

Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 23 September 2020

**Application for Listed Building Consent 20/02527/LBC
at 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh.
Internal and external alterations, erection of shopfronts and
associated works (as amended).**

Item number

Report number

Wards

B11 - City Centre

Summary

The proposals enhance the character of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. The scheme accords with the Managing Change guidance and Section 14 and Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

Links

[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

HEPS, HESCON, HESINT, HESROF, HESUSE, HESWIN, HESDOR, LDPP, LEN01, LEN03, LEN04, LEN06, NSG, NSLBCA, OTH, CRPNEW,

Report

Application for Listed Building Consent 20/02527/LBC at 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh. Internal and external 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 amendments to the previously approved listed building consent reference: 16/03663/LBC. The proposals, as per the previous permission, 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 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 proposals preserve the character of the listed building;
- b) the proposals preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and
- c) any comments have been raised and addressed.

a) Listed Building

Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 states that In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works, the 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. Historic Environment Policy for Scotland sets out how we should care for the historic environment when taking planning decisions. The guidance on Managing Change in the Historic Environment sets out the principles that apply to these specific works and how it should inform planning policies. Policy Env 3 - Listed Buildings - Setting and Env 4 Listed Buildings - Alterations and Extensions in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) state that proposals to alter a listed building will be permitted where those alterations are justified; will not result unnecessary damage to historic structures or result in a diminution of the buildings interest; and any additions would be in keeping with other parts of the building. Development within the curtilage of the listed building will only be permitted if not detrimental to the character, appearance of the historic interest of the building or its setting.

The main changes from the previously granted listed building consent (planning ref: 16/03663/LBC) relate to 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. It is acknowledged that shopfronts will change the character of the building from a plain domestic tenement. However, this change 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. The proposals must also be considered as a whole 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 Historic Environment Scotland (HES) Managing Change Guidance.

The traditional design will sit comfortably with the listed building and retains the traditional character of this built heritage asset within the wider St James Quarter. This will provide 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 openings 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 existing building is plain in design with its historic significance in its association with James Craig and the historic James Craig Square. This proposal will significantly enhance the condition of the building, reinstating many of the original features and the addition of shopfronts will form part of the comprehensive regeneration of the wider area and provide an attractive, animated façade to the new St James Square.

HES has objected to the addition of shopfronts as it believe they will cause some harm to the setting of the listed building by reducing its residential appearance. Concerns have also been raised in terms of the relationship with the neighbouring A listed tenement that survives in near original condition. However, HES has acknowledged that the harm would not be substantial. Whilst, the validity of HES's assessment is acknowledged, with the preference being that the tenement is conserved and restored as originally intended, it is considered that there are overall benefits to the building which outweigh any negative aspect of these additions. There are exceptional circumstances in this case that would justify the addition of shopfronts. Considering the wider redevelopment of the St James Quarter and formation of the new public square, the change in character from domestic tenement to a more commercially orientation reflects the changing nature of this part of the city and the building's ongoing history. Therefore, in this exceptional circumstance, the addition of shopfronts to the building is acceptable. If the Committee is minded to grant this application, it will be referred to Scottish Ministers for a period of 28 days.

With reference to Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 the proposals preserve the character and setting of the listed building.

b) Conservation Area

Planning Advice Note 71 on Conservation Area Management recognises conservation areas need to adapt and develop in response to the modern-day needs and aspirations of living and working communities. LDP Policy Env 6 Conservation Areas - Development permits development that preserves or enhances the special character or appearance of the conservation area and demonstrates a high standard of design, utilising appropriate materials to the historic environment.

The reuse of the building will form part of a diverse mix of uses and contribute towards the comprehensive redevelopment of the Edinburgh St James Quarter. The addition of shopfronts to the building will assist in providing visual interest to the building and integrating it with its new surroundings and reflects the changing character of this area. The conservation and restoration of the listed building will, overall, enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and are a significant improvement on the existing condition. The proposal complies with LDP Policy Env 6 and Section 64 of the Act.

c) Representations

A site notice was published on 30 June 2020.

Material Representations - Objections

- Character of the listed building; this is addressed in section 3.3 a)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposals enhance the character of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area. The scheme accords with HES Managing Change guidance and Section 14 and Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. If Committee is minded to grant consent, the matter shall have to be referred to Scottish Ministers.

