

Minutes

Development Management Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee

10.00am, Wednesday 24 May 2023

Present:

Councillors Osler (Convener), Beal, Booth, Cameron, Dalgleish, Gardiner, Hyslop, Jones, McNeese-Mechan, Mowat (1.1 – 7.1 (Decision 1)) and O'Neill.

1. General Applications and Miscellaneous Business

The Sub-Committee considered reports on planning applications listed in sections 4 and 6 of the agenda for this meeting.

Request for Hearing

Ward Councillor Faccenda requested a hearing in respect of Item 7.1 – 23 Water Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6SU - application no. 22/06426/FUL.

Decision

To determine the applications as detailed in the Appendix to this minute.

(Reference – reports by the Chief Planning Officer, submitted.)

2. 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh

The Chief Planning Officer had identified three linked applications to be dealt with by means of a hearing: 1) planning permission for the selective demolition, adaptation, extension and upgrading of Class 4 office building, demolition of car park and ancillary buildings and proposed development of residential accommodation with associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure (as amended) at 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH - application no. 22/04766/FUL; 2) listed building consent for the selective demolition, adaptation, extension and upgrading of Class 4 office building, demolition of car park and ancillary buildings and proposed development of residential accommodation with associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure at 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH - application no. 22/04768/LBC; 3) conservation area consent for the demolition of the Jointers' Workshop at 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH - application no. 22/04769/CON.

(a) (i) Report by the Chief Planning Officer - application no. 22/04766/FUL

The proposal was for the demolition of five out of the twelve modules of the existing office building and the undercroft car park. The remaining structure would be adapted,

extended and upgraded to form office accommodation comprising 19,252 square metres in gross internal floor area, including an ancillary café, creche and cycle store.

A residential development comprising 174 apartments in five separate blocks would be erected on the remainder of the site, including associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure.

Demolitions/Alterations of Existing Buildings

The five modules to be demolished (Modules 8-12) constituted the north section of the existing office building.

The seven retained modules (Modules 1-7) on the building's south section would be extensively altered and upgraded.

Externally, the glazed curtain wall system would be removed and replaced. The new system would be constructed primarily with tinted, opaque glass panels with openable windows on the upper levels. The proposed framing would largely replicate the uniform mullion pattern of the existing and would be constructed in Polyester Powder Coated (PPC) aluminum with dark bronze toned mullions and transoms.

The lower section of the module used as the reception area (Module 1) would be extended slightly with the same detailing, except for clear, butt-jointed glazing replacing the existing aluminum framed, clear glazing. The supporting columns over the pond and bridge leading to the front entrance would be retained with the formation of a larger entrance platt.

The roof structure of the module at the building's west corner (Module 4) would be removed and an additional storey will be added in matching design and materials. Half the roof of Module 3 in the central area of the building would be removed to incorporate a large sky light.

The undercroft car park and energy centre/boiler house in the north-east section of the site would be demolished.

Sections of the existing stone boundary wall and railings would be removed to form new vehicular/pedestrian accesses from Holyrood Park Road and Parkside Terrace.

New Buildings/Layout

Five new residential apartment blocks (Blocks A to E) would be erected in the north-eastern half of the site.

Proposed Blocks A, B and C on the eastern edge of the site are hexagonal in form and would be set back an equidistant distance from Holyrood Park Road. The two outer blocks (A and C) would be six storeys high, whilst the middle block (B) would be seven storeys in height.

Two 'L-shaped' buildings (Blocks D and E) would be constructed near Parkside Terrace and East Parkside respectively. Block D would be five storeys high at the west edge stepping down to four storeys in the centre of the site. Block E, to the north of this block, would be similarly shaped and six storeys high throughout.

The external walls of these buildings would be constructed mainly in bronze toned metal cladding and the windows, external doors and balcony balustrades would be formed in

dark-grey finished metal.

Each roof would contain a blue roof system with soft planting, as well as plant equipment and photovoltaic (PV) panels.

The proposed layout included a landscaped courtyard in the centre of the site. This would be accessed from Parkside Terrace and Holyrood Park Road by new pedestrian routes and a shared through road.

Accommodation Schedule

Block A: one-bedroom x 1, two-bedroom x 2, three-bedroom x 21 = 24

Block B: one-bedroom x 1, two-bedroom x 1, three-bedroom x 26 = 28

Block C: one-bedroom x 1, two-bedroom x 1, three-bedroom x 22 = 24

Block D: one-bedroom x 1, two-bedroom x 12, three-bedroom x 27, four-bedroom x 1 = 41

Block E: (affordable) one-bedroom x 25, two-bedroom x 29, three-bedroom x 3 = 57
(33% of total residential units)

Total: one-bedroom x 29, two-bedroom x 45, three-bedroom x 99, four-bedroom x 1 = 174

Landscaping/Amenity

The existing landscaping would be retained around Modules 1 to 7, except for the formation of a new external plant area to the immediate left of the existing vehicular entrance and an accessible ramp from Dalkeith Road.

