

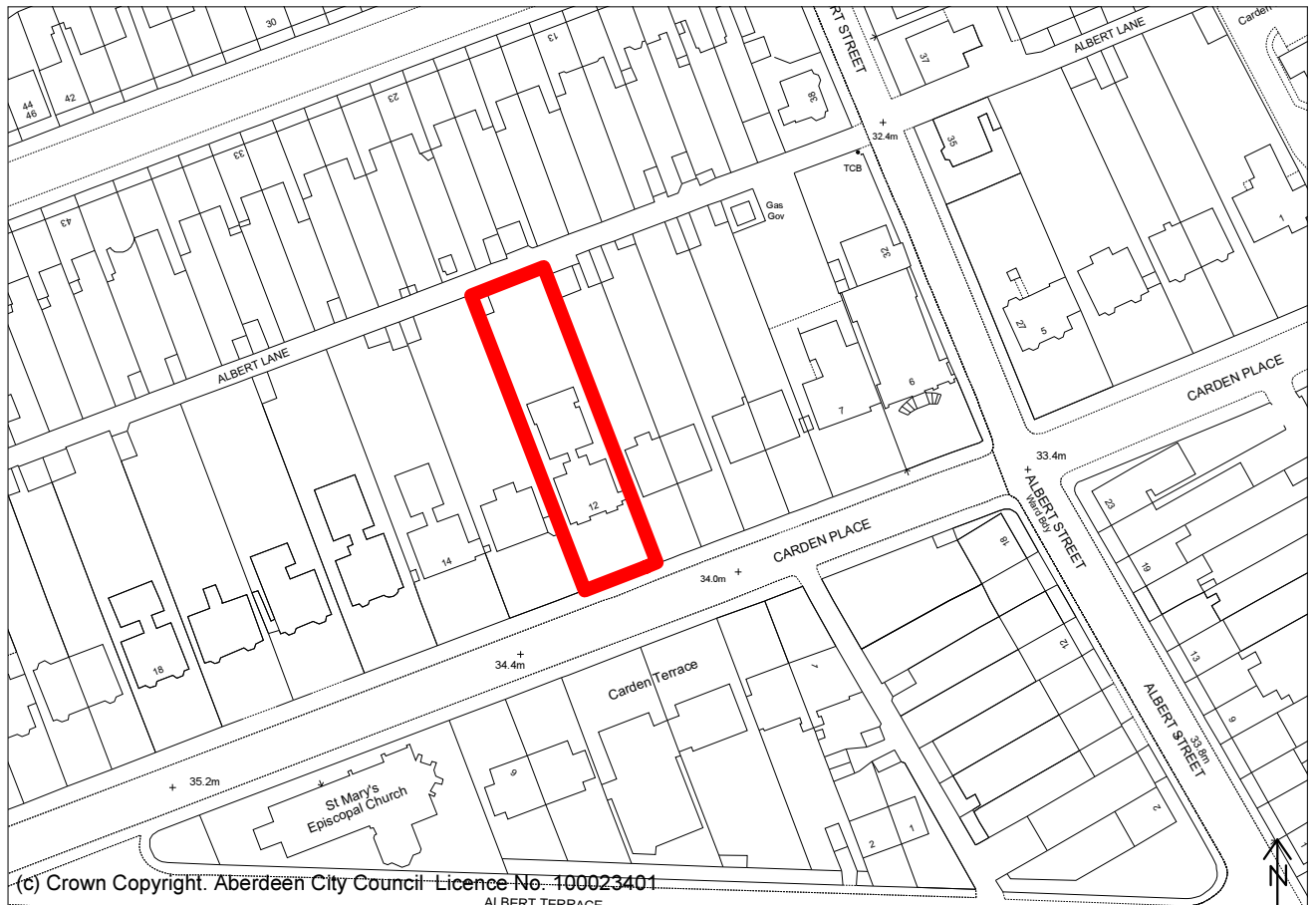
# 12 CARDEN PLACE, ABERDEEN

FORM ADDITIONAL FLOOR OF OFFICES  
TO REAR EXTENSION, RE-CLADDING OF  
EXISTING EXTENSION AND  
INSTALLATION OF RAILINGS AT FRONT  
BOUNDARY

For: James Hay Pension Trustees Ltd

Application Ref. : P111480  
Application Date : 03/10/2011  
Officer : Matthew Easton  
Ward: Hazlehead/Ashley/Queen's Cross(J  
Farquharson/M Greig/J Stewart/J West)

Advert :  
Advertised on :  
Committee Date : 16 February 2012  
Community Council : Comments



**RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions**

## **DESCRIPTION**

The application site is a Victorian mid 19<sup>th</sup> century two storey and basement detached villa, situated on the north side of Carden Place.