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

3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives

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 considered 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 advertised on 30 June 2020. Three objections were received. A full summary of the matters raised by the objectors can be found in section 3.3 (c).

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:

The Historic Environment Policy for Scotland 2019 outlines Government policy on how we should care for the historic environment when taking planning decisions.

Planning Advice Note 71 on Conservation Area Management recognises conservation areas need to adapt and develop in response to the modern-day needs and aspirations of living and working communities.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Interiors sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to alterations to the interiors of listed buildings.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Roofs sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to altering the roofs of listed buildings.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Use and Adaptation of Listed Buildings sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to enable the use, the reuse and adaptation of listed buildings.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Windows sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to altering the windows of listed buildings.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Doorways: Government guide sets out the principles that apply to altering the doorways of historic buildings.

Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.

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.

Relevant Non-Statutory Guidelines

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 Listed Building Consent 20/02527/LBC At 27, 29, 31 James Craig Walk, Edinburgh, Internal and external 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 internal and external 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 ENV3, ENV4, 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 and external 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. Although the removal of the original staircase is a significant and adverse impact upon the fabric of this historic building it is regarded in this instance to be acceptable given the consent history of the development.

Similarly, the proposed additions of wooden shop fronts are considered to have a significant and potentially adverse, impact upon the original character of these Georgian tenements by adding new and prominent architectural details. That's said on archaeological grounds this impact is not considered to be relatively moderate in terms of the impact upon the fabric and understanding of the building.

However, as stated in response to the accompanying FUL application (20/02524/FUL). it is recommended therefore that 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 downtakings/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 - response dated 30/07/2020

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 29 June 2020. The proposals affect the following:

Ref Type	Name	Designation
LB30026 Building	JAMES CRAIG WALK AND PRINCES STREET, GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE SASINE OFFICE	Listed
LB30027 Building	JAMES CRAIG WALK, SCOTTISH OFFICE, FORMERLY 27-31 (INCLUSIVE NOS) ST JAMES'S SQUARE	Listed

Our Advice

We object to the application because the introduction of a range of two-storey shopfronts on the eighteenth-century terrace would significantly harm the character and special interest of the listed buildings.

Background

Nos.27-31 James Craig Walk (along with the Category A listed twinned tenement at Nos. 24-25) represents the last surviving, SW side, 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. Craig's pared-down classicism relied on proportions and detail, and although now lost, one side of the square introduced Edinburgh's first 'palace front', where buildings were designed as a unified composition.

Although the range concerned has been much altered, not least with the extension of the Sasine Office in the first decade of the 20th century, it survived the late 1960s demolition of the remaining three sides of the Square. However, it was then left awkwardly sited with the lowering of the adjacent public realm. The only original doorpiece remained marooned at first floor level, until it too was removed.

The original Design Statement for the outline planning permission for the St James development (2008) urged sensitivity towards the block, and the associated Heritage Statement noted any alterations to the buildings should be informed by a conservation plan. In 2014 a conservation plan (heritage statement and impact assessment) was drawn up by heritage specialists Purcell for the listed building consent (LBC) for conversion of the buildings. It urged future changes should restore the original character of the buildings, whilst being as authentic as possible. The LBC application did just that

- restoring the original doorpieces, entrance stairs/platts and fenestration, as well as removing the latter sheer storey (1904) and restoring Craig's original mansard roof. This was in conjunction with the wider St James development's restoration of external levels to close to the original level of the Square.

Internally, there were only cross walls and the structure of a curved stair (we were informed that the stair itself was modern - if it is indeed original we would have urged its retention). We judged the removal of additional sections of the original internal walling as acceptable, being balanced by the positive external improvements to the listed building.

We welcomed the proposed restoration of this important range of buildings, viewing it as a major conservation benefit within the overall St James Centre redevelopment. We have since supported the removal of paint from the facades, and have raised no concerns over the changing use for the buildings.

Current proposals

In a pre-application meeting last year we intimated that we would be unable to support an approach to add two storey shopfronts to the buildings.

We consider that the current proposals, to add four sections of two-storey faux shopfronts onto the eighteenth-century facades, would be significantly harmful to the building's special interest, and is a retrograde step from the conservation plan adopted for the buildings in 2014.

