under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts and regulations, now determines the application as **Refused** in accordance with the particulars given in the application.

Any condition(s) attached to this consent, with reasons for imposing them, or reasons for refusal, are shown below;

**Reason for Refusal:-**

1. The proposal is contrary to Local Development Plan Policy Hou 7 in respect of Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas, as the use of this dwelling as a short term let will have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions and amenity of nearby residents.
2. The proposal is contrary to National Planning Framework Policy 30(e) in respect of Local Amenity and Loss of Residential Accommodation, as the use of this dwelling

as a short term let will result in an unacceptable impact of local amenity and the loss of a residential property has not been justified.

Please see the guidance notes on our [decision page](#) for further information, including how to appeal or review your decision.

Drawings 01, 02, represent the determined scheme. Full details of the application can be found on the [Planning and Building Standards Online Services](#)

The reason why the Council made this decision is as follows:

The proposal complies with Sections 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to a short term let (STL) will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the City as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity.

The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion. The proposal is unacceptable.

This determination does not carry with it any necessary consent or approval for the proposed development under other statutory enactments.

Should you have a specific enquiry regarding this decision please contact Sean Christie directly at [sean.christie@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:sean.christie@edinburgh.gov.uk).



**Chief Planning Officer**  
**PLACE**  
**The City of Edinburgh Council**

## NOTES

1. If the applicant is aggrieved by the decision to refuse permission for or approval required by a condition in respect of the proposed development, or to grant permission or approval subject to conditions, the applicant may require the planning authority to review the case under section 43A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 within three months beginning with the date of this notice. The Notice of Review can be made online at [www.eplanning.scot](http://www.eplanning.scot) or forms can be downloaded from that website. Paper forms should be addressed to the City of Edinburgh Planning Local Review Body, G.2, Waverley Court, 4 East Market Street, Edinburgh, EH8 8BG. For enquiries about the Local Review Body, please email [localreviewbody@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:localreviewbody@edinburgh.gov.uk).

2. If permission to develop land is refused or granted subject to conditions and the owner of the land claims that the land has become incapable of reasonably beneficial use in its existing state and cannot be rendered capable of reasonably beneficial use by carrying out of any development which has been or would be permitted, the owner of the land may serve on the planning authority a purchase notice requiring the purchase of the owner of the land's interest in the land accordance with Part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

# Report of Handling

**Application for Planning Permission STL  
Flat 5 20 Timber Bush, Edinburgh, EH6 6QH**

**Proposal: Change of use to short term let (in retrospect).**

**Item – Local Delegated Decision  
Application Number – 23/06823/FULSTL  
Ward – B13 - Leith**

## **Recommendation**

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

## **Summary**

The proposal complies with Sections 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to a short term let (STL) will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the City as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity.

The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion. The proposal is unacceptable.

## **SECTION A – Application Background**

### **Site Description**

The application property comprises a two bedroom, second floor flatted dwelling at 5 Timber Bush, Leith. The building entrance is reached via pends which lead through the development from Timber Bush/Tower Street. The property itself is accessed via a shared stairwell.

Although the wider Leith area contains a mix of commercial uses, the direct surrounding area is residential in character. There is a low degree of activity in the immediate vicinity of the property and a low ambient noise level.

The property is located in Leith Conservation Area.

## **Description Of The Proposal**

The application is for the change of use of a flatted dwelling to short term let (sui generis). No internal or external physical changes are proposed. The applicant advises that the short term let use has been operating since April 2015 therefore the application is retrospective.

## **Supporting Information**

Supporting Planning Statement.

## **Relevant Site History**

22/06243/FULSTL  
Flat 5 20 Timber Bush  
Edinburgh  
EH6 6QH  
Change of use to Short Term Let (in retrospect).  
Refused

17 May 2023

## **Other Relevant Site History**

No other relevant site history.

## **Consultation Engagement**

No consultations.

## **Publicity and Public Engagement**

**Date of Neighbour Notification:** 7 June 2024

**Date of Advertisement:** 8 December 2023

**Date of Site Notice:** 8 December 2023

**Number of Contributors:** 3

## **Section B - Assessment**

### **Determining Issues**

Due to the proposed development falling within a conservation area, this report will first consider the proposals in terms of Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997:

- Is there a strong presumption against granting planning permission due to the development conflicting with the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area?

- If the strong presumption against granting planning permission is engaged, are there any significant public interest advantages of the development which can only be delivered at the scheme's proposed location that are sufficient to outweigh it?

This report will then consider the proposed development under Sections 24, 25 and 37 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the 1997 Act):

Having regard to the legal requirement of Section 24(3), in the event of any policy incompatibility between National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) & Edinburgh Local Development Plan 2016 (LDP) the newer policy shall prevail.