The original part of the building is constructed in course rough faced granite, with a 3-bay symmetrical appearance to the Carden Place elevation. To the rear is a two storey extension which was constructed in two phases during the 1970's and 1980's.

The building has an overall gross floor space of 760m<sup>2</sup> and is currently occupied by a firm of accountants (Meston Reid and Co.).

The building is category C(S) listed (December 2000) and is within Conservation Area 4 (Albyn Place / Rubislaw).

The trees at the front of the property are included within Tree Preservation Order 15 and the trees at the rear of the site are protected by virtue of being within a conservation area.

There are 10 parking spaces at the front of the property accessed from Carden Place and 18 spaces to the rear of the property which are accessed from Albert Lane. The site is within Parking Zone L, which requires drivers to purchase a parking ticket or be in possession of parking permit in order to park between 0800 and 1800, Monday to Saturday. There are also parking restrictions on Albert Lane and Carden Place.

To the east and west of the site are mid 19<sup>th</sup> century 1½ storey buildings. No. 13 is an office premises with a modern extension to the rear and No. 11 is in residential use.

## **HISTORY**

Permission (111662) was granted for tree works at the site in November 2011.

## **PROPOSAL**

Planning permission is sought for the creation of an additional floor above the existing two storey extension at the rear of the property. The mansard style roof of the extension would be removed and a steel framework would be constructed around the existing walls in order to support the additional floor which would sit above the existing floors.

The extension would have a contemporary appearance, with the first floor being 15.5m in length and 12m in wide. The second floor would be set back 0.5m from the first floor on the north, east and west elevations and be 14.9m in length and 11m wide. The extension would have a flat roof and be between 9m and 9.5m in height depending on which side of the structure measurements are taken.

The first floor would be re-clad using muted green and grey cladding panels with grey framed aluminium windows on all elevations. The second floor would be largely glazed with aluminium grey frames and glazing with a slightly green tint. The aluminium corner panels and a brise soleil shading louvres would be a lighter grey. The existing grey blockwork on the ground floor of the extension would be retained.

Overall an additional 187m<sup>2</sup> of floor space would be created, 140m<sup>2</sup> on the new second floor and 32.6m<sup>2</sup> on the existing first floor. The remainder would be for the link between the second floor and a new disabled toilet on the lower ground floor.

At the front of the property on Carden Place cast iron railings would be installed on the low granite boundary wall, either side of the car park entrance. The railings would be painted black and have the same appearance as those found a short distance away at 14 Carden Place.

A separate listed building consent application (111481) has also been submitted.

## **REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE**

The application has been referred to the Sub-Committee because Queen's Cross & Harlaw Community Council have objected to the application.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**ROADS SECTION** – No objection to the application, a maximum of 1 space per 30m<sup>2</sup> should be provided for office development. No additional parking has been provided however the proposed development would not have a significant effect on parking in the area. The site has good access to public transportation and located within a controlled parking zone which would prevent indiscriminate parking on nearby streets.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH** – No observations.

**COMMUNITY COUNCIL** – Supports resident's objections to the application. In summary the Community Council consider the glazed upper storey and cladding panels for the middle storey would not sit comfortably with the traditional architecture of the area, the ground floor would be visible from outside the site, the design features incorporated into the extension in order to reduce its visual impact do not work, the extension would affect the amenity and privacy of the occupants at 11 Carden Place and the proposal does not complement or preserve the character of the listed building.

