

Planning permission granted by council for mansion to take the place of bungalow

An Edinburgh bungalow will be bulldozed to make way for a couple's new mansion overlooking the capital – despite neighbours being “up in arms” over the plans.

Work on the home estimated to cost around £5 million, which will have views of Edinburgh Castle, is set to begin after planning permission was granted this week.

Plans were re-drawn following objections from other residents at Braid Hills Approach, who complained about sunlight being blocked out by the new three-storey structure.

But councillors unanimously gave the go-ahead for the design they described as being “uncompromisingly modern”.

Lisa Charters and husband Craig bought the Morningside bungalow after benefiting from her parents' £33 million Lottery win in 2016.

The couple, aged 33 and 34 respectively, made a bid to demolish the bungalow for something more upmarket – and lodged plans for the house and new driveway.

Following a backlash over the proposals, they re-submitted blueprints last year with the house reduced in height by 1.5 metres and moved further away from a neighbour's property.

Supporting the application, council planners said a “satisfactory residential environment will be created” and there would be “no unreasonable impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents”.

Officers added the development would support “sustainable transport modes nearby”.

A report said: “Lothian Bus service 15 is an approximate eight-minute walk away onto Pentland Terrace which provides access into the city centre. The local centre on Comiston Road is accessible in a 16-minute walk or 13-minute bus journey.”

However some of the more than 60 objectors vehemently dismissed suggestions the couple would use local bus services to get around.

One wrote: “Are they seriously suggesting lottery winners will be getting the bus into town?”

“People with that kind of money will be cruising the city in a Ferrari, not waiting in a draughty bus shelter on Lothian Road.

“To claim that multi millionaires will be supporting local bus services in a joke.”

Locals also complained the new build would invade privacy, block out sunlight and harm wildlife in the area – whilst there were also fears the extensive construction project could devalue neighbouring properties.

An objector said: “Although the planning application has been amended the proposed building is still too large and too high for the existing site.”

Another wrote: “The building is still too high and overlooks adjoining properties resulting in lack of privacy.”

The planning application went before the council’s planning

sub-committee on Wednesday (February 8).

Cllr Jo Mowat said she sympathised with neighbours who were “up in arms” about it but added “care and thought” had been put into the design.

The Conservative councillor said: “It’s always difficult when we have applications where they’ve put something which is uncompromisingly modern.

“I think it will be interesting, it will be big but I’m thinking of other architect-designed houses that aren’t so far away and they are different, but actually they work very well in their landscape.

” I think we’ve had the reassurance...that yes it will be new, yes it will be noticeable, but actually I don’t think a large house on a plot of this size taking advantage of what are spectacular views of the city is inappropriate.”

Cllr Neil Gardiner said: “It will be quite prominent, but I think overall it is a brave design.”

Convener Cllr Hal Osler said: “They are trying to be sustainable, they’re trying to change and trying to move forward.

“I do actually admire the applicants for bringing this forward because I think it’s extremely challenging and I hope they manage to build it, and I hope they have a wonderful time living there.

“I’m sure it is going to be quite an extraordinary house to live in.”

by Donald Turvill

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