

Report of Handling for Application 25/01332/FUL

ADDRESS:	The Lorne Hotel 923 Sauchiehall Street Glasgow G3 7TQ	Item 3 25th November 2025
PROPOSAL:	Installation of telecommunications equipment upgrade and associated works	

DATE OF ADVERT:	11 July 2025
NO OF REPRESENTATIONS AND SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED	None
PARTIES CONSULTED AND RESPONSES	Historic Environment Scotland No comments to make on proposal.
PRE-APPLICATION COMMENTS	The below pre-application advice was given to the applicant in February 2025. In their planning application submission, the applicant has reduced the size of the equipment and enclosure relative to the proposal submitted at pre-application stage. <i>The pre-application submission did not contain any assessment of alternative sites in the surrounding area. It is acknowledged that there will be limited options for potential sites given the traditional built form in the surrounding area. Notwithstanding, there are examples of more recent buildings in Finnieston and evidence is required to clarify why these are not suitable for telecommunications equipment.</i> <i>The Park Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the vista along Sauchiehall Street as a key view. The vista terminates with the Category A listed 901-903 Sauchiehall Street behind which the proposed equipment will be prominent. SG 9 states that telecommunications apparatus should not be detrimental to the character or setting of a Listed Building or visual amenity of a Conservation Area. Planning permission is unlikely to be granted if rooftop apparatus would be seen against, and detract from, historic and architecturally renowned skylines.</i> <i>The proposed development shown in the Rev F drawings will be a highly visible addition in a historically sensitive location. It will increase the scale and visual impact of the lift/plant overrun on top of the Lorne Hotel. The equipment and its housing will be a prominent and incongruous addition to the conservation area and will adversely impact the setting of the Category A listed building. The proposed development would not be supported in its current form.</i> <i>The introduction of equipment at this location will generally be resisted given its highly prominent and historically sensitive location. If a planning application is submitted, you will be required to demonstrate that you have carried out a thorough assessment of alternative sites.</i> <i>If it can be demonstrated that no other suitable sites are available, the Council may consider supporting equipment at this location subject to it being adequately screened. You should be aware that a standard telecommunications equipment screen will not be acceptable. The screening will be expected to have a high degree of artistic and architectural merit. A planning application must demonstrate how the design of the screen has evolved and takes its unique historical setting into account. The Lorne Hotel lift/plant overrun should be incorporated into the design and should not appear as a disparate element from the telecommunications equipment. It should appear as a single object that complements and enhances the existing roofscape.</i>

	<i>I strongly advise that you involve a specialist architect / artist / designer in the process to ensure that the screening will be of high architectural merit. An approach led solely by engineering and technical requirements is unlikely to result in a supportable scheme at this location. The approach must be designed in this highly sensitive location.</i>
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EIA - MAIN ISSUES	NONE
CONSERVATION (NATURAL HABITATS ETC) REGS 1994 – MAIN ISSUES	NOT APPLICABLE
DESIGN OR DESIGN/ACCESS STATEMENT – MAIN ISSUES	NOT APPLICABLE
IMPACT/POTENTIAL IMPACT STATEMENTS – MAIN ISSUES	NOT APPLICABLE
S75 AGREEMENT SUMMARY	NOT APPLICABLE
DETAILS OF DIRECTION UNDER REGS 30/31/32	NOT APPLICABLE
NPF4 POLICIES	The relevant NPF4 policies are considered to be: • Policy 7 Historic assets and places • Policy 14 Design, quality and place • Policy 24 Digital infrastructure
CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES	The relevant City Development Plan policies and Supplementary Guidance are considered to be: • CDP 1 The Placemaking Principle & SG 1 Placemaking • CDP 2 Sustainable Spatial Strategy • CDP 3 Economic Development & IPG 3 Economic Development • CDP 9 Historic Environment & SG 9 Historic Environment
OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS	Park Conservation Area Appraisal - Approved 4 th December 2018
REASON FOR DECISION	The proposal was not considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan and there were no material considerations which outweighed the proposal's variance with the Development Plan.