## REPRESENTATIONS

Sixteen representations from fourteen addresses have been received from residents in the surrounding area, the majority of which live on Osborne Place. In summary the following matters are raised –

- The proposal represents overdevelopment of the site, and is inappropriate in its context, scale and its proposed materials which would affect the conservation area.
- The proposed extension would obscure the north elevation, affecting the appearance of the listed building.
- The proposal would affect house prices on Osborne Place.
- The proposal would impact upon the privacy of residents on Osborne Place.
- There would be road and pedestrian safety implications due to an increase in traffic in Albert Lane which has no pavement.
- No additional parking has been provided which would lead to parking problems in the surrounding area.
- Neighbour notification was not received.
- There would be increased noise pollution through and increase in traffic.
- There would be increased damage to property on Albert Lane by vehicle trying to pass.
- The proposal would set a precedent for similar proposals.
- There would be an increase in light pollution.

## PLANNING POLICY

### ***Aberdeen Local Plan (2008)***

Policy 1 (Design) – To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed in due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as scale, massing, colour, materials, details the proportions of building elements and landscaping will be considered in assessing this.

Policy 70 (West End Office Policy Area) – In this area applications for change of use for office purposes will be given favourable consideration. Where there is scope to provide access to businesses/properties from rear lanes this will only be considered acceptable, if satisfactory traffic management measures are in place along the rear lane.

## ***The Aberdeen Local Development Plan***

Proposed Plan was published for consultation on 24th September 2010, with comments on the plan invited until 17th January 2011. The examination of the local development plan by the Scottish Government Reporters took place between 20th June and 21 December 2011. The Reporters Examination Report was considered by the Council on 25th January 2012 when it was resolved to proceed towards adoption of the local development plan on 29th February 2012. Accordingly, the Proposed Plan is a significant material consideration in the assessment and determination of this planning application.

Policy T2 (Managing the Transport Impact of Development) – New developments will need to demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to minimise traffic generated. Maximum car parking standards are set out in Supplementary Guidance on Transport and Accessibility and detail the standard that different types of development should provide.

Policy D1 (Architecture and Place Making) – Re-iterates Policy 1 of the Aberdeen Local Plan (2008).

Policy D5 (Built Heritage) – Proposals affecting conservation areas or listed buildings will only be permitted if they comply with Scottish Planning Policy (SPP).

Policy BI3 (West End Office Area) – Re-iterates Policy 70 of the Aberdeen Local Plan (2008).

### ***National Policy***

#### Scottish Planning Policy (2008) / Scottish Historic Environment Policy (2011)

Listed Buildings – Planning authorities are required when determining applications for planning permission or listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Change to a listed building should be managed to protect its special interest while enabling it to remain in active use. The layout, design, material, scale, siting and use of any development which would affect a listed building or its setting should be appropriate to the character and appearance of the building and setting.

Conservation Areas – A proposed development that would have neutral effect on the character or appearance of a conservation area (i.e does not harm) should be treated as one which preserve that character or appearance. The design, materials, scale and siting of new development within a conservation area, and development outwith the conservation area that will impact upon its appearance, character or setting, should be appropriate to the character and setting of the conservation area. Planning permission should normally be refused for development, including demolition, within a conservation area that fails to preserve or enhance that character or appearance of the area.

## Managing Change In The Historic Environment Series (Historic Scotland, 2010)

Extensions – Most historic buildings can be extended sensitively. Extensions must protect the character and appearance of the building, should be subordinate in scale and form, should be located on a secondary elevation, must be designed in a high-quality manner using appropriate materials.

### **EVALUATION**

The site is located within the west end office area where offices and business uses are generally supported. Although not explicitly mentioned in the policy, it can reasonably be concluded that extension to existing offices uses would also be acceptable. Therefore the matters to be assessed are the size, scale and design of the extension and any impact it may have on the surrounding area.

#### **Impact in Relation to the Listed Building and Conservation Area**

The rear of properties on Carden Place which face onto Albert Lane, between Albert Street and Prince Arthur Street are characterised by extensive areas of car parking and extensions which are generally unremarkable. The stretch between Prince Arthur Street and Blenheim Place does however have larger more contemporary extensions to the rear, which introduce modern materials such as composite cladding and timber panels to the area.

The principal elevations of buildings facing onto Carden Place are often intricately detailed, remain largely unaltered and contribute significantly to the streetscape and the character of the conservation area. In contrast the rear elevations are relatively simple and lack the architectural detailing which the front elevations possess, allowing interventions to these elevations to take place without a significant impact upon the character of the building or its special features.