Significant areas of new soft and hard landscaping were proposed on the north-eastern half of the site, including a garden-like zone in the central area of the site.

A total of 47 trees would be felled out of the existing 71 individual trees on the site and 81 new trees are proposed comprising mostly semi-mature, 18-20cm girth or 2.5-3m high multi-stem. These include locally successful species suited to the site context with emphasis on native species as key habitats for birds and invertebrates.

The proposed low-planting scheme included evergreen blocks with limited foliage and flowering palettes around the office, hornbeam and laurel hedging to screen the ground floors of the residential flats and hardy, low-maintenance, evergreen groundcover with berries and flowers in the north-eastern part of the site.

The proposed hard landscaping would retain the original features in the front section of the site and the existing boundary walls and railings, with minor modifications for access. The proposed palette included re-use of the existing hard surfacing and walling materials. Surfaces would be generally permeable to form part of the surface water drainage strategy, including permeable block paving, resin bound gravel and reclaimed sandstone flags from the site. The retaining walls around the new amphitheatre would be clad in Yorkstone and the retaining walls between blocks B and D and A and E would be faced in shuttered concrete. Steps will be of pre-cast concrete construction with stainless steel handrails and tactile paving would be employed on potentially hazardous areas throughout. The site furniture would include timber topped benches with solid concrete or steel bases and some will be integrated with planter walls.

A central play area would be created with sculptural natural elements, including existing

boulders from the site and the section to the north of Block E would include a play trail with equipment formed in natural materials.

All flats in Blocks A, B and C would have small external terraces. The majority of flats at ground floor level in Blocks D and E would have small private, soft landscaped gardens and most upper flats at the ends of these blocks would have small external terraces with larger roof terraces for two flats in Block D. Otherwise, the external amenity areas comprised a series of landscaped residential courtyards with different characteristics.

Lighting

No details of the proposed lighting scheme had been included with this application, so a condition had been applied to ensure that the proposed fixtures and fittings were appropriately located and detailed.

Access

Pedestrian access to the office would remain mainly unchanged from the existing arrangement, with the addition of an accessible ramp to connect with the main bridged entrance from Dalkeith Road and inclusion of shared cycle access to new visitor cycle parking. There were two accessible routes to the office courtyard from the office building and new car park. A network of pedestrian routes would be formed within the new development, with gradients of less than 1:20 where possible and new entrance points would be formed in Parkside Terrace and Holyrood Park Road. These pedestrian routes included an accessible shared route to the lower level (north-east area of the site) from Holyrood Park Road.

All cycle routes through the site were shared with pedestrians and vary in width from 2.5-3 metres with gradients shallower than 1:20.

A one-way shared route would be created connecting Parkside Terrace and Holyrood Park Road, providing access for refuse, emergency and servicing vehicles.

Bus services to and from the city centre could be accessed from Dalkeith Road, at the Commonwealth Pool and near Parkside Terrace and from Newington Road/South Clerk Street which was a three-minute walk from the site.

The site was alongside a proposed pedestrian and cycle route (QuietRoute 30) from Holyrood Park Road to Ratcliffe Terrace, which included a segregated cycleway on Holyrood Park Road.

Waste Strategy

Refuse would be collected from four bin stores at ground level located throughout the residential blocks and at lower ground level within the office building. These stores would contain a range of bin sizes and types for separate mixed, glass and food recycling, in addition to residual waste.

Car/Cycle Parking

Office Development

A total of 29 car parking spaces were proposed including 3 accessible bays, and 9 motorcycle spaces.

Most of these spaces (25, plus the motorbike spaces) would be located at courtyard

level, in a new undercroft car park to the rear of Module 6, with ramp access from Holyrood Park Road. The remaining 4 spaces (including 1 of the accessible spaces) would be at ground floor level outside Module 6. All spaces would be fitted with EV charging points.

The proposed cycle parking provision for the office comprised a total of 170 spaces: 52 on semi-vertical racks, 44 on Sheffield stands, 27 non-standard spaces, 26 E-bike stands and 21 lockers for folding cycles. These would be located at courtyard level in Module 4, along with shower/changing facilities and a cycle repair station.

An additional 20 visitor cycle spaces would be provided for the office on 10 Sheffield stands at ground level, near Module 1 (accessed from Dalkeith Road) and outside Module 6.