Comments	
Planning History	Numerous planning and listed building applications were submitted in relation to the site's previous use as a hotel. Planning permission 22/01075/FUL was granted to convert the hotel to student accommodation in June 2023. Development is currently underway with the first tenants expected in September 2025.
Site Visits (Dates)	30 th July 2025
Siting	The proposed development will be sited on the roof of the former Lorne Hotel. The building dates from 1960s and is currently being converted to student accommodation. As part of the conversion, the façade of the building was stripped and re-clad with a rainscreen system that uses natural sandstone. An upper floor was added to the building which is set back from the principal façade and clad in matt gold aluminium panels. There is a plantroom which projects approximately 4.4 metres above the roof at its western end. The plantroom is a prominent feature of the building and is visible in both eastward and westward views along Sauchiehall Street. It is finished in light-grey painted render. There is existing telecommunications equipment on the roof including wall-mounted antennas on the plantroom, equipment cabinets and a replica flagpole antenna. This equipment will be removed as part of the proposed upgrade. The building connects to the Category A listed 901-903 Sauchiehall Street on the corner of Sauchiehall Street and Kelvingrove Street. The listed building was part of the Lorne Hotel and is also being converted to student accommodation. It is outwith the site boundary of this application.
Design and Materials	The proposal is to install telecommunications equipment on the roof of the building. The proposed equipment includes: • Removal of existing wall-mounted antennas, existing replica flagpole antenna and 3no. equipment cabinets. • Erection of a new GRP enclosure on top of the existing plantroom. The enclosure will contain 6no. antennas, 4no. dishes and ancillary equipment. The GRP enclosure will be approximately 3.3 metres high, 2 metres deep and 2.7 metres wide. It will be painted grey to match the existing plantroom. • Installation of 6no. replacement equipment cabinets onto the existing freestanding support frames.
Daylight	The proposed equipment will not adversely impact daylight or sunlight to surrounding properties due to its size and position relative to nearby windows.
Privacy	The proposal will not create any new windows, raised terraces/platforms or roof accesses. Consequently, the proposal will not impact the privacy of surrounding residential properties.
Site Constraints	The site is in Park Conservation Area and immediately adjacent to the Category A listed 901-903 Sauchiehall Street. The impact of the development on the setting of the listed building has been assessed below.
Other Comments	Sections 25 and 37 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Acts require that when an application is made, it shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations dictate otherwise. In addition, under the terms of Section 59 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997, the Council is required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting listed buildings. Section 64 of the same Act requires the Council to pay special regard to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, including the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The issues to be taken into account in the determination of this application are therefore considered to be: a. whether the proposal accords with the statutory Development Plan;

- b. whether the proposals would impact on the setting of the listed building or nearby listed buildings;
- c. whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or the appearance of the Conservation Area;
- d. whether any other material considerations (including objections) have been satisfactorily addressed.

In order to assess (a), (b) and (c), the proposal will be considered against the Development Plan, which is comprised of NPF4 (adopted 13th February 2023) and the Glasgow City Development Plan (adopted 29th March 2017).

NPF4 Policy 24, CDP 2 and CDP 3 support the rollout of new digital and telecommunications infrastructure across the city. The proposed telecommunications equipment will support the local economy and provide connectivity benefits to the local community.

IPG 3 expects applicants to demonstrate that their site has been identified and justified as the most appropriate solution following a search for alternative locations and options. The applicant has submitted a comprehensive analysis of 18 alternative sites in the area as part of their Site Specific Supplementary Information. The alternative sites were discounted for a variety of reasons including network coverage, ICNIRP public exposure guidelines, land ownership and visual amenity. It is considered that the applicant's site selection process is reasonable and that the application site is, in principle, suitable for the proposed telecommunications equipment upgrade.