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

If the proposals do comply with the development plan, are there any compelling material considerations for not approving them?

If the proposals do not comply with the development plan, are there any compelling material considerations for approving them?

In the assessment of material considerations this report will consider:

- equalities and human rights;
- public representations; and
- any other identified material considerations.

## **Assessment**

The application is in retrospect. The application form states that the operation of the property as a short term let commenced April 2015. This is prior to 5 September 2022, when the Edinburgh STL control area came into effect. As the designation does not have a retrospective effect it is necessary to consider whether the use of the property as an STL is a material change of use.

Granting planning permission would change the use from a residential dwelling to STL. The use of the property as an STL, as a result of the granting of planning permission, would constitute a material change in the use of the property under section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, given the associated characteristics of STL use in this location and property type.

### **a) The proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area?**

The Leith Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the area's unique and complex architectural character, the concentration of buildings of significant historic and architectural quality, the unifying effect of traditional materials, the multiplicity of land use activities, and the importance of the Water of Leith and Leith Links for their natural heritage, open space and recreational value.

There are no external changes proposed. The change of use from a residential premises to a short term let will not have any material impact on the character of the conservation area. The change of use would preserve the appearance of the conservation area.

## **Conclusion in relation to the conservation area**

The proposals are acceptable with regard to Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

### **b) The proposals comply with the development plan?**

National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) was adopted by the Scottish Ministers on 13 February 2023 and forms part of the Council's Development Plan. NPF4 policies supports the planning and delivery of Sustainable Places, Liveable Places and Productive Places and are the key policies against which proposals for development are assessed. Several policies in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) are superseded by equivalent and alternative policies within NPF4. The relevant policies to be considered are:

- NPF4 Sustainable Places Policy 1.
- NPF4 Historic Assets and Places Policy 7.
- NPF4 Productive Places Tourism Policy 30.
- LDP Housing Policy Hou 7.
- LDP Transport Policies Tra 2 and Tra 3.

The non-statutory 'Listed Buildings and Conservation Area' guidance is a material consideration that is relevant when considering historic assets.

The non-statutory 'Guidance for Businesses' (2024) is a material consideration that is relevant when considering change of use applications.

### Conservation Area

There are no external or internal works proposed and as such there will not be a significant impact on historic assets and places. The proposal complies with NPF 4 Policy 7.

### Proposed Use

With regards to NPF 4 Policy 1, the proposals do not involve operational development. The proposals will have a negligible impact on the global climate and nature crisis.

NPF 4 Policy 30 seeks to encourage, promote and facilitate sustainable tourism development which benefits local people, is consistent with our net zero and nature commitments, and inspires people to visit Scotland. Criterion 30 (e) specifically relates to STL proposals.

LDP Policy Hou 7 (Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas), seeks to protect residential amenity.

### Amenity

The two bedroom property is accessed via a shared stair and is located in a predominantly residential area of Leith. The immediate surrounding area is

characterised by limited activity and low ambient noise levels, particularly during the evening/night.

The use of this property as an STL would introduce an increased frequency of movement to the property and the shared stair. The proposed STL use would enable visitors to arrive and stay at the premises for a short period of time on a regular basis throughout the year in a manner dissimilar to that of permanent residents. There is no guarantee that guests would not come and go frequently throughout the day and night, and transient visitors may have less regard for neighbours' amenity than individuals using the property as a principal home.

The additional servicing that operating a property as an STL requires compared to that of a residential use is also likely to result in an increase in disturbance, further impacting on neighbouring amenity. However, this would be of lesser impact as it is likely that servicing would be conducted during the daytime.

This would be significantly different from the ambient background noise that neighbouring residents might reasonably expect and will have a significantly detrimental effect on the living conditions and amenity of nearby residents. The proposal does not comply with NPF 4 policy 30(e) part (i) and LDP policy Hou 7.

#### *Loss of residential accommodation*

NPF 4 policy 30 (e) part (ii) requires that where there is a loss of residential accommodation, this will only be supported where the loss is outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits. The applicant's supporting statement emphasises the economic benefits associated with the STL use, including local job creation.

Paragraph 220 of the LDP acknowledges that tourism is the biggest source of employment in Edinburgh, providing jobs for over 31,000 people. The use of the property by guests and the required maintenance and upkeep of STL properties are likely to result in a level of job creation and spend within the economy which can be classed as having an economic benefit.

However, it is important to recognise that residential occupation of the property contributes to the economy, in terms of providing a home and the spend in relation to the use of the property as a home, including the use of local services, resultant employment, and by making contributions to the local community.

The applicant also states that if planning permission is refused, the property will likely remain vacant other than when used by the owner (approximately 6 weeks of the year). It is proposed therefore, that no loss of residential will take place.