Residential Development

A total of 117 car parking spaces were proposed, including 12 accessible bays and 9 motorcycle spaces. All spaces would be fitted with EV charging points.

The proposed residential cycle parking provision comprised a total of 469 bicycle spaces, including 324 on two-tier racks, 43 on Sheffield stands, and 102 non-standard spaces.

An additional 34 visitor cycle parking spaces would also be provided on 17 Sheffield stands, located externally near the entrances of each apartment block.

Most of this parking (except for the 2 accessible spaces outside Block B, and the visitor cycle racks) would be accommodated in a new two-level undercroft car park, accessed from Holyrood Park Road. Five separate cycle stores are proposed: four on the larger upper level and one on the level below.

Scheme 1

The original scheme proposed:

- a different curtain wall pattern and detailing for the office building;
- Blocks A, D and E one storey higher: seven storeys; six/five storeys and seven storeys respectively;
- Block B one storey lower (six storeys);
- 194 residential flats, including 68 affordable (35%)
- minor changes to the mix of housing in Blocks A-D;
- two fewer one-bedroom flats in Block E and
- 6 more car parking spaces and zero non-standard cycle parking spaces.

An associated application for listed building consent (reference 22/04768/LBC) had been submitted for the proposed demolitions and alterations of the listed structures on the site.

The proposed substantial demolition of the Joiners' Workshop was the subject of the associated application for conservation area consent (reference 22/04769/CON).

Supporting Information

- Pre-application Consultation Report;
- Heritage Statement;

- Planning Statement and Addendum;
- Design and Access Statement and Addendum;
- Townscape and Visual Appraisal and Addendum;
- Existing Building Performance Review Report (ARUP);
- Report on Suitability for Occupier Occupation;
- Economic Impact Assessment;
- Sustainability Form S1;
- Sustainability Statement;
- Surface Water Management Plan;
- Air Quality Impact Assessment;
- Ecological Assessment;
- Tree Survey;
- Landscape Planting Schedule;
- Landscape Maintenance Plan;
- Accommodation Schedule;
- Affordable Housing Statement and Addendum;
- Noise Impact Assessment;
- Daylight and Sunlight Availability Report and Addendum;
- Transport Statement;
- Swept path analysis and
- Waste Management information.

The application had been screened for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and no EIA was required.

(ii) Report by Chief Planning Officer - application no. 22/04768/LBC

The proposal was for the demolition of five out of the twelve modules of the existing office building and the undercroft car park. The remaining structure would be adapted, extended and upgraded to form office accommodation comprising 19,252 square metres in gross internal floor area, including an ancillary café, creche and cycle store.

Demolitions/External Alterations

The five modules to be demolished (Modules 8-12) constituted the north section of the existing office building.

The seven retained modules (Modules 1-7) on the building's south section would be extensively altered and upgraded.

Externally, the glazed curtain wall system would be removed and replaced. The new system would be constructed primarily with tinted, opaque glass panels with openable windows on the upper levels. The proposed framing would largely replicate the uniform mullion pattern of the existing and will be constructed in Polyester Powder Coated (PPC) aluminum with dark bronze toned mullions and transoms.

The lower section of the module used as the reception area (Module 1) would be extended slightly with the same detailing, except for clear, butt-jointed glazing replacing the existing aluminum framed, clear glazing. The supporting columns over the pond and bridge leading to the front entrance would be retained with the formation of a larger entrance platt.

The roof structure of the module at the building's west corner (Module 4) would be removed and an additional storey would be added in matching design and materials. Half the roof of Module 3 in the central area of the building would be removed to incorporate a large sky light.

The undercroft car park and energy centre/boiler house in the north-east section of the site would be demolished.

Sections of the existing stone boundary wall and railings would be removed to form new vehicular/pedestrian accesses from Holyrood Park Road and Parkside Terrace.

Internal Alterations

The proposed internal adaptations to the building were associated with the aims of improving the interior's legibility and the retention, restoration and enhancement of existing original features. These works included the following:

- the formation of a full-height, central circulation core in Module 3 with concrete connecting walkways, and a feature spiral hanging stair and internal, irrigated, green wall;
- the hanging stairs in Modules 3 and 9, including the Yorkstone clad walling in the stairwells, would be relocated to new small stair cores in Module 5, but with replacement handrails and barriers;
- the existing steel "Management" stair located in the reception area (within Module 1) would be relocated to a new café in Module 7, along with its original decorative features;
- the relocation of the original double doors, and any original panelling remaining within the Boardroom at third floor level in Module 3, to first floor level to decorate the back wall of the office floor in Module 1; and
- areas of original Yorkstone cladding in various locations will be relocated in Module 1 (along with the commemorative opening inscription within the former staff restaurant), at courtyard and lower ground level as wall surfaces within the proposed circulation spaces, in the new café and within the landscaping (including around the amphitheatre outside Module 7).