NPF4 Policy 14 and CDP 1 are overarching placemaking policies which expect that new developments will be design-led and lead to an improvement in the quality of the built environment. NPF4 Policy 24 and CDP 3 (as supported by IPG 3) require that the visual impact of telecommunications equipment is minimised through careful and sensitive design and siting.

NPF4 Policy 7 and CDP 9 require that new developments preserve and enhance the character of listed buildings and conservation areas. SG 9 states that telecommunications apparatus should not be detrimental to the character or setting of a Listed Building or visual amenity of a Conservation Area. Planning permission is unlikely to be granted if rooftop apparatus would be seen against, and detract from, historic and architecturally renowned skylines.

The Park Conservation Area Appraisal states that views are one of the major identifying features of Park Conservation Area. A key view identified by Park Conservation Area Appraisal is the vista along Sauchiehall Street that terminates at the Category A listed 901-903 Sauchiehall Street and former Lorne Hotel. This part of Sauchiehall Street is characterised by 2-4 storey sandstone terraces. The rooftop plant room of the former Lorne Hotel is prominent in this view and, due to its position and height, plays a significant role in defining the roofline behind the listed building. It is considered that the plant room is a large and incongruous massing that detracts from the quality of this view, the character of Park Conservation Area and the setting of the listed building.

The proposed development includes the erection of telecommunications equipment and associated enclosure on top of the plant room. The enclosure will be painted and finished grey to match that of the plant room. In visual terms, the proposal will increase the height and scale of the plant room and will exacerbate the adverse impact of an already incongruous massing on the roofscape.

As stated above, it is considered that the applicant's site selection process has demonstrated that the site is the most suitable in the area for the equipment. Furthermore, it is accepted that any equipment erected on top of the plant room is likely to be highly visible. The work carried out by the applicant to reduce the size of the proposed equipment and associated enclosure from pre-application stage is

	recognised and welcomed. Notwithstanding, the proposed development remains significant in size and will increase the scale and massing of the plant room, further compounding its impact on the historic roofscape. It is considered that this will adversely affect the visual amenity of the area, the character of Park Conservation Area and the setting of the Category A listed building. At pre-application stage, the applicant was advised they should present a creative solution to screening the equipment which incorporates the plant room and displays a high degree of artistic and architectural merit. It is considered that the submitted design is engineering-led with an appearance that is typical of telecommunications equipment. The proposal does not display the architectural or design-led response that is required to preserve and enhance the view and special historic setting. In principle, the Council is willing to support telecommunications equipment on this site if it can be demonstrated that it will not have an adverse impact on visual amenity of the area, the special character of Park Conservation Area and the Category A listed building. For the reasons stated above, it is not considered that the design of the proposal is sufficient quality to comply with Development Plan policies relating to telecommunications equipment, placemaking policies or the historic environment. The proposal will have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the area, the special character of Park Conservation Area and the Category A listed building and is therefore contrary to the Development Plan. No representations were received and it is not considered that there are any other material considerations that outweigh the Development Plan. It is therefore considered that the proposal is unacceptable and should be refused.
Recommendation	Refuse

Date: 18/08/2025	DM Officer	David Haney
Date	DM Manager	

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

1. The proposed development was not considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan and there were no material considerations which outweighed the proposal's variance with the Development Plan.
2. The proposed development is contrary to Policy 7 Historic assets and places; Policy 14 Design, quality and place; and Policy 24 Digital infrastructure and CDP 1 The & SG 1 on Placemaking; CDP 3 & IPG 3 on Economic Development; and CDP 9 Historic Environment & SG 9 on Historic Environment of the Glasgow City Development Plan as specified below, and there is no overriding reason to depart therefrom.
3. The proposed development, by virtue of its siting, size, scale and design quality, would be a dominant addition to the roofscape that, in visual terms, would enlarge the existing plant room to form an incongruous and prominent massing in a highly visible and historically sensitive location. The proposed development would detract from the visual amenity of the area and result in a significant loss of character to Park Conservation Area and the setting of the Category A listed 901-903 Sauchiehall Street.