

Changes to Ambassador Homes plans welcomed by locals

Ambassador Homes are developing a residential site for 124 new homes at Ferrymuir Gait where access for vehicles has been a long-standing issue.

The developers have now applied to The City of Edinburgh Council 21/04116/FUL to change the vehicular access to the new homes under construction.

The Edinburgh Reporter explained [in an article](#) last month that the owners of the new homes would be forced to drive through the Varney Estate, accessed off Kirkliston Road, rather than being allowed access from the roundabout between Macdonalds and the Shell Garage. That access road is Ferrymuir Gait, and it was Transport Scotland who were standing in the way of a direct access being created, meaning vehicles would have to drive through a Low Traffic Neighbourhood set up in the 1960s instead.

In the revised plans, the developers propose to restrict access from Hugh Russell Place and the Varney Estate to pedestrian and cycle access only, in a u-turn from their previous stance.



Map of the new development created by Ambassador Homes – the access through Hugh Russell Place will be restricted to cyclists and pedestrians if the planning application is approved.



The photo shows Hugh Russell Place which will now, if planning permission is granted, be restricted to pedestrians and cyclists, as is currently the position.

This new application indicates that the development will no longer require to drive out to a public road by going through the Varney estate along **Hugh Russell Place** and Viewforth Place onto Kirkliston Road.

New home owners will, if this application is approved, be allowed to use the road from Ferrymuir Gait to the roundabout past the Shell garage for vehicular traffic, as well as a vehicular access along **Henry Ross Place** onto The Loan. This is a major change on the part of Transport Scotland and reflects a legal agreement between them and Ambassador Homes which was confirmed by the developer's agents, Ryden.

Previously, Transport Scotland said that they would not allow the development to use the roadway, given that they use it for gritting lorries and other heavy traffic. There used to be a motel on the site which had used Ferrymuir Gait as a public

access route. Transport Scotland have their main office overlooking the Forth Road Bridge on Ferrymuir Gait. This is the place that Transport Ministers are usually seen on TV during adverse weather.

Hamish Campbell, Chairman of the Varney Residents Association, welcomed the news. He said: "At last sense has prevailed. I feel sure that the large majority of residents of the new development will use Ferrymuir Gait and not the narrow streets and tight junctions of the Varney Estate and the difficulty of accessing Kirkliston Road.

"It is not ideal, but at least it seems finally that access through Ferrymuir Gait has been approved."

Mr Campbell also explained the many problems encountered over the years.

He said that when Transport Scotland got in the way of allowing access, residents had to raise almost £5,000 to fight the issue. The planners appeared to ignore their own guidance about the number of homes using one access, and then the residents found that their title deeds had been wrongly reproduced on the Registers of Scotland mapping system. The legal advice the residents received was that their ransom strip had disappeared when the system was digitised and the developers claimed the ground. All the affected residents applied for rectification of the Land Register but this claim was dismissed.

A tribunal was not an option owing to the possibility of high expenses claims. The legal and other professional advice had already cost nearly £10,000 with a significant portion of the costs met by Chris Walker of Muirhall Energy.

Foyso Choudhury MSP who met with the local residents recently wrote to Graham Dey, Transport Minister, about the developer's plans.

Mr Choudhury was delighted to hear this latest news, and said: "Congratulations to the residents and elected members in achieving access by Ferrymuir Gait to the new housing development in South Queensferry.

"I have written to the Transport Minister to get assurances that Transport Scotland are now allowing access, and will work with residents, elected members, the developer and Planning to protect the environment and active travel policies."



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Foysol Choudhury MSP
Member of the Scottish Parliament for Lothian Region

Graeme Dey MSP
Minister for Transport
Scottish Government

31st August 2021

Ref: FC/AH/0004

Dear Graeme,

Road Access for Ferrymuir Gait housing development and Transport Scotland

Further to the answer given to question (S6W-01641), which stated that the 'Ferrymuir Gait Housing development shall not be accessed from this road', the road being a private road owned by Transport Scotland, I write to seek confirmation that this position has now changed, as advised to local residents from the housing developer, Ambassador Homes.

I note that Ambassador Homes, developer of the site at Ferrymuir Gait, have informed residents that they have applied to the City of Edinburgh Planning (ref 21/04116/FUL) to change access as in their approved plans. Rydens, submitting the application on behalf of the developer state that unrestricted access through Ferrymuir Gait has been secured, which would be the main access, supported by the access through Henry Ross Place.

This is very welcome news and appears to acknowledge the strength of feeling in the local community, which has been campaigning for more acceptable access arrangements to Ferrymuir Gait.

I would be grateful for an assurance that Transport Scotland now confirm that this road will now be the main access route to the Ferrymuir Gait housing development, that unrestricted access has been agreed, and the alteration to the planning application will be supported?

I would also ask for confirmation that Transport Scotland will be working with the developer and local residents to ensure that the access arrangements will adhere to Scottish Government policies on the environment, health and active travel.

Yours sincerely,

FOYSOL CHOUDHURY MSP

Member of the Scottish Parliament for Lothian Region
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