Elsewhere the internal alterations involve the erection of new partitions to form a cycle store and changing facilities at lower ground level within Module 4, and other limited partitioning associated with the formation of new café and other facilities within other multi-function areas.

Non-original ceilings and partitions will be removed across all floors.

Scheme 1

The original scheme proposed:

- a different curtain wall pattern and detailing for the office building and
- less salvage and re-use of original internal materials within the new office.

An associated application for planning permission had been submitted for the erection of a new residential development comprising 174 apartments in five separate blocks on the remainder of the site, including associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure (reference 22/04766/FUL).

The proposed substantial demolition of the Joiners' Workshop was the subject of the associated application for conservation area consent (reference 22/04769/CON).

Supporting Information

- Heritage Statement;
- Planning Statement and Addendum;
- Design and Access Statement and Addendum;
- Townscape and Visual Appraisal and Addendum;
- Existing Building Performance Review Report (ARUP);
- Report on Suitability for Occupier Occupation and
- Economic Impact Assessment

(iii) Report by Chief Planning Officer - application no. 22/04769/CON

The application was for the substantial demolition of the Joiners' Workshop, retaining the front gable wall (propped up by a steel structure to the rear) and reconstruction of a short section of the flanking wall and roof behind the crowstepped gable facing Holyrood Park Road.

The existing slates would be reused to cover the part reconstructed roof, and a new stone gable wall would be erected to support this reconstructed section of roof and flanking wall. The rear stone walls of the Workshop would also be retained or reinstated to boundary wall height as reasonably practicable, and the existing brick wall at the northern end would be reduced in height for stabilisation purposes.

Scheme 1

The original scheme proposed full demolition of the Workshop.

An associated application for planning permission had been submitted for the erection of a new residential development comprising 174 apartments in five separate blocks on the remainder of the site, including associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure (reference 22/04766/FUL).

A parallel application for listed building consent (reference 22/04768/LBC) had been submitted for the proposed demolitions and alterations of the listed structures on the site.

The presentation can be viewed in full via the link below:

[Development Management Sub-Committee - Wednesday 24 May 2023, 10:00am - City of Edinburgh Council Webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

(b) Southside Community Council

Mr Philip McDowell addressed the Development Management Sub-Committee on behalf of Southside Community Council. Mr McDowell indicated that the Community Council

was supportive of family housing and of the aim of the proposals, but there was concern about some aspects of this. Affordable housing was required and this was included in the proposals, but the proposals were not tenure neutral. There were concerns about the mass of the new residential blocks, which were excessively large, dark, oppressive and high, especially on the Northeast part of the site. There were further concerns about the impact on local facilities, such as health and education. Additionally, there was unease about the felling of mature Class B trees and although it was intended to plant new trees, the community would suffer from the loss of these mature trees in the meantime. It was also hoped if the trees were to be felled, that the timber would be put to good use. There were further concerns about the view along Holyrood Park Road as certain blocks, close to the road, would dominate the view. However, if some of the trees were retained, this would help to provide mitigation and make a big difference to the way the new development was perceived.

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East Parkside Residents

Dr James Gilmour addressed the Development Management Sub-Committee on behalf of East Parkside Residents. Dr Gilmour indicated that he had no comments to make about the office building, but was strongly opposed to the revised housing proposals. He referred to the northern part of Section 1, which showed the east side park buildings there, which comprised of a block of 4 storey flats, and the proposed new development to the south. There were concerns about the excessive height of the existing office building and that the new building would be 3 storeys higher than the line of the topmost flats in the East Parkside blocks. There was a great deal of structure in the foreground, but minimal visual impact because it was covered by greenery, but the proposals would change this. At its closest, the building would be only 28 meters from the East Parkside Blocks. Both the height and the dark facades of the new buildings would add to the adverse impact and this was out of character with the area. The North Wall of the Jointers Workshop was owned by the proprietors of the East Side Park Development. He supported the partial demolition of the existing office building as part of it had been subject to subsidence and could not be rendered safe. The developers proposed to retain the gable facing Holyrood Park Road, and both the wall in the nearer foreground and the wall beyond that would be reduced in height. When the gable was retained, there would be supporting structure inside it and the North Wall would be reduced. Although the retention of the gable wall would supposedly contribute to the conservation area, it would be completely overwhelmed by the buildings behind it. Members should also consider impact that the black facades would have on the area.

