

Council hearing on proposals for Caltongate development



There is to be a hearing on the plans for redevelopment of the Caltongate site this morning at the City Chambers beginning at 10.00am. The running order for the meeting is reproduced below. The council says in the papers for the meeting that it wishes to take evidence from members of the public on their views on what is proposed.

It is trite to say that this is an important development. This is, according to those who oppose the latest plans the most significant development in Edinburgh city centre since the 12th century. Some members of the Old Town Community Council resigned and have started a petition which has now gained nearly 4000 signatures in support.

The petitioners say that the council is simply not listening and that there has been no meaningful public consultation.

In the papers for today's Development Management Committee it appears that the council is minded to grant the planning as proposed by the developer, Artisan. We will be at the meeting and will report what happens.

The extensive grounds for objection which they set out are as follows:

The proposed development represents a grave threat to the UNESCO World Heritage status of the Old Town due to inappropriate and insensitive design that is contrary to local planning guidelines.

Inexcusable neglect of listed buildings within the World

Heritage designation, including council housing fronting on to the Royal Mile and the Canongate Venture building.

Threatened demolition of previously well used and valued public listed buildings.

Significant loss of revenue from public buildings which have lain empty for over 5 years in favour of private speculative interests.

Failure to achieve 'Best Value' in the transfer and sale of public assets. E.g. The Jeffrey Street arches which are to be "sold by way of a 125 year internal repairing and insuring leasehold basis on a peppercorn rent".

Due diligence has not been satisfactorily demonstrated.

The proposed development will lead to fundamental 'leakage' in the local economy, compromising existing local businesses, in particular the City's many small, independent guest houses.

An over provision of hotels, offices, pubs/clubs and retail outlets.

Controversial planning decisions, granted in the face of overwhelming public opposition, lapsed but subsequently

extended in favour of private economic interests, in contravention of policy.

Sale to previous developer deemed "illegal" by European Commission.

Failure of developer to honour bond that would have mitigated against the adverse affect of blight from this proposed development.

<http://www.theedinburghreporter.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Order-of-hearing-29-January-2014.pdf>

The planning process in this case has been long and tortuous and the papers can be found in several places:-

[13/03406/FUL](#) | Redevelopment/erection of buildings for mixed use development including offices (class 4) class 1,2,3 commercial, non-residential institutions (class 10), leisure (class 11) and other associated uses, landscaping/public realm and other associated works. | Land Adjacent To New Street Edinburgh.

[13/03407/FUL](#) | Redevelopment/demolition/erection of buildings for mixed use development comprising class 7 hotels, class 1, 2, 3 commercial, class 4 business, community uses (class 8 & 10), leisure (class 11), other associated uses, landscaping/public realm and other associated works. | Land Adjacent To New Street 2, 4, 5 New Street 221, 223, 227, 231 Canongate, Land At East Market Street, 5A-24A Cranston Street, 1-15 East Market Street, Edinburgh

[13/03399/LBC](#) | Alterations to building, boundary walls and

gatepiers including removal of existing plinth and new additions to building. | 5 New Street Edinburgh EH8 8BH

[13/03400/LBC](#) | Part demolition/part retention of building with part retained Canongate and New Street facade. | 2, 4 New Street 231 Canongate Edinburgh EH8 8BH

[13/03405/LBC](#) | Internal and external alterations to arches and erection of new building to west of Cranston Street abutting arches. | Land At East Market Street, 1 To 15 East Market Street, 16 To 24A Cranston Street Edinburgh

[13/03402/CON](#) | Demolition of building and boundary wall. | CEC Depot East Market Street Edinburgh

[13/03403/CON](#) | Part demolition of buildings with part retained facade. | 221, 223, 227, 229 Canongate Edinburgh EH8 8BJ