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Mr Gattis.
4 Blackie House
Wardrop's Court
Edinburgh
EH1 2NY

Decision date: 24 April 2024

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

Use of flat for short term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect). This property is available for letting all year.
At 4 Blackie House Wardrop's Court Edinburgh EH1 2NY

Application No: 23/04543/FULSTL

DECISION NOTICE

With reference to your application for Planning Permission STL registered on 18 September 2023, this has been decided by **Local Delegated Decision**. The Council in exercise of its powers under the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts and regulations, now determines the application as **Refused** in accordance with the particulars given in the application.

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

Reason for Refusal:-

1. The proposal is contrary to Local Development Plan Policy Hou 7 in respect of Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas, as the use of this property as a short term let will have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions and amenity of nearby residents.

2. The proposal is contrary to National Planning Framework Policy 30(e) in respect of local amenity and loss of residential accommodation, as the use of this property as a short term let will result in an adverse impact on local amenity and the loss of a residential property that has not been justified.

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

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

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

The proposal complies with Sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will not harm the listed building or its setting and it will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to a short-term let (STL) will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the City as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity. The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

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

Should you have a specific enquiry regarding this decision please contact Benny Buckle directly at benny.buckle@edinburgh.gov.uk.



Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

NOTES

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

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

Report of Handling

Application for Planning Permission STL 4 Blackie House, Wardrop's Court, Edinburgh

Proposal: Use of flat for short term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect). This property is available for letting all year.

**Item – Local Delegated Decision
Application Number – 23/04543/FULSTL
Ward – B11 - City Centre**

Recommendation

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

Summary

The proposal complies with Sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will not harm the listed building or its setting and it will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to a short-term let (STL) will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the City as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity. The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

SECTION A – Application Background

Site Description

The application property is a fourth floor, three-bedroom flat, which forms part of a six-storey and attic, residential tenement, situated between North Bank Street and Wardrop's Court. The surrounding character of the application property is mixed use. There are commercial properties located on the northern elevation of Blackie House at street level, however, these properties are accessed via North Bank Street. On the southern elevation is Wardrop's Court a large pedestrian courtyard that is accessed via

North Bank Street and Lawnmarket. Access is gained via a shared main door access from Wardrop's Court into a communal stair and lift that is accessed by five further residential properties.

The property is a category 'A' listed building (51522) designated on the 14/12/1970 and is located within the Old Town Conservation Area and Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

Description Of The Proposal

The proposal is for a retrospective change of use from residential to STL use.

Supporting Information

- Site Photos
- Management Plan

Relevant Site History

No relevant site history.

Other Relevant Site History

No further relevant site history.

Consultation Engagement

Historic Environment Scotland

Publicity and Public Engagement

Date of Neighbour Notification: 24 April 2024

Date of Advertisement: 6 October 2023

Date of Site Notice: 6 October 2023

Number of Contributors: 2

Section B - Assessment

Determining Issues

Due to the proposals relating to a listed building(s) and being within a conservation area, this report will first consider the proposals in terms of Sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (the "1997 Heritage Act"):

- a) Is there a strong presumption against granting planning permission due to the proposals:
 - (i) harming the listed building or its setting? or
 - (ii) conflicting with the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area?

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

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

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

Do the proposals comply with the development plan?

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

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

In the assessment of material considerations this report will consider:

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

Assessment

The application is in retrospect. The applicant stated within the application form that the short term let use commenced in November 2021. This is prior to 5 September 2022, when the Edinburgh short term let control area came into effect. As the designation does not have a retrospective effect it is necessary to consider whether the use of the property as a commercial short stay let is a material change of use.

On the basis of the application form, the description of development, drawings and supporting information it is considered that the proposals constitute a material change of use under Section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

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

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

- Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Interim Guidance on the principles of listed building consent.
- Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Interim Guidance on the principles of listed building consent sets out the principles for assessing the impact of a development on a listed building.

Managing Change in the Historic Environment: Setting sets out the principles that apply to developments affecting the setting of historic assets or places including listed

buildings and conservation areas. It includes factors to be considered in assessing the impact of a change on the setting.

There are no external or internal alterations proposed. As such, the proposal will not have an adverse impact on or cause harm to the listed building. The setting of the listed building and the setting of neighbouring listed buildings will be unaffected by the proposal.

Conclusion in relation to the listed building

The proposal does not harm either the listed building or its setting. It is therefore acceptable with regard to Sections 59 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

b) The proposals harm the character or appearance of the 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."

The Old Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal states *"emphasises the survival of the original medieval street pattern; the wealth of important landmark buildings; the survival of an outstanding collection of archaeological remains, medieval buildings, and 17th-century town houses; the consistent and harmonious height and mass of buildings; the importance of stone as a construction material for both buildings and the public realm; the vitality and variety of different uses; and the continuing presence of a residential community."*

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

c) The proposals comply with the development plan?

