

Royal Hospital for Sick Children (RHSC), 9 Sciennes Road EH9 1LF

Planning Applications 18/02719/FUL, 18/02722/LBC and 18/02723/LBC

OBJECTION from Grange Association

18 July 2018

The Grange Association has reviewed applications 18/02719/FUL, 18/02722 and 18/02723/LBC, which have been submitted following extensive consultation by the developer, and lodges these objections:

1. Basement car park

The proposals differ from those presented to the community at public exhibitions, and which were the subject of considerable discussion and feedback, differing principally in excluding provision for car parking in a basement below the main hospital building. We understand that this exclusion was triggered by suggestions that the listed building consent for the main hospital building would be at risk from the proposal to raise the ground level in front of the building. If this is the case, we wish to place on the record that we regard the raising of the ground level as a minor loss to the building by comparison with the retention of above ground car parking. The presence of cars and other vehicles in front of the building would dominate the appearance from the street and would be greatly inferior to the earlier proposals for a memorial garden, public space and landscaping.

Policy Tra4 of the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (Nov 2016) (page 128) includes:

“Where off-street car parking provision is required or considered to be acceptable, the following design considerations will be taken into account:

- a) surface car parks should not be located in front of buildings where the building would otherwise create an active frontage onto a public space or street, and main entrances to buildings should be located as close as practical to the main site entrance;*
- b) car parking should preferably be provided at basement level within a building and not at ground or street level where this would be at the expense of an active frontage onto a public street, public space or private open space*

The earlier proposals, as presented at the public exhibitions, were consistent with this policy Tra4 but the revised proposals submitted for approval are not.

Moreover, the earlier proposals for a basement car park would require no vehicular access from Sciennes Road and so would protect the option for a future decision to stop up Sciennes Road to motor traffic, an option that remains the subject of extensive public discussion. Approval of the current proposals, requiring vehicle access from Sciennes Road, would extinguish this option. We therefore request that the applicants be asked to reinstate their earlier proposal for a basement car park with 24 vehicle spaces, accessed from Rillbank Terrace, and to remove the plans for above ground parking in front of the main hospital building.

2. Sylvan Place

The proposals include new construction along the whole of the eastern side of Sylvan Place. This will include the rear flank of the student accommodation which could create an inhospitable environment on a narrow pavement, given that there will be no access to the student accommodation from Sylvan Place.

The Edinburgh Street Design Guidance (Jan 2015) states (Street Pattern – page 12):

“.. the key requirements include:

- creating an urban form thatcreates relationships between street widths and building heights and [ensures] neighbourhoods are walkable”*

We therefore request that the developers be asked to adjust the proposals for the building lines on Sylvan Place to ensure that pavements are no narrower than 2.5m wherever possible and that landscaping or soft trees be incorporated to improve the desirability of Sylvan Place as a through route for pedestrian traffic to maintain its vitality and to deter antisocial behaviour.

Grange Association

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