

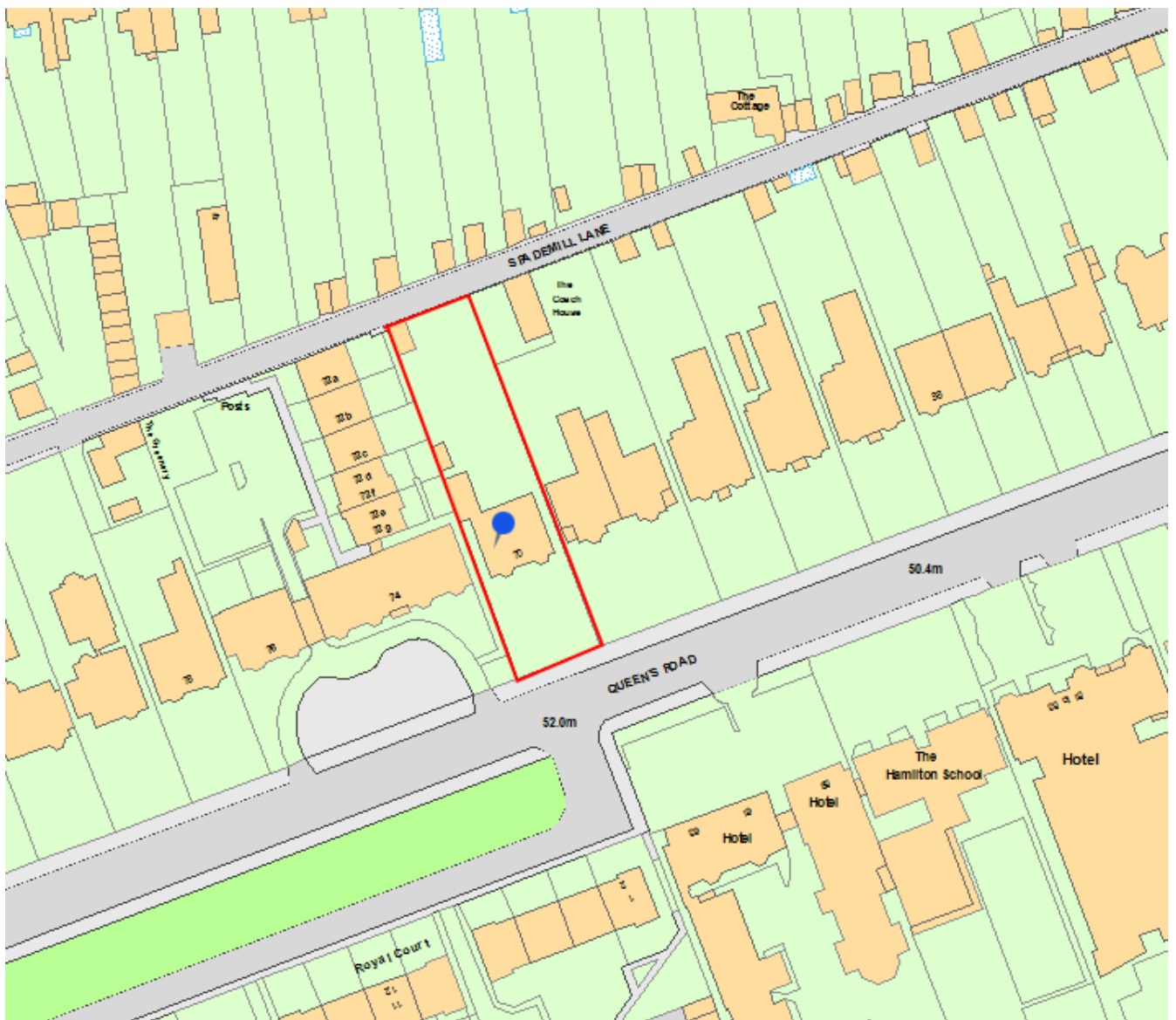
70 QUEEN'S ROAD, ABERDEEN

ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION OF OFFICE

For: JPR Services Ltd

Application Ref. : P120787  
Application Date : 29/05/2012  
Officer : Tommy Hart  
Ward: Hazlehead/Ashley/Queen's Cross(M  
Greig/J Stewart/R Thomson/J Corall)

Advert : Section 60/65 - Dev  
aff LB/CA  
Advertised on : 11/07/2012  
Committee Date : 23 August 2012  
Community Council : No response received



**RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions**

## **DESCRIPTION**

The application property is a 2 ½-storey granite and slate villa, situated within a large feu on the north side of Queen's Road. Access is gained from both Queen's Road and Spademill Lane. There is space for 18no cars (including 2no disabled) in the formal rear car park and 3 cars in the informal front car park . There is a 1 & ½-storey granite off-shoot to the rear of the building situated on the western boundary. The site benefits from pockets of landscaping throughout.