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

The relevant NPF4 and LDP 2016 policies to be considered are:

- NPF4 Sustainable Places Tackling the climate and nature crises Policy 1.
- NPF4 Productive Places Tourism Policy 30.
- NPF4 Historic Assets and Places Policy 7.
- Local Development Plan Housing Policy, Hou 7.
- Local Development Plan Transport Policies, Tra 2 and Tra 3

The non-statutory Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance is a material consideration when considering NPF 4 Policy 7.

The non-statutory Guidance for Business (2024) is a material consideration that is relevant when considering LDP Policy Hou 7 and NPF4 policy 30.

The Edinburgh Design Guidance is a material consideration when considering LDP Policies Tra 2 and Tra 3.

Listed Buildings, Conservation Area and World Heritage Site

There are no external or internal works proposed and as such there will not be a significant impact on historic assets and places. Historic Environment Scotland (HES) were consulted due to the properties category 'A' listing. HES gave no comment to the proposal. The proposal complies with NPF 4 Policy 7.

Proposed Use

With regards to NPF 4 Policy 1, the proposed change of use does not involve operational development resulting in physical changes to the property. The proposals will have a negligible impact on the global climate and nature crisis.

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

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

The non-statutory Guidance for Businesses (2024) states that an assessment of a change of use of dwellings to a short term let will have regard to:

- The character of the new use and of the wider area;
- The size of the property;
- The pattern of activity associated with the use including numbers of occupants, the period of use, issues of noise, disturbance and parking demand and
- The nature and character of any services provided.

Amenity

Despite the property being located within a busy mixed-use area, it is accessed via a shared communal front door, shared residential stair and lift. The use of the property as a STL would allow visitors to come and go from the premises for inconsistent periods of time on a regular basis throughout the year in a manner dissimilar to that of a permanent resident. A transient visitor may also have less regard for neighbours' amenity than individuals using the property as a principal home.

Additional servicing is required for a STL which would likely result in an increase in disturbance, further impacting on neighbouring amenity. However, this would be of lesser impact as it is likely that servicing would be conducted during the daytime.

A supporting statement provided information pertaining to the management of the proposed STL. As the ongoing management of a STL is unenforceable by the planning authority, little consideration may be given to management regime of the STL.

Despite the location being in a busy mixed-use environment, the proposed STL use would be significantly different from the ambient background noise that neighbouring residents within the communal stair might reasonably expect, and consequently will have a significantly detrimental effect on their living conditions and amenity. The proposal does not comply with NPF 4 policy 30(e) part (i) and LDP policy Hou 7.

Loss of residential accommodation

NPF 4 policy 30 (e) part (ii) requires that where there is a loss of residential accommodation, this will only be supported where the loss is outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits.

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

The current lawful use of the property is for residential accommodation. Consequently, the use of the property as an STL would result in the loss of this residential accommodation, which given the recognised need and demand for housing in Edinburgh it is important to retain, where appropriate.

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

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

Transport

Permit and paid parking are available on an adjacent street at St Giles Street. This is acceptable as there are no parking requirements for STLs. The proposed change of use will not result in a significant impact to traffic congestion in the local area.

The proposals comply with LDP Policies Tra 2 and Tra 3.

Conclusion in relation to the Development Plan

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

does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7.

d) There are any other material considerations which must be addressed?

The following material planning considerations have been identified:

Emerging policy context

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

Independent economic impact assessment

An independent economic impact assessment was commissioned by the Planning Service, and this resulted in a report on the Economic Impact of Residential and Short-Term Let Properties in Edinburgh (the Economic Report). This was reported to Planning Committee on 14 June 2023. The Committee noted that the findings of the report are one source of information that can be considered when assessing the economic impacts of short-term let planning applications and that given the report is considering generalities rather than the specifics of an individual case, it is likely that only limited weight can be attached to it as a material consideration when making planning application decisions. The study considered the economic impact of various types of properties in Edinburgh if used as a residential property as opposed to being used for short-term holiday lettings.

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

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

The application received two public objections. A summary is provided below:

material considerations in objection

- The proposed change of use would have a negative impact to neighbouring amenity. Assessed in section c).
- The proposed change of use would have a negative effect to the listed buildings, conservation area and world heritage site. Assessed in section a), b) and c).

Conclusion in relation to identified material considerations

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

Overall conclusion

The proposal complies with Sections 59 and 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 as it will not harm the listed building or its setting and it will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

The change of use of this property to a STL will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity. The loss of the residential accommodation has not been justified. Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the city as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity or loss of residential accommodation. The proposal does not comply with the Development Plan policy NPF 4 policy 30(e) and LDP policy Hou 7. There are no material considerations that outweigh this conclusion.

Section C - Conditions/Reasons/Informatives

The recommendation is subject to the following;

Reason for Refusal

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

Background Reading/External References

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

Further Information - [Local Development Plan](#)

Date Registered: 18 September 2023

Drawing Numbers/Scheme

01 - 02

Scheme 1

David Givan
Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Benny Buckle, Assistant Planning Officer
E-mail: benny.buckle@edinburgh.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Consultations

NAME: Historic Environment Scotland

COMMENT: No comment.