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Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage

Mr Matthew Benians addressed the Development Management Sub-Committee on behalf of Scotland's Garden and Landscape Heritage (SLGH). Mr Benians indicated that he would represent the views of Scotland Garden and Landscape Heritage. Explaining their role, he indicated that Dame Sylvia Crowe had been the leading force in the development of changing landscapes and the landscape profession of Britain. She was key to providing practical guidelines for designers involved in various aspects of landscape architecture and her aim was to create a simple landscape that could fade into the surrounding countryside. Details were provided of her extensive work in this regard. The entrance from Dalkeith Road was a confident expression of landscape design. SGLH had had undertaken a review of the planning documents and they supported the recommendations for a holistic, evidence-based approach and for the preparation of a conservation plan. If the members thought that the only way to retain this was to agree to its partial demolition and change to residential, that the Sylvia Crowe designed landscape, associated with the building, should be retained and conserved. They would encourage the heritage led approach to the conservation and refurbishment. However, the plant room compromised the lawn area and setting to the hexagonal units there and further consideration could be given how to this could be best incorporated . Early representation discussed the screening on the west boundary and there might be an opportunity to re-plant screening along the boundary.

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Docomomo Scotland

Mr Clive Fenton addressed the Development Management Sub-Committee on behalf of Docomomo Scotland. Mr Fenton explained the background to the organisation which was set up by conservation architects, to promote the study of materials and the design of modern movement architecture. The building was sound and was a very prestige building within a design landscape. In this project, especial consideration was given to the site and setting, including the views of Holyrood Park, responding to the views of relevant bodies, there was height restriction and concealment of the car park and plant and the arrangement of buildings behind boundary walls. The management of the volume of the building was similar to other Scottish Widows buildings and the mass of the building was not apparent. After deliberation by experts and a consultation, it was given A listed building status. However, the if proposals went ahead, only 20 % percent of the original building would remain and the building would be removed from this statutory list of category A listed buildings. This was not a heritage led scheme, it was an enabling development and might be considered to be overdevelopment. Referring to the 1997 Planning Act, the proposals would harm the listed building and the conservation area and both these applications should be rejected. The arguments on sustainability did not hold and other options could be put forward. This was not a rescue operation, but rather a case of large-scale demolition.

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(c) Ward Councillors Burgess and Pogson

Councillor Burgess thought that this was a significant proposal. The former Scottish Widows building was iconic, in a high-profile location and this proposal had stimulated considerable local interest. It was welcome that the developers were trying to make use of the A listed building, as was their ambition to achieve an A level of energy ratings. However, both the Southside Community Council and the Grange and Prestonfield Community Council objected to the proposals. Their concerns included affordable housing, the building materials, loss of trees, permeability and, principally, the height of the residential blocks. Although the developers had amended their original proposals to reduce the height of some of the residential blocks, this remained significantly higher than the neighbouring blocks on East Parkside. From the site visit, the members should consider the height of the residential development and the effect on the Southside Conservation Area and the direct impact on residential amenity. It had to be asked if the proposals complied with LDP Policies Des 4 and Des 11. This was a very challenging site and the developers should be congratulated on their positive motives, but the proposals should not adversely affect the locality or the City's character. The members should hopefully consider measures to mitigate any such impacts.

Councillor Pogson indicated that his ward included Oxford Street. 15 Dalkeith Road was a challenging site to develop, had lain empty for a number of years and previously, he was Chair of Southside Community Council, who had often discussed the possible use of this land. It was vast in scale and the architecture, and the view from Preston Street were truly iconic. The proposals were mainly positive regarding views, access from Dalkeith Road, and permeability. The most positive aspect was that it would be used for housing and affordable housing, however, he was concerned that there lack of agreement about the affordable housing element and of parking provision. The outstanding issue was the size of the accommodation blocks, however, amended plans had been submitted. This was a challenging site to develop, it had to make sense commercially and the developers had good intentions. The main concern was the massing of the accommodation blocks and the members should think specifically about that issue.

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(d) Applicants and Applicant's Agent

Steven Black (JLL), Nick Ball (Corran Properties), Guy Morgan (Morgan Architects), Pol MacDonald (Landscape Architect) from OPEN were heard in support of the application.

Nick Ball introduced himself and indicated that he was Director of Corran Properties, an Edinburgh-based development management consultancy. They had a strong track record in bringing challenging listed buildings in Edinburgh back into beneficial use.

Their client first approached them in 2019 in anticipation that this building would possibly fall vacant. That happened sooner than anticipated due to lockdown in March 2020.

