

Houghton Planning Ltd.
FAO: Paul Houghton MRTPI
Alloa Business Centre
Whins Road
Alloa
Clacks
FK10 3RF

Ms Naoko Takagi Berry.
7 East Castle Road
Edinburgh
Scotland
EH10 5AP

Decision date: 26 August 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).
At 313 Webster's Land Edinburgh EH1 2RU

Application No: 24/03587/FULSTL

DECISION NOTICE

With reference to your application for Planning Permission STL registered on 29 July 2024, 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 4 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 unacceptable impact on local amenity and the loss of a residential property 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 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 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. The proposal is unacceptable.

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 Lesley Porteous directly at lesley.porteous@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
313 Webster's Land, Edinburgh, EH1 2RU**

**Proposal: Use of flat for short-term let use (Sui Generis) and
residential flat (in retrospect).**

**Item – Local Delegated Decision
Application Number – 24/03587/FULSTL
Ward – B11 - City Centre**

Recommendation

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

Summary

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 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. The proposal is unacceptable.

SECTION A – Application Background

Site Description

The application site is a one bedroom flat at 313 Webster's Land in the West Port. The property shares its access to West Port via a communal stair and a secure gated access.

Webster's Land is a large residential development comprising around 116 individual flats. It is in a mixed use area just off the Grassmarket. The Grassmarket has a high concentration of cafes, restaurants and bars. Public transport links are easily accessible from the site.

The site lies within the Old Town Conservation Area and the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

Description Of The Proposal

The application is for a change of use of the flat to short term let (sui-generis) and residential flat. The application gives no indication how many weeks or months the property would be in use as a short term let but a change of use is being applied for. No internal or external physical changes are proposed. The applicant has advised that the property has been used as a short term let since January 2022. Therefore, the application is retrospective.

Relevant Site History

23/03626/FULSTL

313 Webster's Land

Edinburgh

EH1 2RU

Use of flat for short-term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect).
Refused

19 January 2024

Other Relevant Site History

23/03626/FULSTL

313 Webster's Land

Edinburgh

EH1 2RU

Use of flat for short-term let use (Sui Generis) and residential flat (in retrospect).

Local Review Body uphold the decision to refuse planning permission.

26 June 2024

Consultation Engagement

No consultations.

Publicity and Public Engagement

Date of Neighbour Notification: 30 July 2024

Date of Advertisement: 2 August 2024

Date of Site Notice: 2 August 2024

Number of Contributors: 0

Section B - Assessment

Determining Issues

Due to the proposed development falling within a conservation area, this report will first consider the proposals in terms of Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997:

- Is there a strong presumption against granting planning permission due to the development conflicting with the objective of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area?
- 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 application form states that the operation of the property as a short term let commenced January 2022. This is prior to 5 September 2022, when the Edinburgh STL 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 an STL is a material change of use.

Granting planning permission would change the use from a residential dwelling to STL. The use of the property as an STL, as a result of the granting of planning permission, would constitute a material change in the use of the property under section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997, given the associated characteristics of STL use in this location and property type.

a) 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 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.

Conclusion in relation to the conservation area

The proposals are acceptable with regard to Section 64 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997.

b) 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 policies to be considered are:

- NPF4 Sustainable Places Policy 1.
- NPF4 Heritage Assets and Places Policy 7.
- NPF4 Productive Places Tourism Policy 30.
- LDP Housing Policy Hou 7.
- LDP Transport Policies Tra 2 and Tra 3.

The non-statutory 'Listed Buildings and Conservation Area' guidance is a material consideration that is relevant when considering historic assets.

The non-statutory 'Guidance for Businesses' (2024) is a material consideration that is relevant when considering change of use applications.

Conservation Area and Edinburgh 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. The proposal complies with NPF 4 Policy 7.

Proposed Use

With regards to NPF 4 Policy 1, the proposals do not involve operational development. 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 relates to STL proposals.

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

Amenity

This one-bedroom property is part of a five-storey residential block of 116 units. The entrance door of the flat is connected to the shared entrance gate by a series of external walkways that are linked by internal stairways. These are communal.

There is a mix of uses in the surrounding area and as such there is a fairly high ambient noise level. Consequently, the introduction of an STL use in this location will have no further deterioration in the amenity of the surrounding area. However, the use of the property as an STL would introduce an increased frequency of movement to the property. The proposed one bedroom STL use would enable visitors to arrive and stay at the premises for a short period of time on a regular basis throughout the year in a manner dissimilar to that of permanent residents. There is no guarantee that guests would not come and go frequently throughout the day and night, and transient visitors may have less regard for neighbours' amenity than individuals using the property as a principal home. It is noted however, that the size of the property having one bedroom will, to an extent, mitigate the amenity impacts of the proposed use.

The additional servicing that operating a property as an STL requires compared to that of a residential use is also likely to 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.

The potential for noise to be generated as described would be significantly different from the ambient background noise that neighbouring residents might reasonably expect and will have a significantly detrimental effect on the living conditions and amenity of nearby residents. 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 a loss of residential accommodation,

which given the recognised need and demand for housing in Edinburgh is important to retain, where appropriate.

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).

Car Parking

There is no off street car parking available within the site. The site is accessible to public transport. There are no cycle parking standards for STLs. Bikes could be parked within the property if required. 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 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.

c) 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. On 27 June 2024 the Council accepted the recommendations and modifications required to the Proposed City Plan 2030. The Proposed City Plan 2030 has now been submitted to Scottish Ministers for their final consideration. 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 adoption of the plan.

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.

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.

Public representations

No representations have been received.

Conclusion in relation to identified material considerations

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 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 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. The proposal is unacceptable.

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 4 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 unacceptable impact on local amenity and the loss of a residential property 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: 29 July 2024

Drawing Numbers/Scheme

01, 02

Scheme 1

David Givan
Chief Planning Officer
PLACE
The City of Edinburgh Council

Contact: Lesley Porteous, Planning Officer
E-mail: lesley.porteous@edinburgh.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Consultations

No consultations undertaken.

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: Lesley Porteous

Date: 26 August 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): Damian McAfee

Date: 26 August 2024