To the immediate west of the application site are residential properties which take the form of 1 & ¾-storey town houses and flats to the rear of no 74 Queen's Road which itself comprises residential flats. On the north side of Spademill Lane are the rear gardens of residential properties on Rubislaw Den South. To the east, the properties are similar in style to the application property and similarly in office use.

The application property lies within the Albyn Place/Rubislaw Conservation Area and is allocated as West End Office Area in the Adopted Local Development Plan.

## **HISTORY**

There have been 4 other applications at this property in the past 30 years for change of use, introduction of rooflights, illuminated signage and minor alterations to the building & car park to rear – all of which have been approved.

## **PROPOSAL**

Planning permission is sought for alterations and extension to no 70 Queen's Road, namely;

- At the front of the property a flat-roofed dormer window would be introduced at attic level. The car parking arrangements would be formalised with 4no spaces introduced. The driveway/turning/parking area would be upgraded through a hard and soft landscaping scheme which would include granite cassies laid to the access point onto Queen's Road. A short-stay cycle rack would also be introduced.
- At the rear, the existing 1 & ½-storey rear off-shoot extension would be removed. In its place a full 3-storey extension is proposed. An 8m x 3m corridor/lift shaft link would abut the rear of the existing building. The main body of the extension would be 11m wide and would project into the rear of the site by some 18m. The extension would be around 10m in height. The main part of the extension would be set 4m off the west boundary. The top floor would be set back around 2m off the western and eastern edges of the extension, and be set around 2.5m off the rear (north) edge of the extension.
- There would be a plant room at ground floor level on the west elevation, measuring 6m x 3m. A covered cycle rack for 5no cycles would be located on the west side behind the link corridor.

- Other minor alterations include relocating a few windows on the rear elevation.
- In terms of materials, the solid walls would be constructed of Kemnay Grey natural Granite. The glazing along the western elevation of the extension would be obscured up to 1600mm in height on the first and 1500mm on the second floor. The rest of the glazing on the extension would have sunguard silver glass with silver grey aluminium frames. The roof would be finished with a dark grey sarnafil membrane and grey metal bullnose soffit. The link corridor would have clear structural glass to the east elevation.

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

The application has attracted more than 5 objections and thus, in terms of the Council's agreed Scheme of Delegation, has to be determined by the Development Management Sub Committee.

### **CONSULTATIONS**

ROADS SECTION – with regards parking, the shortfall of 7no spaces on-site is not considered to have a significant effect on parking in the area as the development is located within a controlled parking zone and has adequate accessibility to public transport. A Green Travel Plan has been requested and it has been agreed that this can be as a condition to any grant of permission.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – no comments received

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – no comments received

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

A total of 12 objections have been received from nearby residents in response to the neighbour notification, press advert and site notice. The material planning considerations raised can be summarised as follows;

- The proposed extension would block out the light into the adjacent residential dwellings;
- The size/massing/height of the development is out of keeping with the surrounding residential area;
- The development would impact negatively on the character of the Conservation Area;
- There would be a reduction in privacy and residential amenity due to the extension being close to the boundary and the windows facing directly towards the houses and back gardens;
- The development would lead to an increase in traffic levels on Spademill Lane to its detriment; and
- The amount of car parking spaces proposed would not be sufficient.

Other matters raised were; loss of a private view and reduction in property values, although were not taken into account as these are not material planning considerations.

## **PLANNING POLICY**

The application site lies within an area designated as West End Office Area (policy BI3) in the Aberdeen Local Development Plan (ALDP). ALDP policy D1 (Architecture and Placemaking) is also applicable. Since the application site lies within the Conservation Area, ALDP policy D5 (Built Heritage), as well as the Conservation Areas section of SPP and Historic Scotland's Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) are also relevant. In relation to the dormer window, the Council's Interim Supplementary Guidance: Householder Development Guide is applicable.

## **EVALUATION**

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 require that in determining a planning application, regard must be had to the Development Plan. Determination shall be made in accordance with the Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan consists of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan and the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

### **Policies and Guidance**

ALDP policy BI3 (West End Office Area) is an enabling policy for new office developments in that part of the City. As the proposal is an extension to an existing office there is no conflict with the principles of the policy and the extension is therefore acceptable. However, it is the design of the extension that needs to be evaluated in more detail with regard to its impact on the nearby residential properties to the west, the Conservation Area as a whole and setting of the adjacent Listed Building to the east.