It was fair to say that everyone appreciated the significant challenges that this building

presented. He imagined that was apparent to members during the site visit a couple of months ago.

The status quo was clearly not an option. A pragmatic balance between the undoubted heritage, interest of the building and the need to repurpose it for modern, sustainable use was required in order to secure a viable future for the building.

From the outset, they were keen to consult and engage as widely as possible, starting with Historic Environment Scotland who he first took to the building in 2019 and continued through local and heritage community engagement, recognising that access to the building was essential, they hosted an inordinate number of building tours for all parties. They held a large public exhibition inside the building and also online consultation events and they welcomed 200 people into the building last May for the exhibition.

It has taken nearly four years to get to this stage. From the outset, their goal was to create an exemplar project for the re-use of modernist heritage assets. A design team of the highest quality, renowned for bringing obsolete listed buildings back to life with sensitivity, was employed. This included Arup the original building engineers.

They had the benefit of full access to the Scottish Widows archive, which included all correspondence between the architect and client from the earliest stages of design in 1970, through to post completion and the problems that arose. Almost immediately with the functionality and performance of the building, they had not sought to use this large volume of information to denigrate the importance of the building, but to inform of the matters that required to be addressed. This included issues which dated back to 1976, as well as the challenges of meeting today's and tomorrow's standards of office design, sustainability and environmental performance. They had considered every possible option for the building and the wider site, every use, including student accommodation and hospitality through to more unusual uses, such as data centres and indoor farming. Every configuration associated with those uses was considered all the while, considering the potential impact on the listed building and its setting.

They had assessed everything against the most stringent current and future environmental and sustainability standards. These were the goal of net zero carbon operation, the retention of embodied carbon, indoor air quality, biodiversity, habitat improvement, accessibility and equalities. All for which the building currently fell far short.

Looking at some specifics, the statistics for this building were quite staggering. It was almost 300,000 square feet gross of office accommodation that was 200,000 square feet of usable office accommodation, on a site of six acres. It was designed for a single occupier, the ground-floor alone was close to 65,000 square feet, making it the largest single floor open-plan office space in Scotland. There were two enormous subterranean levels beneath the ground floor with little daylight and remarkably, the intermediate floor was deliberately designed to be non-habitable. To put that scale in some sort of commercial context, there had only ever been one letting of an office building in Edinburgh to a single occupier of more than 200,000 square feet and there has only ever been eight such lettings of more than 100,000 square feet.

The changes they proposed would give this building the flexibility to accommodate multiple tenants, creating a business hub that would benefit the South Side and the City. This was not insignificant, they were talking about businesses that could, on average, occupy 15,000 square feet each and probably employ more than 150 people each. Post renovation, this building would still be capable of accommodating 1,200 people.

The former Thomas Nelson Print Works covered the entire 6-acre site with virtually no green space. It was demolished and then the entire site was excavated to a two-storey depth, to create basement levels and a base for the 300-space multi-storey car park.

Contemporary records of staff liaison meetings, in the months after opening, exposed the problems that have existed from the outset. It would be simultaneously too hot and too cold, depending on which elevation was in sunlight. There was no glare control, it would be dark and oppressive away from the building edge and had poor air quality. Behind every façade, through 360 degrees, was asbestos. This had to be removed in any scenario.

The building had a current MPC rating of G, the worst of any building in the country. By that calculation, it currently emitted in operation, something in the order of 3 million kilograms of CO₂ per annum, most of which was due to its inefficiency, its lack of daylight penetration and its poorly performing facade and sheer scale. Their goal was to achieve an A rating and zero carbon emissions in operation.

They had also assessed the proposals against a host of other environmental sustainability and wellbeing accreditations, for which they have targeted the highest ratings. Embodied carbon had been considered from the outset, and they had undertaken a whole life carbon assessment for these proposals. 95% of waste material from this site was proposed to be re-used. Embodied carbon savings from this proposal compared to an equivalent new build, equated to the planting of 75,500 trees.

Setting aside environmental performance, they also needed to provide the amenities to attract occupiers to the building, amenities that the current building lacked. This included large spaces for secure bicycle storage, exceeding current standards for the quantity and range of storage, well-being for occupants, including indoor and outdoor spaces, for exercise, contemplation and different working environments, presentation and auditorium spaces, as well as services such as child and pet care.

However, this proposal did not solely concern the listed building. The site was six acres in a key city centre location, so it is important that it was utilised sensitively and appropriately, respecting the listed building and its landscape setting. Of course, they considered a range of uses for the remaining site as part of their feasibility analysis. They could have retained the existing car park and operated it as such, however, this would have fallen short of so many policy goals and environmental ambitions, such as the quiet route 30 and air quality targets. Other uses, such as student accommodation and hotel, might have given greater financial viability, but they listened to community feedback and recognised the disappointment this would have caused.

