

# Residents up in arms over planning for West End bar



A major development in the city's West End, close to a four star hotel, may get the green light for the planners despite much concern among local residents who have attended two public meetings and produced a petition.

The council's [Development Management Sub-Committee](#) meets on Wednesday to discuss planning matters across the city but in particular, residents who live at the west end of Rose Street are troubled that their [objections](#) to the planning application to convert the church at 204 Rose Street into a bar appear to have fallen on deaf ears.

It is still possible that the committee might decide to defer the matter to a hearing as the city centre councillors, Joanna Mowat, Alasdair Rankin and Karen Doran have requested. This would at least allow the residents the opportunity to speak and air their views, which they are keen to do.

City Centre Councillor Karen Doran said:-“I am very concerned at the proposal to open a Mega Pub in the Rose Street area. I have have met with local residents and attended a public meeting regarding this proposal.

“There are seven bars in close proximity to this proposed mega pub, and residents already suffer from anti social behaviour and noise. Opening a mega pub in an area that is already suffering from over provision is certainly very worrying.

“I have requested a hearing at the Planning Committee and hope to be able to speak in support of my constituents objections.”

The plans include conversion of the property into what is

described as a family based bar with acoustic bands and live sports events on big screens. The applicants state that only the ground floor would be used on quieter days, but it is the weekends and late nights that local residents are worried about. And the numbers... the planning application states that the venue will have capacity for 910 people.

With regard to deliveries to the building the applicants have suggested that they will keep traffic to a minimum, that they will use a glass crusher in the building, that food would be delivered 6 days a week by vans not trucks, with only one truck delivering chilled food once weekly, which all adds up to around 14 deliveries per week in their submission.

There were 27 letters sent to the council about this application originally lodged in May 2013. Two letters of objection preceded 25 others which were received late. These were a mix of letters of representation and objections. There was also a petition, and one letter sent in by the vendor supporting the application, also received too late to be considered, but they are [mentioned](#) in the council report since they raise similar points to the material letters.

The main grounds on which the affected neighbours object to the planning application are that there are too many pubs, there would be excessive pedestrian and other traffic since the pub would accommodate 900 people. The objectors believed that the noise in the area would be amplified by the narrowness of the street, and that the balance between residents and businesses in the area would be tipped in favour of the latter.

Local MP Mark Lazarowicz also lodged his letter of objection after the cut off date but hoped it would still sway the council decision. Lazarowicz told The Edinburgh Reporter:-“I am extremely concerned by this application. There are a number of residential properties around this end of Rose Street, and the street is narrow which makes it much more likely people

will gather outside the building on leaving and entering. I believe the proposal is unsuitable for this location.”

Even the Community Council appeared to lodge its complaints a bit too late, but their objections were based on the grounds of over-development and the proximity of residential properties.

They included this diagram of pubs on Rose Street with their letter:-



New Town & Broughton Community Council observed:- “This development is situated in a mixed-use area in which there are already 7 smallish pubs – 3 of them towards the same end of the street as the chapel building, so residents already live with a significant amount of late-night noise and disturbance. We consider that the proposed capacity of this scheme is so large that it would upset the balance of existing uses and amenity of the street. The number of smokers for example could well be into dozens. However well-managed the proposed new pub might be, this is bound to lead to the detriment of living conditions for residents especially given the narrowness of Rose Street compared to say George Street, the Grassmarket or the Cowgate where other such large venues exist. ”

The application has been amended to delete the application for an outside seating area, and officials have recommended to the committee that the permission is granted, based on the fact that the street already has many bars and that secondary glazing and sound proofing measures should ensure that any flats nearby are unaffected by noise.

The Environmental Assessment has recommended refusal suggesting it is not good practice to site large entertainment venues like this one next to houses. The council can of course demand that the licensee uses a noise limiter if the noise is such that it causes disturbance to the neighbours, but the

Environmental team think these devices should only be a matter of last resort rather than a routine way of allowing bars and clubs to be situated in such areas.

And finally the developer of this building is being required to pay a contribution of £27,750 towards the improvements of the public realm in and around Rose Street. We asked the developer for a comment but at the point of publication none has been made.

All papers relating to this application are [here](#).

The Transport & Environment Committee recommended last month that Rose Street is used as a pilot project for a new trade waste removal [scheme](#) being introduced. It hopes to minimise traffic congestion by ensuring that traders employ one waste company to take away rubbish for disposal or recycling.

