

As well as the usual applications for Certificate of Lawfulness for STLs and an increasing number of window replacements in the New Town Conservation area appearing on the Weekly Lists for NTBCC's area, there's actually quite a lot of more significant applications going on. I have summarised the various discussion items under applications that are Live (i.e. still open to comments post the NTBCC meeting on 12 February) & others that are for information only i.e. noting.

### **Live applications**

**1. Proposal at 28 St Andrew Square for change of use from Class 4 offices to Class 7 hotel use.**

Formerly the Virgin Money offices at the north-east corner of St Andrew Square. Current applications are 24/00257/FUL & 24/00258/LBC with no (0) comments lodged as yet but open for comments until 23 February 2024.

Previous application to extend to the rear / add storeys to the rear already granted (21/04282/FUL, "Proposed internal and external alterations to existing office building (class 4) to include removal of current extension and the provision of a new rear and rooftop extension, including cycle parking and associated facilities (as amended)").

The new application is covered here

[www.urbanrealm.com/news/10832/St Andrew Square landmark turns away from the dark si de.html](http://www.urbanrealm.com/news/10832/St_Andrew_Square_landmark_turns_away_from_the_dark_si_de.html)

The Cockburn have also blogged on this

[www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/planning-consultation-responses/28-st-andrew-square/](http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/planning-consultation-responses/28-st-andrew-square/)

**2. Proposal at 9-10 St Andrew Square for change of use from Class 4 office / Class 1 retail to Class 7 (Hotel) & Class 3 (Restaurant) (24/0185/FUL & .**

Despite scepticism from some, this is a Sir Basil Spence Cat A listed building with Sainsbury's at street level. It was originally the Scottish Widows & Life Assurance building, built between 1956 - 1962 with the basement / ground floor being converted to supermarket use in 1999 with the upper storeys (first to sixth floor) being office use. Proposal includes redevelopment of the street level and the upper storeys to hotel use i.e. Sainsbury's would disappear. Currently 1 comment (objection) lodged.

More information on the proposal here

<https://citydev-portal.edinburgh.gov.uk/idxpa-web/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=makeComment&keyVal=S7CIDZEWLF900>

More broadly, currently there are a number of other hotels surrounding St Andrew Square, historically the IBIS at 19 St Andrew Square, the relatively new Malmaison at 21 -22 St Andrew Square (converted from offices in 2017 (under 17/03375/FUL), the Edinburgh Grand (under 15/02786/FUL) at 42 St Andrew Square, the Gleneagles at 39 St Andrew Square in 2018 (under 18/03272/FUL). Without further checking, there may be others.

I guess the question is when are too many similar uses too much - especially when it seems to remove a much-used supermarket?

3. Recent pre-app presentation on the **refurbishment of the Baillie Gifford offices** on Leith Street / Calton Place. Planning application expected in late Spring / early Summer. Quite extensive refurbishment proposed (more than I was expecting) with changes to the facade & additional storeys on the section adjacent to the OMNi.

4. Possibly a FYI, another application at the **Edinburgh Playhouse** which forms part of wider proposals to integrate the existing commercial unit (formerly known as the Habana Bar) into the Edinburgh Playhouse Theatre and to support the successful ongoing operations of the theatre. Minor external modifications but more substantial internal changes (23/07232/FUL & associated /LBC application) - window for comments closed on 26 January 2024.

### **Decisions (to note)**

- There is a recent decision (refusal) to renew the application for the 5G installation at Drumsheugh Place (originally granted I think for 2 years) - obviously relevant to the yet-to-be progressed installation at Gayfield Square;
- Approval of a new application for the relocated Edinburgh Street Food Market (ESF) sign at Unit 6 - 7 in the Omni ;
- Summer seating outside Boozy Cow on Frederick St (which NTBCC objected to the previous application but not this one - both refused AFAIK).
- There is also the recent DMSC decision (this week) to approve (on a split vote) the scheme on Queensferry Street / Shandwick Place opposite the Johnny Walker development by the Chris Stewart Group for another hotel (replacing the current backpackers hostel & some empty (possible residential, possibly STLs) units - although outwith (just) NTBCC's area - notable as both Historic Environment Scotland & the Council's Archeologist objected due to the removal of 2 staircases in listed buildings. Officer recommendation also to approve.

- Other Planning matters (at Planning Committee) were the approval of the draft (Old & New Towns of) Edinburgh World Heritage Site Management Plan next steps i.e. further consultation.
- Finally, a position statement on the recent JR on Short Term Lets at the Planning Committee (also tabled at the Regulatory Committee).
- Finally - a couple of interesting articles - one on the number of new student housing proposals from the Cockburn Association  
[www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/news/why-are-we-building-student-flats-and-not-affordable-homes/](http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/news/why-are-we-building-student-flats-and-not-affordable-homes/)
- & the other on the possible expansion for Glasgow's Willow Tea Rooms to Princes Street (believed to be next to the relocated Starbucks on the corner of Princes St & Castle St  
[www.heraldscotland.com/news/24106141.willow-tea-rooms-glasgow-open-new-site-edinburgh/?ref=twtrrec](http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/24106141.willow-tea-rooms-glasgow-open-new-site-edinburgh/?ref=twtrrec)

There's also the ongoing Scottish Reporter appeal on 72 - 74 Eyre Place - I made a further submission on behalf of NTBCC highlighting inconsistencies / issues in both the DMSC hearing in December as well as supporting other issues raised by residents.

I also flagged to those interested the recent DPEA appeal at 6 Picardy Place for the proposed Taco Bell taking over the former Bank of Scotland premises there which was approved but with stringent conditions on the type / number of cooking appliances permitted (due to concerns over odours impacting residential amenity) - the conditions are the subject of the appeal. The Spurtle covered the original application here

[www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk/news/problems-smell-taco-bell](http://www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk/news/problems-smell-taco-bell)

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