DATE: 25 October 2023

The full consultation response can be viewed on the Planning & Building Standards Portal.

Appendix 2

Application Certification Record

Case Officer

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

Case Officer: Benny Buckle

Date: 29 February 2024

Authorising Officer

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

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

Authorising Officer (mRTPI): Elizabeth McCarroll

Date: 24 April 2024

Comments for Planning Application 23/04543/FULSTL

Application Summary

Application Number: 23/04543/FULSTL

Address: 4 Blackie House Wardrop's Court Edinburgh EH1 2NY

Proposal: Use of flat for short term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect). This property is available for letting all year.

Case Officer: Benny Buckle

Customer Details

Name: Dr The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland

Address: 15 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2BE

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Amenity Body

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The AHSS Forth & Borders Cases Panel has examined the proposals for the change of use to short-term let in a late 17th-century (with later alterations) A-listed tenement, which lies within the Old Town Conservation Area and World Heritage Site, and objects.

- 1) The proposals only relate to one property within the tenement, which is accessed from a shared stair. This would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, and limits the future of the flats not included within the application.
- 2) The change of use would contribute to the unsustainable growth of the short term let (STL) sector in Edinburgh. The economic benefits of tourism for Edinburgh are clear, and we celebrate the role that our architectural heritage plays in this sector. However, the current rising rate of STLs threatens the sense of place and community which are part of the city's attraction, and this is especially acute in the World Heritage Site.
- 3) Scottish Government Research has highlighted the links between STLs and the negative impacts of reduced availability of affordable housing, congestion and reduced quality of life through noise and disturbance (People, Communities and Places, October 2019, pp. iv-v)
- 4) With particular reference to architectural heritage the responsibility for the care and maintenance of communal areas and aspects of joint responsibility in listed buildings and conservation areas is diminished by the increase of short-term occupants. The change of use does not respect the special characteristics of history and place reflected in the building's designation and location in the World Heritage Site and would increase the negative impacts caused by the growth of STLs in Edinburgh.

The proposals contradict Edinburgh Council's Local Development Plan policies DES1, DES5, ENV4, and HOU7. It also conflicts with NPF4 30(e) part (ii), as it would result in the loss of

residential accommodation. We therefore object to the application.

Comments for Planning Application 23/04543/FULSTL

Application Summary

Application Number: 23/04543/FULSTL

Address: 4 Blackie House Wardrop's Court Edinburgh EH1 2NY

Proposal: Use of flat for short term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect). This property is available for letting all year.

Case Officer: Improvement Team

Customer Details

Name: Mr Tom Welsh

Address: 3 Blackie House Wardrop's Court Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour-Residential

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Flat 4 has been operating as an unlicensed short time let for some time now, resulting in nuisance and inconvenience to myself and other neighbours. ie strangers trying to enter the building without a key, noise in the stairwell and from flat 4. The tenancy are generally only for a few days and the amount of coming and goings is most disturbing.

There are other available buildings close by that are specifically designed to cater for tourists and other short term visitors including the recently opened Virgin Hotel, just around the corner.

If the application is granted then it will be the only short term let in the building.

The owner of flat is resident West Coast USA and is not on hand to deal with these issues.

I strongly object to the use of Flat 4 for short term lets.



By email to:
benny.buckle@edinburgh.gov.uk

City of Edinburgh Council
Planning and Strategy
4 Waverley Court
East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Longmore House
Salisbury Place
Edinburgh
EH9 1SH

Enquiry Line: 0131-668-8716
HMConsultations@hes.scot

Our case ID: 300068799
Your ref: 23/04543/FULSTL
25 October 2023

Dear City of Edinburgh Council

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013
4 Blackie House Wardrop's Court Edinburgh EH1 2NY - Use of flat for short term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect). This property is available for letting all year.

Thank you for your consultation which we received on 12 October 2023. We have assessed it for our historic environment interests and consider that the proposals affect the following:

Ref	Name	Designation Type
LB51522	2-6 (INCLUSIVE NOS) NORTH BANK STREET AND WARDROP'S COURT, BLACKIE HOUSE	Listed Building

You should also seek advice from your archaeology and conservation service for matters including unscheduled archaeology and category B and C-listed buildings.

Our Advice

We have considered the information received and do not have any comments to make on the proposals. Our decision not to provide comments should not be taken as our support for the proposals. This application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy on development affecting the historic environment, together with related policy guidance.

Further Information



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA

This response applies to the application currently proposed. An amended scheme may require another consultation with us.

Guidance about national policy can be found in our 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' series available online at www.historicenvironment.scot/advice-and-support/planning-and-guidance/legislation-and-guidance/managing-change-in-the-historic-environment-guidance-notes/. Technical advice is available through our Technical Conservation website at www.engineshed.org.

Yours faithfully

Historic Environment Scotland

Historic Environment Scotland – Longmore House, Salisbury Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1SH

Scottish Charity No. **SC045925**

VAT No. **GB 221 8680 15**