ALDP policy D1 (Architecture and Placemaking) states *that to ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportions of building elements etc will be considered in assessing that contribution.*

**Siting:** the extension would be set around 4m off the west and 3m off the east boundary. This is an improvement on the originally submitted plan which showed the extension being 3m off the west boundary. It is also considered that this is a vast improvement on the current situation whereby the existing 9m high x 9m long extension abuts the common boundary with no 72e & g, and therefore is only around 10m away from the rear windows of the flats to the west. By moving the extension a further 1m to the east the potential impact from the new structure has been further reduced. It should be noted that the distance between the residential properties and the extension would be around 15m. In relation to the Listed Building to the east, it is considered that the extension has been adequately sited so as not to have a negative impact.

**Sun/daylight:** although the extension would be to the immediate east of the residential properties at no 72 Queen's Road, it is considered that this would only lead to a loss of sun/daylight for a short period of the day in the morning before the sun heads behind the existing building and thereafter the loss of sun/daylight would be the same as present. Therefore, it is considered that the extension

would have little additional impact on the residential properties compared to the existing situation. It is also worthy of note that the only impact is likely on properties 72 c-g Queen's Road given their close proximity to the extension.

**Height/scale/massing/plot ratio:** at 3-full storeys (10m) in height, the proposed extension would be no higher than the ridge of the existing building and, by virtue of the levels of this and the adjacent site, would be only around 1.2m above the ridge level of no 72 Queen's Road to the west. It is considered that there is very little difference in terms of impact of the mass of the extension on the residential properties to the west between the existing rear off-shoot which is around 9m tall x 9m long on the west boundary and the new extension at 10m tall x 17m long at 4m off the boundary. In terms of plot ratio, it is considered that the increase from around 16% to around 27% is acceptable as it still leaves more than 2/3 of the site undeveloped which is comparable with the nearby properties at 74, 80 and 82 Queen's Road. The overall massing of the building is not considered to be onerous and again it is comparable with other nearby development at 74, 80 and 82 Queen's Road. Lastly, it is considered that the extension would appear smaller by virtue of the amount of glazing and lack of solid walls.

**Privacy/overlooking:** The current extension does not have any windows facing to the west. In order to overcome any issues relating to potential loss of privacy/overlooking towards the residential properties to the immediate west from the new extension, the windows on this elevation would be obscurely glazed up to 1600mm at first floor and 1500mm at second floor levels. It is considered that this is adequate to mitigate any impact from having windows facing towards the residential properties. Furthermore, as the second floor is set back from the edge of the extension by around 2m, this would further restrict any potential overlooking and loss of privacy.

**Materials:** the materials proposed for the extension are considered to be in keeping with the existing building by virtue that natural granite is proposed for the solid walls. Although there is a large amount of glazing proposed, it is considered that this contemporary approach is acceptable on the rear elevation given that it is not readily visible from Queens Road and its site well in the context of this feu. It is not considered that the materials would have a negative impact on the character of the surrounding area.

ALDP policy D5 (Built Heritage), SPP and Historic Scotland's SHEP seek to ensure that any development within a Conservation Area enhances or preserves the area – in other words, the proposed development should not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area. The application property is not Listed. However, there is a Category C(s) Listed building to the immediate east (no 68/66 Queen's Road) and as such this also needs to be taken into account. The principle of extending a building such as this is clearly acceptable (given the various examples of similarly sized extensions nearby) provided it does not undermine the integrity, or adversely affect the setting, of the Conservation Area. Although the extension comprises a greater floor area than the existing building

(476sqm gross floorspace as existing and 629sqm gross floorspace proposed), its design and use of materials minimise the apparent massing and bulk of the extension, thus reducing its impact on its setting within the Conservation Area and adjacent to a C(s) Listed Building. It is considered that a contemporary design is appropriate as it can clearly be read as a new addition to the building and provides a contrast between the old and the new, while the extensive use of granite complements and respects the historic character of the building within the Conservation Area. The full height glass screen corridor link ensures a visual separation between the extension and the original building on the east elevation. The design and external finishing materials are of a high standard appropriate for this sensitive site and the conservation area in general.