In this instance the architect has chosen to design the extension as an assertive contrast to the existing building. The extension makes a bold contemporary statement, but at the same time respects the status of the original building. It would be set back from the main façade at the rear of the building by 3.5m, creating a visible separation between the old and the new. It should also be noted that the rear elevation is already largely obscured by the existing extension. The new extension would be around 3m higher than the existing and when finished be 3.5m lower than the top of the original building (excluding chimney stack). This would allow the original building to remain as the main built feature on the site.

Historic Scotland's guidance note on extensions describes how it is often preferable to take a modern approach to design when intervening in historic buildings, rather than attempt an unconvincing imitation of a traditional building style. In this instance it is considered that the proposal would preserve the character and integrity of the listed building and improve its setting by removing an extension with little architectural merit and replacing it with a more interesting example of contemporary architecture.

In relation to the conservation area, there is a mix of extensions along Albert Lane, with a substantially less formal appearance than Carden Place. Modern extensions completed in the last five years can be found between Prince Arthur Street and Blenheim Place, however in the stretch in question, most extensions are relatively modest and nondescript,

The proposed extension in terms of its footprint would be no larger than the existing extension and would project from the rear of the property largely in line with those already present along this side of Albert Lane. Owing to the drop in level between the front of properties on Carden Place and their rear, it is possible to create a substantial extension which is lower in height than the original building, ensuring that the structure reads as an extension to the building. In these respects it is considered that the proposal would respect the dominant built form along Albert Lane.

Whilst the massing of the extension does give it a more bulky appearance than the existing extension, this has been broken up into distinct parts by the different finishing treatment for each of the floors. The second floor would also be set back slightly, in an attempt to reduce its mass. Whilst it is arguable whether this feature would achieve its aim, it is considered that it would not result in an unsatisfactory appearance. The extension would largely be viewed from a distance, most prominently from Albert Street when looking west at a distance of approximately 80m away. Whilst travelling along Albert Lane from the east, when glimpses are available between boundary walls and out-buildings, the extension would appear against the backdrop of Carden Church which dominates the surrounding area. Furthermore, the area between the back of Carden Place and the properties on Albert Place is approximately 80m wide, which allows an extension of this size to sit comfortably in the space without having undue prominence in the townscape.

On balance, when the surrounding context is taken into account it is considered that a contemporary extension which clearly distinguishes itself from the historical buildings beside it can be accommodated on the site whilst preserving the character and visual amenity of the conservation area. This would accord with Scottish Planning Policy and local plan policy on design.

The applicant also proposes to reinstate cast iron railing along the Carden Place boundary which is welcomed. The specific design of the railings would match the railings at 14 Carden Place. This addition would enhance the character of the conservation area.

### **Neighbourhood Amenity**

The overwhelming majority of objections are from residents on Osborne Place, whose rear gardens back onto Albert Lane, with issues such as privacy, noise and light pollution being raised.

This distance between the closest part of the proposed extension and the rear of the buildings on Osborne Place is generally around 62m. The distance to the rear boundary walls of their gardens would be 32m. Although there are no specific regulations with regards to window to window distance, the planning authority

generally take between 18-20m as being an acceptable distance between windows. Therefore in terms of privacy it is considered that there would be no adverse impact upon privacy for residents on Osborne Place. Furthermore the properties which are directly on front of the application site would both have garages facing onto Albert Lane, with trees beyond, which obscure views into these gardens, which in any case would be insignificant. It should also be noted that although higher, the extension would be coming no further closer to the lane than the previous extension.

The neighbouring property at 11 Carden Place is in residential use and at present the garden of this property is overlooked by several windows within the extension. The architect has made efforts to reduce the number of windows on the east elevation in order to minimise any overlooking and several of the windows on the top floor will be fitted with obscure glazing. The extension would be 3m back from the boundary wall and given the context this is considered to be an acceptable distance in terms of daylight. No objection has been received from the occupier of this property.

Similarly, there would be no impact on properties due to lights within the building due to distances involved and the nature of light coming from within a building being diffuse rather than being projected directly into neighbouring properties.

In terms of noise pollution, there is no indication that any further noise would be generated by the presence of the extension, either from the building itself or from traffic associated with the development (see below).

