

# Development Management Sub Committee

Wednesday 7 October 2020

**Application for Listed Building Consent 20/01597/LBC  
at GF, 6 Bell's Brae, Edinburgh.  
Internal alterations, roof works including new dormers and  
minor external facade works to allow the formation of 11  
properties.**

Item number

Report number

Wards

B05 - Inverleith

## Summary

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This proposal will deliver a new use for the listed building whilst preserving its main features of architectural and historic interest.

The works comply with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Scotland Act 1997 as they preserve the character and setting of the listed building and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. The external alterations involve an acceptable change to the exterior and there are no internal features of special interest.

## Links

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[Policies and guidance for this application](#)

HES, HEPS, HESUSE, HESSET, LDPP, LEN03, LEN04, LEN06, NSG, CRPDEA,

# Report

## **Application for Listed Building Consent 20/01597/LBC at GF, 6 Bell's Brae, Edinburgh Internal alterations, roof works including new dormers and minor external facade works to allow the formation of 11 properties.**

### **Recommendations**

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

### **Background**

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#### **2.1 Site description**

The application site is a C listed building (listed 12 December 1974 and revised 2009, reference LB30067) located on Bell's Brae within the Dean Village.

6 Bell's Brae is a 13-bay, slightly curved building. It varies between one and three storeys in height reflecting the complex topography of the site where the street climbs steeply to the east and falls to the north. The building was constructed in 1881 as a stable block and was converted to office use in 1970s/80s.

The building is constructed of sandstone with a slate roof and has elongated timber framed windows. There are a number of later additions to the building including large glazed opening to the ground floor rear elevation, a projecting rear full height glazed and slate stairwell and rooflights. Internally, the building has no apparent features of interest as a result of its conversion and use.

The building is sits within a grouping of other buildings from similar periods within the Dean Village. Many of these buildings have been converted into to residential use. To the rear of the building is a semi-private courtyard and small garden shared by the building and converted residential properties on Miller Row.

The site is within the Edinburgh Old and New Towns World Heritage Site.

This application site is located within the Dean Conservation Area.

## **2.2 Site History**

12 December 2002 - Planning permission granted to replace existing timber/glass doors with traditional timber lined doors on the main facade to Bell's Brae (02/03923/FUL)

13 January 2003 - Listed building consent granted to replace existing timber/glass doors with traditional style timber lined doors on the main facade to Bell's Brae (02/03923/LBC)

14 April 2020 - Concurrent planning application for internal alterations, roof works including new dormers and minor external facade works to allow the formation of 11 properties (20/01616/FUL)

## **Main report**

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### **3.1 Description of the Proposal**

It is proposed to change the use of the building from office to residential. Eleven flats are proposed spread over four floors, including the roof space.

Externally, nine dormers and three rooflights are proposed. These include five dormers to the north elevation and four to the south. Of the three rooflights, one replaces an existing opening whilst two are new insertions. Four existing rooflights will be removed.

To the rear, the modern projecting stairwell will be refinished with new glazing, stone and zinc. A number of screened and blocked up windows will be reinstated with wooden framed windows to match existing. An existing ground floor window will be modified to form a door opening.

Internally, partition walls are to be removed and new walls formed.

### **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) all public comments received have been addressed.

#### a) Character of the Listed Building

In determining applications for planning permission or listed building consent, the Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Paragraph 4 of Historic Environment Policy for Scotland 2019 (HEPS) identifies that:

*The documents that should be referenced for the management of the historic environment are Scottish Planning Policy, Our Place in Time: The Historic Environment Strategy for Scotland, the associated primary and secondary legislation and Historic Environment Scotland's Managing Change series of guidance notes.*

HEPS outlines how we should undertake our duty of care whenever a decision affects the historic environment. It contains a number of policies including a policy statement that decisions affecting the historic environment should be informed by an inclusive understanding of its breadth and cultural significance. Other policies stress that detrimental impacts should be avoided. Where appropriate opportunities for enhancement should be sought.

Historic Environment Scotland (HES) guidance note Managing Change: Use and Adaptation of Listed buildings, sets out the principles that apply to converting historic buildings to new uses.

LDP Policy Env 3 (Listed Buildings - Setting) states that development within the curtilage or affecting the setting of a listed building will only be permitted if not detrimental to the appearance or character of the building or its setting.

Policy Env 4 (Listed Buildings - Alterations and Extensions) in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) states that proposals to alter a listed building will be permitted where those alterations are justified; will not result in unnecessary damage to historic structures or result in a diminution of the building's interest; and any additions would be in keeping with other parts of the building.

The main alteration to the listed building is the introduction of dormer windows. Five are proposed to the north and four to the south roof slopes. These dormers are of a sensitive design being small in scale with pitched roofs. The dormers are to be finished in slate to complement the existing roof and the design will be similar in width and pitch to the building's original dormers as well as those introduced as part of the adjacent development. The three rooflights proposed will be conservation style. The addition of new dormers and rooflights will have minimal impact on the setting of the building.

The partial replacement of the large non-original wooden door to the south elevation with a similar hardwood door with a further opening will match existing materials and will have only a minimal impact on its appearance.

Whilst the form of the building and many of the historic window and door openings remain, the C listed building has seen a number of interventions since its conversion to office use in the 1970s, including the projecting stairwell, replacement and blocked up windows and rooflights.