Although we have no concerns with retail or catering uses within the buildings, we do not consider the extent of the alterations proposed are either necessary or desirable.

In such a major retail-led development (St James) we would suggest that uses that complimented the character and special interest of the buildings should be sought - there is a reference to different offers to the 'mall environment' within the Design and Heritage Statement. With this in mind, we note that around 50% of the units on ground and upper ground floor are planned for catering/retail. We would suggest that a catering use (bar, restaurant or café) would not require the level of advertisement and display space proposed.

We note the comments within the Design and Heritage Statement regarding display and advertisement. There are several retail and catering units in Edinburgh that operate within a similar Georgian façade without the need for shopfronts, even including one at 95 Princes Street, which has a similar accessible half-basement level.

The block has the benefit of level access to the entire lower ground level from the south of the site, and is centrally and prominently sited in the heart of the development with an open forecourt across from the signature hotel. It will undoubtedly benefit from a considerable level of both visibility and footfall.

With this in mind, we consider that there are other less harmful options for providing methods of advertisement for the units. As well as display and advertisement from within the units, there is scope for sensitive signage, hanging signs, free-standing panel signs and use of feature lighting.

The shopfronts proposed, which are not traditional, but rather a timber and glazed screen placed over the elevations, would harm the special interest of the buildings, which, despite alterations, still have a recognisable character, retaining all their original façade openings (with only the former doors changed to windows). We do not agree the shopfronts would 'retain the Georgian heritage of the building' as the chosen form of the shopfronts is from a much later historical period and approach to shopfront design. We consider the works would harm our understanding and experience of the block, introducing an artificial interpretation of its history, from that of one of Edinburgh's first residential squares. It would also differentiate the block from its Category A listed neighbour at Nos.24-25, which survives in near original condition.

In conclusion, we consider that the proposals would significantly harm the character and special interest of this range of Category B listed buildings.

The demolition of the majority of St James Square, originally designed in 1773 by James Craig, was one of Edinburgh's worst architectural losses in the post-war period. The approved proposals followed the recommendations of the Purcell conservation plan, and were a welcome restoration of the surviving side of the Square, a rare work by the designer of the First New Town.

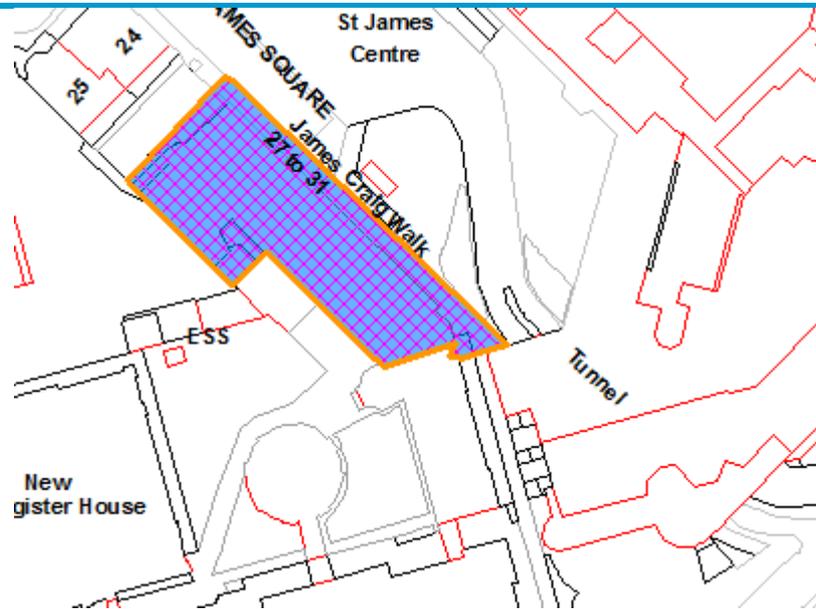
We welcome the investment to repair and convert these important buildings, but, consider that there are less harmful options to both reuse and advertise the units within the block. With this in mind, we would be happy to meet you and the applicants, remotely if necessary, to discuss our concerns and potential solutions.

If you are minded to grant consent, with or without conditions, you are required under the terms of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Notification of Applications) Direction 2015 to notify Scottish Ministers.

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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