Housing was the right approach, they had to strike the right balance on design and density to respect the landscape setting of the listed building. The mixed-use

approach was entirely consistent with the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

The masterplan design respected the hexagonal, typology of the site. To build houses of regular form and traditional materials, such as stone or brick, would, they thought, be discordant with everything that was admirable in the current building. Whilst their initial proposals were carefully considered, with regard to their local impact, they recognised that there were changes which could be made, hence the revisions to the proposals submitted earlier this year.

He then made a few comments on affordable housing. From the outset, they set themselves the goal of achieving the Authority's emerging policy position of 35% on-site provision. Due to the reduction in heights shown in their revised proposals in response to consultation feedback, this had reduced fractionally to 33%. Working with affordable housing officers, they had designed and tested numerous layouts and configurations, covering mixes of tenure, types and unit sizes, social rent, mid-market rent, intermediate rent and varying proportions of each. Their approach throughout had been to provide a service landholding at nil cost.

That there was a funding gap was not a surprise. Funding gaps for affordable housing were commonplace, pre-2020, but they had seen an over 30% increase in construction costs just in the period, since they submitted the PAN for this application, whilst public subsidy had been frozen. However, the issue was particularly acute on this site, because they were designing in the landscape setting of an important A listed building. To be tenure blind meant a high build cost. Their designs for the affordable housing met high sustainability and environmental standards, as was required, including triple glazing, air source heat pumps, blue roofs and enhanced insulation standards.

They remained committed to delivering affordable housing on site, but they could not move the detailed design forward to find further economies, without having a planning consent in place. They welcomed the approach recommended by planning officers to cover this by legal agreement. They would hope the precite of this quality, the necessary financial support could be provided.

In conclusion, this was an enormously complex building that has taken a substantial amount of time and expertise to understand, even before work could begin on planning for its future. Finding a solution has been a lengthy and detailed process, where a huge array of balances had to be struck. It was not possible to please everyone, but they had been their own harshest critics throughout this process, always seeking the best solution to ensure they provided the next generation with buildings of the highest quality. They had assessed every possible option and could provide assurance that the proposals were the very best option for this property. There were no objections to this proposal from any statutory consultee.

If it was not thought that they were left with a decaying, polluting and energy inefficient, vacant, listed building, these proposals would retain and enhance this category A listed office building and enable its re-use. They would provide much needed new housing and affordable housing. It would be an exemplar project for the re-use of such buildings in a highly efficient way, reducing CO2 emissions by an enormous amount and enabling net zero carbon use of the building. It would substantially reduce traffic movements and

facilitate active travel, it would provide open space and permeability, all within a landscaped setting that thoroughly respected the original design. It would create a new, mixed-use 20-minute neighbourhood and it would create a substantial number of jobs, local employment opportunities and economic gain for the City.

They were happy to answer any questions and hoped that the members would support them in their ambitions to bring this wonderful building back into a purposeful net zero carbon use.

The presentation can be viewed in full via the link below:

[Development Management Sub-Committee - Wednesday 24 May 2023, 10:00am - City of Edinburgh Council Webcasts \(public-i.tv\)](#)

15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh - application no. 22/04766/FUL

Decision 1

To **GRANT** planning permission subject to:

- 1) The conditions, reasons, informatives and a legal agreement as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.
- 2) An additional condition that notwithstanding what is shown on the approved plans, details of cycle parking for the residential development to achieve greater accessibility, taking account of Council policy and the Cycle Parking Factsheet, to be submitted to and approved by the Council, as planning Authority.

Reason

To improve accessibility and use for cycling in line with Council policy on active travel and modal shift targets.

Note: To ensure that the application came back to Sub-Committee to ensure that the Section 75 was concluded in respect of affordable housing.

15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh - application no. 22/04768/LBC

Decision 2

To **GRANT** listed building consent subject to the conditions, reasons and informatives as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.

15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh - application no. 22/04769/CON

Decision 3

To **GRANT** conservation area consent subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.

(Reference – report by the Chief Planning Officer, submitted.)

3. 23 Water Street, Edinburgh

Details were provided of an application for change of use from warehouse to aparthotel including alteration and extension, landscaping and associated works at 23 Water Street, Edinburgh - application no. 22/06426/FUL.

The Chief Planning Officer gave details of the proposals and the planning considerations involved and recommended that the application be granted.

Decision 1

A vote was taken for or against on whether to continue the application for a hearing.

Voting

For Continuation - 4

Against Continuation - 7

(For Continuation: Councillors Booth, Cameron, McNeese-Mechan and O'Neill.)