The proposed new additions to the roof are relatively modest, of a sensitive design and allow for the conversion of the building to ensure its continued use. The reinstatement of windows will have a positive impact on the character of the building. Recladding of the modern stairwell with stone and high-quality contemporary materials will enhance its appearance as it is now in a state of disrepair.

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

### c) 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."

LDP policy Env 6 (Conservation Areas - Development) states that development within a conservation area will be permitted which preserves or enhances the special character and appearance of the conservation area and which is consistent with the relevant character appraisal.

The Dean Conservation Area Character Appraisal emphasises the distinctive village character of the streetscape within Dean Village, the heritage of high quality buildings, the limited range of building materials, the predominance of residential uses, and the importance of the Water of Leith and its corridor.

The roof slopes of 6 Bell's Brae are visible as part of the collection of buildings at the south east entrance to the Dean Village from the Dean Bridge. The roof plane features original dormers along with rooflights and it is largely unaltered. The introduction of dormers to the roofscape would not be uncharacteristic with original dormers present on the south elevation. The adjacent building was also converted in a similar manner in 2017.

As part of the application, the number of dormers has been reduced by 50% on the more prominent northern roof to reduce their impact. The proposed dormers are modest in scale and, when considered within the context of the wider conservation area, will not have a significant detrimental effect.

The alterations to the stairwell will be visible from within the courtyard space. However, the recladding materials are sensitive in nature and will be an enhancement over the existing situation.

The proposed external bike store is small in scale and will largely be obscured from public view on Bell's Brae. The structure's sedum roof will soften its appearance when viewed from within the courtyard.

Other alterations, including reopening of windows, will have a positive impact on the conservation area.

Overall, the choice of materials and design proposed is appropriate to the surrounding area.

The proposal will preserve and enhance the special character and appearance of the conservation area and complies with Policy Env 6.

### c) Public Comments

No public comments were received.

### Conclusion

This proposal will deliver a new use for the listed building whilst preserving its main features of architectural and historic interest.

The works comply with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Scotland Act 1997 as they preserve the character and setting of the listed building and preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. The external alterations involve an acceptable change to the exterior and there are no internal features of special interest.

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

### **3.4 Conditions/reasons/informatives**

#### **Conditions :-**

1. A detailed specification, including trade names where appropriate, of all the proposed external materials shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority before work is commenced on site; Note: samples of the materials may be required.

#### **Reasons:-**

1. In order to enable the planning authority to consider this/these matter/s in detail.

## **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**

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### **4.1 The financial impact has been assessed as follows:**

There are no financial implications to the Council.

## **Risk, Policy, compliance and governance impact**

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5.1 Provided planning applications are determined in accordance with statutory legislation, the level of risk is low.

## **Equalities impact**

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### **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**

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### **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**

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### **8.1 Pre-Application Process**

There is no pre-application process history.

### **8.2 Publicity summary of representations and Community Council comments**

No representations have been received.

## **Background reading/external references**

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- 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 an urban area as designated in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan and the Dean Conservation Area.

### **Date registered**

9 April 2020

### **Drawing numbers/Scheme**

01-10, 11A, 12A, 13A, 15A, 16B,

## **David R. Leslie**

Chief Planning Officer

PLACE

The City of Edinburgh Council

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## **Links - Policies**

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### **Relevant Policies:**

#### **Relevant Government Guidance on Historic Environment.**

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

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: Setting sets out Government guidance on the principles that apply to developments affecting the setting of historic assets or places.

#### **Relevant policies of the Local Development Plan.**

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**

**The Dean Conservation Area Character Appraisal** emphasises the distinctive village character of the streetscape within Dean Village, the heritage of high quality buildings, the limited range of building materials, the predominance of residential uses, and the importance of the Water of Leith and its corridor.

# Appendix 1

**Application for Listed Building Consent 20/01597/LBC  
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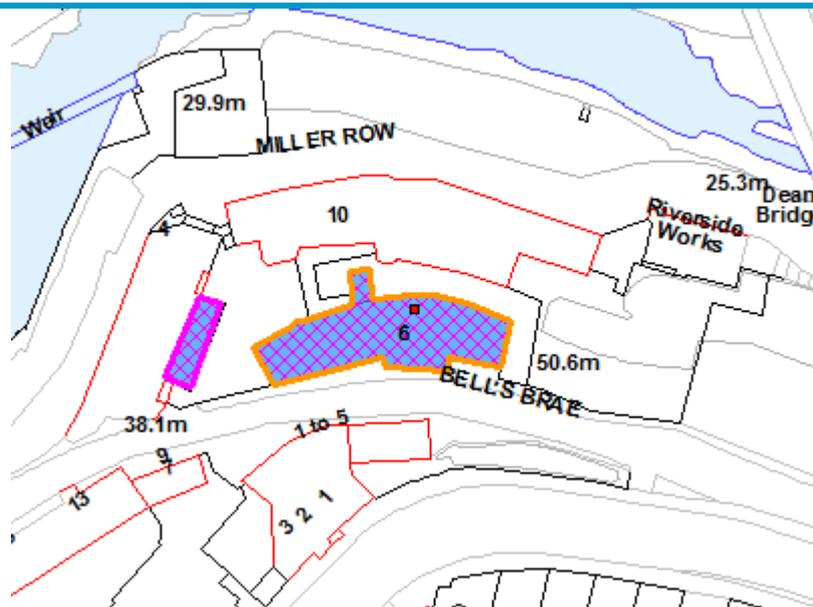
## Consultations

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No consultations undertaken.

## Location Plan

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