

Development Management Sub-Committee Report

Wednesday 1 March 2023

**Application for Listed Building Consent
Melville Statue, St Andrew Square, Edinburgh**

Proposal: Removal of plaque.

**Item – Committee Decision
Application Number – 22/04496/LBC
Ward – B11 - City Centre**

Reasons for Referral to Committee

The application has been referred to the Development Management Sub-Committee because 274 letters of representation to the proposals have been received. The Chief Planning Officer has also requested this application is referred to the Development Management Sub-Committee.

Consequently, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation, the application must be determined by the Council's Development Management Sub-Committee.

Recommendation

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

Summary

The proposals have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting and will not adversely impact on its special architectural and historic interest. The proposals will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is acceptable with regards to Section 14 and Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

SECTION A – Application Background

Site Description

The application relates to an A3 sized brass plaque located at the base of the Category A listed Melville Monument, a fluted Greek Doric column topped by a statue of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville (1742-1811) and designed by William Burn, 1820-3.

The column is constructed in polished cream ashlar sandstone. A Cubic pedestal with eagles at each corner supports the fluted column with laurel wreath base and egg and dart torus at the capital. Surmounted by a drum pedestal and statue of Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville by Robert Forrest, from a model by Francis Chantrey, the structure contains a spiral stair, exiting at the drum.

The plaque is located on the northern side of the monument between the plinth's decorative moulding and an architrave panel, approximately 1.8m above ground level.

The monument was listed on the 13 January 1966, LB Ref:27816.

The monument occupies a prominent and central position in St Andrew's Square, surrounded by green space and a circular pathway.

This application site is located within the New Town Conservation Area

The site is within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

Description of the Proposal

Listed building consent is sought to remove the A3-sized, brass information plaque which is fixed to the north elevation of the monument.

Supporting Information

A supporting letter on the abolition debate was submitted.

Relevant Site History

22/04257/FUL
Melville Statue
St Andrew Square
Edinburgh
Removal of plaque.

20/03382/LBC
Melville Statue
St Andrew Square
Edinburgh

A new A3 brass plaque on the Melville Monument.
Granted
19 March 2021

Other Relevant Site History

There is no relevant planning history for this site.

Pre-Application process

There is no pre-application process history.

Consultation Engagement

Historic Environment Scotland

Archaeology

Refer to Appendix 1 for a summary of the consultation response.

Publicity and Public Engagement

Date of Neighbour Notification: Not Applicable

Date of Renotification of Neighbour Notification: Not Applicable

Press Publication Date(s): 30 September 2022

Site Notices Date(s): 27 September 2022

Number of Contributors: 274

Section B - Assessment

Determining Issues

Due to the proposals relating to a listed building(s) within a conservation area, this application for listed building consent requires to be assessed against Sections 14 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (the "1997 Heritage Act"):

- Having due regard to HES Policy and guidance, do the proposals:
 - a. harms a listed building or its setting? or
 - b. conflict with the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- If the proposals do comply with HES Policy and guidance, are there any compelling reasons (including but not limited to the public sector equality duty) for not approving them?
- If the proposals do not comply with HES Policy and guidance, are there any compelling reasons (including but not limited to the public sector equality duty) for approving them?

Assessment

To address these determining issues, it needs to be considered whether:

a) The proposals harm the listed building or its setting?

The following HES guidance is relevant in the determination of this application:

- *Managing Change - Altering external fixtures*
- *Managing Change - Setting*

The removal of the brass plaque would reveal the ashlar stonework that forms an intrinsic character of the monument, thereby protecting the architectural or historic interest of the building.

An appropriate condition will ensure the stonework is repaired using appropriate methods, within a timescale of one month.

It should be noted that assessment of this application is restricted solely to the impact of the proposal on the character of the listed building and no regard can be had to the content of the text that is displayed on the plaque.

In addition, the granting of the listed building consent application does not confer ownership rights to remove the plaque.

Conclusion in relation to the listed building

The proposal will not impact on the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building and is acceptable with regards to Section 14 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Scotland) Act 1997.

b) The proposals harm the character or appearance of the conservation area?

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*

The small brass plaque is located in an inconspicuous location at the base of the monument. By virtue of its size and discreet location, the proposed removal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Conclusion in relation to the conservation area

The proposal has regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. The proposal is acceptable with regards to Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997

c) there are any other matters to consider?

The following matters have been identified for consideration:

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.

Public representations

A summary of the representations is provided below:

material considerations

None received.

non-material considerations

The letters of objection relate to the content of the plaque which is a non-material consideration in the assessment application.

Comments in support relate to the content of the plaque which, as above, are non-material considerations in the assessment of the application.

Conclusion in relation to other matters considered

The proposals do not raise any issues in relation to other material considerations identified.

Overall conclusion

The proposals have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting and will not adversely impact on its special architectural and historic interest. The proposals will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. It is acceptable with regards to Section 14 and Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

Section C - Conditions/Reasons/Informatives

The recommendation is subject to the following;

Conditions

1. The stonework shall be repaired within one month of the implementation of the date of this consent and a schedule of the proposed methods submitted for approval.

Reasons

1. In order to safeguard the character of the statutorily listed building.

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.

Background Reading/External References

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

Further Information - Local Development Plan

Date Registered: 8 September 2022

Drawing Numbers/Scheme

1-2

Scheme 1

David Givan
Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Diana Garrett, Planning officer
E-mail:diana.garrett@edinburgh.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Summary of Consultation Responses

NAME: Historic Environment Scotland

COMMENT: HES requested additional time to comment.

No consultation response was received.

DATE: 27 October 2022

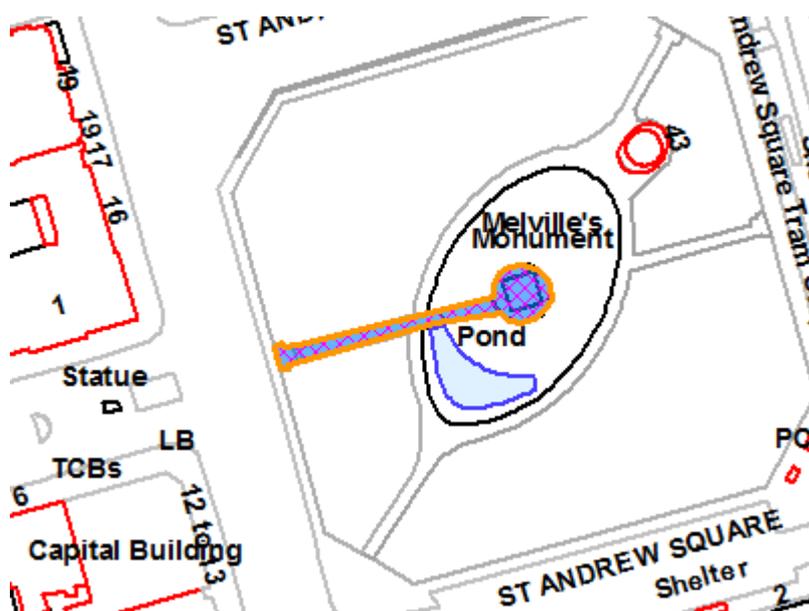
NAME: Archaeology

COMMENT: Although it's proposed removal would not have a significant physical impact nor one in regards to its setting, it would be seen as having an impact upon the understanding of the monument as it stands today.

DATE: 2 November 2022

The full consultation response can be viewed on the [Planning & Building Standards Portal](#).

Location Plan



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