### **Parking / Traffic**

The City Council's parking standards require 25 spaces to be provided for the overall site once the proposal is completed; 1 space per 30m<sup>2</sup>. The site already accommodates 28 parking spaces and therefore the standard has been exceeded and should provide sufficient parking for the development. However, there is evidence of double parking taking place within the rear car park of the site, which indicates that at times parking demand and the premises may exceed the number of allocated spaces at the site.

The site is within a controlled parking zone and there are parking restrictions in force on Albert Lane (Mon – Fri, 0800-1800) and Carden Place (Mon – Sat, 0800-1800) which discourages indiscriminate parking should the car parks be full. Any contravention of these regulations would be for the City Wardens to enforce.

Although the comments from the Roads Service indicate that the applicant should provide five parking spaces for the additional floor space, these five spaces already exist as described above and no further spaces are required.

Given that there would be no increase in the amount of parking spaces at the property and there is limited spaces for further vehicles to double parking if they so wished, it is difficult to see how the development would generate substantial levels of traffic in Albert Lane as suggested by many of the objectors.



The applicant has advised that there are around 44 staff operating from the building, however many of these work outside of the office the majority of the time. It is possible that in the future that a new occupant of the premises would have more staff but it is considered that as the new floor space would be relatively small in comparison to the overall building, that any increase in staff numbers which may occur in the future as a result of this, would be within tolerable levels. Furthermore the site is easily accessible by sustainable transport means such a bus, walking and cycling which provides a range of options for those working or visiting the premises.

In these circumstances it is considered that there would be no adverse impact from the proposal in terms of parking demand, traffic generation, safety or traffic noise and that it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on any of these grounds.

### **Other Matters**

- The neighbour on Osborne Place, who noted that they had not been alerted to the development as part of the neighbour notification process, is located outwith the 20m buffer zone around the application site within which neighbours are notified, so did not receive notification. This distance is specified in national legislation and the correct neighbour notification procedure was carried out by the planning authority.
- Each planning application is assessed on its own merits so it is not considered that the application would set a precedent. What is acceptable at one site may not be acceptable at another.
- Any impact which a development may have on house prices is not a material planning consideration.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Approve subject to conditions**

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The principle of an office extension at this site is supported by the West End Office Area Policy.

It is considered that a contemporary extension which clearly distinguishes itself from the historical buildings beside it can be accommodated on the site whilst preserving the character and visual amenity of the conservation area. The setting of the listed building would be preserved as the extension would be subservient in position and size in relation to the original building and it's important features would remain intact. The reinstatement of railing on Carden Place would enhance the character of the conservation area.

There would be no adverse impact upon the surrounding area either due to issues of amenity such as privacy, noise, and daylight or road safety.

**it is recommended that approval is granted with the following condition(s):**

(1) that no development shall take place unless a scheme detailing all external finishing materials (including samples) to the roof and walls of the extension hereby approved has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority and thereafter the development shall be carried out in accordance with the details so agreed - in the interests of visual amenity and character of the conservation area.

(2) that the extension hereby approved shall not be occupied unless a scheme detailing cycle storage provision has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority, and thereafter implemented in full accordance with said scheme - in the interests of encouraging more sustainable modes of travel.

(3) that the extension hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the cast iron railings on the Carden Place elevation hereby granted planning permission have been installed in accordance with drawing No. 1318.PD.005 of the plans hereby approved or such other drawing as may subsequently be submitted and approved in writing by the planning authority - in order to enhance the character of the conservation area.

(4) that the windows as indicated on the east facing elevation of the extension hereby approved shall not be fitted otherwise than with obscure glass unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation - in the interests of protecting the privacy of adjoining residential properties.

(5) that, except as the Planning Authority may otherwise agree in writing, no construction or demolition work shall take place:

- (a) outwith the hours of 7.00 am to 7.00 pm Mondays to Fridays;
- (b) outwith the hours of 9.00 am to 4.00 pm Saturdays; or
- (c) at any time on Sundays,

except (on all days) for works inaudible outwith the application site boundary. [For the avoidance of doubt, this would generally allow internal finishing work, but not the use of machinery] - in the interests of residential amenity.

**Dr Margaret Bochel**

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.

