

Plans to build Port of Leith Distillery

It has taken four years to get there but friends Ian Stirling and Patrick Fletcher have finally [submitted plans](#) for a new whisky distillery in Leith to the council.

The Port of Leith Distillery would be the first single malt distillery here for a century and it is planned to sit right next to The Royal Yacht Britannia and Ocean Terminal, and the only one in Scotland to use a vertical distilling process.



The two businessmen who grew up in Edinburgh have formed a company Muckle Brig Ltd to lead the scheme. They said : “We have set out to create a new whisky business with Innovation, Education and Openness placed at the forefront of our operations.

“The design brief for the building was expressly aimed at encompassing these values by creating an exciting and modern face for the scotch whisky industry.”



The company is developing a long-term partnership with Heriot Watt University’s International Centre for Brewing and Distilling, in order to facilitate an extensive product development and research programme, which will begin in early 2018 and progress throughout the building’s construction. The partnership also aims to provide the university’s students with access to learn and experiment in the building’s lab and blending facility, and opportunities to access work experience and internships with the distillery’s team.



[Port of Leith](#) expects to produce 400,000lpa (litres pure alcohol) per year and also plans to use the adjacent harbour as a heat sink for cooling the production process; an environmentally friendly design feature that will significantly reduce the volume of water required to produce its whisky.

The vertical, gravity-led design also provides an opportunity for visitors to experience a distillery like no other in Scotland, getting as close to the production process as possible as they follow the liquid from the mash tun in the centre of the building, down through the 'brewery', to the stills on the ground floor.

Afterwards, visitors will be able to enjoy unique views from the rooftop bar and restaurant. To the north they will be able to look across the Firth of Forth to Fife, to the east over the busy port of Leith, to the west to the Queensferry Crossing and Forth Bridge and not least in the south there will be views towards Edinburgh Castle.



The building has been designed by Scottish practice Threesixty Architecture. At just short of 40 metres in height, and with a total floorspace, of 28,000 sqft, it will become a major new landmark for the city, and a beacon for the many cruise ships that now dock in Leith.

Stefano Faiella, Director of Threesixty Architecture said "It has been an exciting opportunity to design a new distillery where the client has challenged us to develop a design where the distillation process and a unique visitor experience are equally important and must complement one another, in a building they can be proud of."

Patrick Fletcher added : "Leith was once the national hub for the Scotch industry and it's really exciting to be restarting that tradition.

"Our business will boost the local economy by drawing more tourists and residents down to the harbour and providing many new jobs. Leith has been on the up for many years and we're really excited to be building where we are, right in the heart of the docks. Hopefully the quality of our building's architecture will encourage more investment in the area."

If the planning application is successful, construction is

scheduled to commence at the beginning of 2018,
with the distillery opening its doors in the Spring of 2019.
Whisky fans will still need to wait a bit longer before
the company releases its first Single Malt, however there are
plans for a number of early-release products, to
be announced in due course.