

Residents rise up against developer's lack of public consultation

UPDATE – the formal period for consultation has now been extended by one week to 23 March 2022.

The developers CA Living plan to build student flats on the former Jewson site at 72-74 Eyre Place and are running an online public consultation to give residents the opportunity of commenting.

Locals say that almost everyone in the area is opposed to the plans including The Yard charity which has its base just beside the site near George V Park.

While a pre-application [public consultation](#) is not only necessary but usually welcome, in this particular case residents say that the consultation has encountered problems. It was supposed to start on 15 February but did not begin until 23 February – with no communication from the developer. There has been no direct contact with residents, except a letter from Scott Hobbs Planning distributed to residents on 25 February. (Read the letter below).

The [consultation](#) is due to end on 16 March 2022, despite calls

for it to be extended.

After 16 March the developer may submit an application to planners to develop the site with a 21 day period after this for public comment. The planning proposal is [here](#) and comments may be made to the developer [here](#).

Residents have created a [Special Interest Group](#) and have set up a petition to oppose the plans by the “opportunistic London-based, US headquartered developer”. But they are more concerned about the way the consultation is being run for now, saying that it is of significant concern. The group has written to the developers explaining that their consultation is too short, and that it has not involved the option of Zoom calls as an alternative to in-person meetings. The developer has instead used web chats, leading the locals to say that CA Living is hiding behind Covid regulations.



The residents' view is that the development will be contrary to the interests of the local community saying: “Students by nature are a transient population, and this weakens local community bonds to the detriment of the long-term residents.

This effect would be further increased by use of such accommodation for holiday lettings out of term time. There is also already significant over-provision of student accommodation at nearby sites at Logie Green, Leith Walk and McDonald Road, weakening the strength of local communities in the whole area.

“In addition with a huge new development of 435+ homes, entailing a thousand plus new residents, at the RBS site next door, local infrastructure such as medical services will be badly over-stretched; adding further high-density student housing is wholly inappropriate against this background.

“The site itself is a narrow strip of land situated between other high-density housing so any tall multi-storey-type developments with numerous units (eg student-type blocks) will cause unacceptable problems of overshadowing, privacy, noise, and access issues.

“Finally, the site directly abuts the New Town Conservation Area, and part of it is also within a Historic Garden Designed Landscape, so significant extra consideration has to be given to the appropriate land use against this conservation background. The small local King George V Park is also already over-stretched due to housing density. Crammed-in student blocks would not fit with these conservation requirements, and would chronically exacerbate park over-use as well.”

In addition the group has unearthed criticism of the developer's student complex in Glasgow at Bridle Works where the flats were described as “unfinished and filthy” in an article on [BBC News](#).

According to Edinburgh by Numbers there was a total of 65,585 students in Edinburgh in 2020 along with 28,953 students at Edinburgh College.

Letter from Scott Hobbs Planning to Eyre Place residents received 25 February.



Arrived PM
25/2/22.

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21 February 2022

Eyre Place Residents
Edinburgh

Dear Resident,

I am writing to introduce our client, CA Student Living (CASL), and the emerging proposals to develop a purpose-built student accommodation development on the site of the former Jewson builders merchants on Eyre Place. A Proposal of Application Notice was submitted to the City of Edinburgh Council on 21 December 2021, outlining the intention to submit a future planning application following a statutory public consultation period.

We are currently in the process of finalising a project website and will be hosting a live interactive text chat session on Thursday 3 March (3pm-7pm), where members of the project team will be available online to answer questions and provide further information.

I fully appreciate that as a local resident you may have a number of questions and perhaps some initial concerns regarding the proposals. I would like to assure you that as an industry-leading developer of student accommodation, along with its in-house management company Novel Student, CASL take great care in both delivering and operating these developments and this would be no different at Eyre Place.

CASL and Novel aim to create outstanding student residences, providing the very best in both service and amenities. Crucially, they also aim to ensure that all developments integrate fully into their surrounding areas and neighbourhoods. Eyre Place would be the third Novel's third in Edinburgh, following the recently opened Silk Mill on Dundee Street and Huxley Studios in Abbeyhill, which is due to open later this year.

All our developments benefit from our on-site management and maintenance team, with CCTV monitoring our grounds and wardens able to respond to any incidents around the clock. We strongly believe in sustainable modes of transport, with all our buildings offering bikes for residents to use with our developments benefiting from our strict car-free policy.

Further information regarding Novel is available on (www.novelstudent.com) with the project website (www.eyreplacedevelopment.co.uk) due to go live on Wednesday 23 February.

Eyre Place will mark an exciting development for both CASL and Novel, and we want to ensure that you as a near neighbour have all the information to hand. Great pride in these developments and, if granted planning consent, CASL and Novel look forward to playing a positive and proactive role in the local community.

Should you have any immediate questions, please don't hesitate to contact us on: eyreplacedevelopment@consultationonline.co.uk.

Best wishes,

Rhiannon Martin

Rhiannon Martin BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
Senior Planner

Scott Hobbs Planning

EYRE PLACE
LANE

the
yard

200m this way