The application property is a residential unit and the current established use of the property is for residential accommodation. Consequently, it is considered that the use of the property as an STL would result in a direct loss of residential accommodation, which given the recognised need and demand for housing in Edinburgh is important to retain, where appropriate.



In this instance, it has not been sufficiently demonstrated that the loss of the residential accommodation is outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits. As such, the proposal does not comply with NPF 4 30(e) part (ii).

### Parking

Two car parking spaces are available at the property. This is acceptable and there is no requirement for cycle parking for STLs. The proposal complies with policies Tra 2 and Tra 3.

### **Conclusion in relation to the Development Plan**

The change of use of this property to an STL will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the city as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity. The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7.

### **c) There are any other material considerations which must be addressed?**

The following material planning considerations have been identified:

#### Emerging policy context

On 5 April 2024 the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division published its report into the examination of the Proposed City Plan 2030 and supporting documents in terms of Section 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997. The Council is currently considering the recommendations and modifications required to the Proposed City Plan 2030. It is the intention that the modifications will be considered by the Council before the end of June 2024. At this time in the context of the consideration of this particular application limited weight can be given to the relevant policies of City Plan 2030 until the proposed modifications have been fully considered.

#### Equalities and human rights

Due regard has been given to section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010. No impacts have been identified.

Consideration has been given to human rights. No impacts have been identified through the assessment and no comments have been received in relation to human rights.

#### Independent economic impact assessment

An independent economic impact assessment was commissioned by the Planning Service, and this resulted in a report on the Economic Impact of Residential and Short-Term Let Properties in Edinburgh (the Economic Report). This was reported to Planning Committee on 14 June 2023. The Committee noted that the findings of the report are one source of information that can be considered when assessing the economic impacts of short-term let planning applications and that given the report is considering generalities rather than the specifics of an individual case, it is likely that

only limited weight can be attached to it as a material consideration when making planning application decisions. The study considered the economic impact of various types of properties in Edinburgh if used as a residential property as opposed to being used for short-term holiday lettings.

The Economic Report shows that there are positive economic impacts from the use of properties for both residential use and short-term let use. The Report found that in general the gross value added (GVA) effects are greater for residential uses than short-term lets across all property types and all areas. However, given it is considering generalities rather than the specifics of this individual case, only limited weight can be attached to it as a material consideration in the determination of this application.

### Public representations

#### *material considerations*

Three objections were received in relation to this application. A summary is provided below:

#### *material considerations*

- The proposed STL use will have a negative impact on residential amenity due to noise and disruption and will erode the residential character of the development. Addressed in part b).
- Parking pressure from increased STL use in the area. There are no parking requirements for STL units. Addressed in part b).

#### *non-material considerations*

- Granting STL use at this location will set a precedent for further STLs nearby. Each planning application is assessed on its own merit.
- The property deeds prohibit non-residential use. Not a material planning consideration.

### **Conclusion in relation to identified material considerations**

Identified material considerations have been assessed above and do not raise issues which outweigh the conclusion in relation to the development plan.

### **Overall conclusion**

The proposal complies with Sections 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to an STL will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the City as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity.

The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion. The proposal is unacceptable.

## **Section C - Conditions/Reasons/Informatives**

The recommendation is subject to the following;

### **Reason for Refusal**

1. The proposal is contrary to Local Development Plan Policy Hou 7 in respect of Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas, as the use of this dwelling as a short term let will have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions and amenity of nearby residents.
2. The proposal is contrary to National Planning Framework Policy 30(e) in respect of Local Amenity and Loss of Residential Accommodation, as the use of this dwelling as a short term let will result in an unacceptable impact of local amenity and the loss of a residential property has not been justified.

### **Background Reading/External References**

To view details of the application go to the [Planning Portal](#)

**Further Information - [Local Development Plan](#)**

**Date Registered: 30 November 2023**

### **Drawing Numbers/Scheme**

01, 02

Scheme 1

**David Givan  
Chief Planning Officer  
PLACE  
The City of Edinburgh Council**

Contact: Sean Christie, Assistant Planning Officer  
E-mail: [sean.christie@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:sean.christie@edinburgh.gov.uk)



Appendix 1

## **Consultations**

No consultations undertaken.

## Appendix 2

### **Application Certification Record**

#### **Case Officer**

I have assessed the application against the City of Edinburgh Council's Scheme of Delegation (2023) Appendix 6 – Chief Planning Officer and the Statutory Scheme of Delegation (2023) and can confirm the application is suitable to be determined under Local Delegated Decision, decision-making route.

Case Officer: Sean Christie

Date: 31 May 2024

#### **Authorising Officer**

To be completed by an officer as authorised by the Chief Planning Officer to determined applications under delegated powers.

I can confirm that I have checked the Report of Handling and agree the recommendation by the case officer.

Authorising Officer (mRTPI): Damian McAfee

Date: 7 June 2024