

# **Leith Docks – planning approval for Skyliner flats**

**Plans to build four blocks of flats on a derelict site on Leith waterfront have been approved by councillors – despite concerns over the design of an affordable housing block.**

S1 Developments has secured planning permission to build 245 flats, branded 'Skyliner', at Ocean Drive on the edge of Albert Dock. The flats will be built in four blocks ranging from seven to 13 storeys high and will include 61 affordable homes – with 50 of them taking up one of the blocks in its entirety.

The city council's development management sub-committee backed the proposals – putting aside concerns from environment protection that poor air quality from the docks could have a "significant adverse affect" on the health of residents.

The development will include 154 underground car parking spaces, 27 electric car charging points and 320 cycle spaces – although Cllr Chas Booth asked for the proposals to increase the number of bike spaces to meet the council's policy.



The Skyliner development will be built across the road from CALA Homes' Waterfront Plaza scheme, where in August planning approval was granted for 388 homes.

Council planning officers labelled the Skyline development "an exciting opportunity for the area" and said it was an "acceptable scale, height and density".

Councillors raised concerns that the social housing block will look different to the rest of the scheme. Officers said "high quality building materials" would be used, but residents will not have balconies.

Cllr Hal Osler said: "I do have reservations about the social housing. I think they have probably done the best they can. It's not perfect but at least it goes some way to addressing the issues.

"It puts housing in an area that's particularly barren at the

moment.”

The new development would provide easy access to the proposed extension of the tram line to Newhaven, subject to the approval of the council.

Cllr Joanna Mowat added: “This is a substantial amount of housing in a city that’s crying out for housing.

“It’s probably one of the best connected sites for public transport in the city. The real winner here will be the promenade if we can get that board-walk extended.”

Planning convener Cllr Neil Gardiner called for the plans to be approved. He said: “There’s some concern about the social housing looking different. The site is in the local plan and it’s achieving a good level of density on this site.

“On the whole, I do support this scheme. I did share the reservations but it’s good quality affordable housing. There’s a lot of three-bedroom flats which I welcome. This site has been left derelict for the best part of 20 years – on balance, I would support the scheme as it stands.”



Councillor Chas  
Booth

Cllr Booth supported the application, but put forward an amendment for more cycle parking to be provided – but his proposal was not supported by the committee.

He said: “There’s a desperate need for social housing on the

site. On balance, I think that this application is supported.

“I would like to see conditions to address some of the shortcomings. There’s not a great deal of play space and if families move into this area, that’s going to cause problems. It’s a long way to being perfect but it’s going to provide housing in this area.”

Conditions were added for the developers to explore options for children’s play space and whether the buildings could be hooked up to any future district heating system.