(Against Continuation: Councillors Beal, Dalgleish, Gardiner, Hyslop, Jones, Mowat, Osler.)

Decision

To **REFUSE** the request for a hearing.

Decision 2

Motion

To **GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons, informatives and a legal agreement as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.

- moved by Councillor Osler, seconded by Councillor Gardiner.

Amendment

To **REFUSE** planning permission as the proposals were contrary to Local Development Plan Policy Hou 7, NPF4 Policy 30 (b)(ii) and sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

- moved by Councillor Booth, seconded by Councillor Cameron.

Voting

For the motion: - 6 votes

For the amendment: - 4 votes

(For the motion: Councillors Beal, Gardiner, Hyslop, Jones, Osler and O'Neill.)

For the amendment: Councillors Booth, Cameron, Dalgleish, and McNeese-Mechan.)

Decision

To **GRANT** planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons, informatives and a legal agreement as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.

(Reference – report by the Chief Planning Officer, submitted.)

Appendix

Agenda Item No. / Address	Details of Proposal/Reference No	Decision
<p>Note: Detailed conditions/reasons for the following decisions are contained in the statutory planning register.</p>		
<p>4.1 – 137 Drum Street, Hyvots Bank, Edinburgh</p>	<p>Change of use from hotel to supported & secured tenancy shared residential accommodation - application no. 22/04659/FUL</p>	<p>To GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons and informatives as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>
<p>4.2 – 2 Dundrennan Cottages, Edinburgh, EH16 5RG</p>	<p>Change of use from a domestic dwelling to a 7-bedroom house of multiple occupancy - application no. 22/04724/FUL</p>	<p>To GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons and informatives as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>
<p>4.3 – 57 - 59 (2F - 3F) High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR</p>	<p>Alterations and change of use of second and third floors, currently office space, of 5 storey listed building, to form 3 No. short term let apartments - application no. 22/05144/FULSTL</p>	<p>To GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>
<p>4.4 – 26 Westgarth Avenue (Colinton Lawn Tennis Club), Edinburgh</p>	<p>To install controlled LED lighting to 3 courts by installing 6 new steel columns with 7m mounting height and utilise two existing columns that are already in situ for adjacent three court lighting system. The lights will have minimal physical tilt +incorporated integrated louvres to reduce spill and glare - application no. 22/04508/FUL</p>	<p>To GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons, informatives as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>

Agenda Item No. / Address	Details of Proposal/Reference No	Decision
<p>6.1 - 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH - application no's 22/04766/FUL, 22/04768/LBC & 22/04769/CON</p>	<p>Protocol Note by the Service Director – Legal and Assurance</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>6.2 - 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH</p>	<p>Selective demolition, adaptation, extension and upgrading of Class 4 office building, demolition of car park and ancillary buildings and proposed development of residential accommodation with associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure (as amended)- application no. 22/04766/FUL</p>	<p>To GRANT planning permission subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The conditions, reasons, informatives and a legal agreement as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer. 2) An additional condition that notwithstanding what is shown on the approved plans, details of cycle parking for the residential development to achieve greater accessibility, taking account of Council policy and the Cycle Parking Factsheet, to be submitted to and approved by the Council, as planning Authority. <p>Reason</p> <p>To improve accessibility and use for cycling in line with Council policy on active travel and modal shift targets.</p> <p>Note: To ensure that the application came back to Sub-Committee to ensure that the Section 75 was concluded in respect of affordable housing.</p>

Agenda Item No. / Address	Details of Proposal/Reference No	Decision
<p>6.3 - 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH</p>	<p>Selective demolition, adaptation, extension and upgrading of Class 4 office building, demolition of car park and ancillary buildings and proposed development of residential accommodation with associated landscaping, parking and infrastructure- application no. 22/04768/LBC</p>	<p>To GRANT listed building consent subject to the conditions, reasons and informatives as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>
<p>6.4 - 15 Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh, EH16 5BH</p>	<p>Demolition of the Jointers' Workshop - application no. 22/04769/CON</p>	<p>To GRANT conservation area consent subject to the conditions and reasons as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer.</p>
<p>7.1 - 23 Water Street, Edinburgh, EH6 6SU</p>	<p>Change of use from warehouse to aparthotel including alteration and extension, landscaping and associated works - application no. 22/06426/FUL</p>	<p>1) To REFUSE the request for a hearing. (On a division.)</p> <p>2) To GRANT planning permission subject to the conditions, reasons, informatives and a legal agreement as set out in section C of the report by the Chief Planning Officer. (On a division.)</p>