In assessing the details of the new dormer at the front of the existing property, the Council's Interim Householder Design Guide is relevant. It states that *in the case of dormer windows and roof extensions, the guidelines will also extend to originally residential properties now in non-domestic use*. It goes on to say as a *basic principle, new dormer windows should respect the scale of the building and they should not dominate or tend to overwhelm or unbalance the original roof*. In specific relation to older properties of a traditional character, it states that on the public elevation, the Council will seek a traditional, historically accurate style of dormer window which shall be of appropriate scale i.e. a substantial area of the original roof must remain untouched and clearly visible. It is considered that the dormer is acceptable in this context. The dormer has been appropriately sited off the wallhead and down from the ridge. The dormer does not dominate the roofspace in any way. It is considered that the dormer is more appropriate than what exists on other nearby properties (no's 74-76 Queen's Road) by virtue that the windows proposed would be traditional in appearance rather than the modern interpretation used nearby.

### **Letters of Representation**

The matters raised in objection relating to massing, height, materials, loss of light, impact on privacy and impact on Conservation Area have been dealt with above.

With reference to the potential parking and traffic issues, the Roads Officer has not raised any concerns.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the proposed development has been designed to a high standard and is of a scale, design and general appearance that preserves the character of the Conservation Area. It is considered that the proposal does not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area or impact negatively on the adjacent C(s) Listed Building. Accordingly, the proposal complies with the relevant local and national policies and guidance. The proposal does not raise any residential amenity or public/road safety concerns sufficient to warrant refusal. Therefore, the application is recommended for approval subject to the conditions listed below.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Approve subject to conditions**

#### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed development has been designed to a high standard and is of a scale, design and general appearance that preserves the character of the Conservation Area. It is considered that the proposal does not detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area nor does it have any negative impact on the residential amenity of the nearby residential properties. The proposal is considered to comply with the Aberdeen Local Development Plan policies D1, D5 and BI3, the Conservation Areas section of SPP; Historic Scotland's SHEP and the Council's Interim Supplementary Guidance: Householder Design Guide.

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

(1) that the development hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the car parking areas hereby granted planning permission have been constructed, drained, laid-out and demarcated in accordance with drawing No. 100D of the plans hereby approved or such other drawing as may subsequently be submitted and approved in writing by the planning authority. Such areas shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose other than the purpose of the parking of cars ancillary to the development and use thereby granted approval - in the interests of public safety and the free flow of traffic.

(2) that no development pursuant to the planning permission hereby approved shall be carried out unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority a further detailed scheme of hard and soft landscaping for the site, which scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and landscaped areas on the land, and details of any to be retained, together with measures for their protection in the course of development, and the proposed areas of tree/shrub planting including details of numbers, densities, locations, species, sizes and stage of maturity at planting - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

(3) that all planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a size and species similar to those originally required to be planted, or in accordance with such other scheme as may be submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the planning authority - in the interests of the amenity of the area.

(4) that no part of the development hereby approved shall be occupied unless a plan and report illustrating appropriate management proposals for the care and maintenance of all trees to be retained and any new areas of planting (to include

timing of works and inspections) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The proposals shall be carried out in complete accordance with such plan and report as may be so approved, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(5) that any tree work which appears to become necessary during the implementation of the development shall not be undertaken without the prior written consent of the Planning Authority; any damage caused to trees growing on the site shall be remedied in accordance with British Standard 3998: 2010 "Recommendations for Tree Work" before the building hereby approved is first occupied - in order to preserve the character and visual amenity of the area.

(6) 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.

(7) That the extension hereby granted planning permission 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.

(8) That no development shall take place unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing a detailed Green Transport Plan, which identifies sustainable measures to deter the use of the private car, in particular single occupant trips and provides detailed monitoring arrangements, modal split targets and associated penalties for not meeting targets - in order to encourage more sustainable forms of travel to the development.

(9) that no development shall take place unless a scheme of all drainage works designed to meet the requirements of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority and thereafter no part of the development shall be occupied unless the drainage has been installed in complete accordance with the said scheme - in order to safeguard water qualities in adjacent watercourses and to ensure that the development can be adequately drained.

(10) That the extension hereby approved shall not be occupied unless the opaque glazing has been installed to a height of 1600mm above floor level on the west elevation of the first and 1500mm above floor level on the west elevation of the second floors and the obscure glazing shall be retained in perpetuity unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority - in the interests of residential amenity



(11) that no development pursuant to this planning permission shall take place nor shall the building be occupied unless there has been submitted to and approved in writing for the purpose by the Planning Authority an assessment of the noise levels likely within the building, unless the planning authority has given prior written approval for a variation. The assessment shall be prepared by a suitably qualified independent noise consultant and shall recommend any measures necessary to ensure a satisfactory noise attenuation for the building. The property shall not be occupied unless the said measures have been implemented in full - in the interests of residential amenity.

**Dr Margaret Bochel**

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.