

New homes plan withdrawn from site of historic Portobello railway station

A bid to build houses on the site of a former Edinburgh train station has been dropped after locals feared the development would block any future re-opening of the railway stop.

Portobello residents hit back at proposals they said would represent a “massive loss” to the community if given the go ahead.

In objections to plans it was pointed out the land at Station Brae, off Southfield Place, is the historic site of Portobello railway station which closed in the 1960s but the council has indicated could be re-opened in years to come.

Developers had argued there were several other “potentially more appropriate locations” nearby for the station, however they have now withdrawn their application.

Currently occupied by Traditional Roofing and Building, the company planned to vacate Station Brae to make way for seven houses.

After blueprints were lodged in November, however, the council received more than a dozen objections, with concerns the project would dash hopes of trains eventually picking Portobello passengers up again one day.

One local resident wrote: “The proposed use of this land would prevent the station being used forever and as such would represent a massive loss to the future community at such a time when transport infrastructure is of utmost significance for reducing carbon emissions.”

Another said: “This site was the former railway station for Portobello and should be retained for that purpose in the future. Rail transport will increase partly because it can operate by electricity without fossil fuels.”

[Portobello Amenity Society](#) also joined calls for the proposals to be dropped, writing it “compromises the possibility of developing a new station for Portobello as identified in the current Local Development Plan”.

The group said: “There is renewed interest in reinstating a station as part of Edinburgh’s infrastructure in helping to reduce car dependency for travel and making easy access to public transport.

“Easy access is required to a new station and not just to a siding as indicated on the proposed ground floor plan as submitted.

“The developer was initially unaware of the requirement to safeguard the creation of the station and the proposal for a pedestrian ramp and stair is inadequate to address the aspiration of providing easy access to rail travel.”

TRB Developments recognised that developing a train station for Portobello “is strongly supported by the community”.

“We are aware that this site is a possible future location for this installation,” they said, however added there were “several other potentially more appropriate locations”.

They marked out several other possible sites for a station nearby, saying they were all “within a short walking

distance”.

The developer added even if the new homes were built at Station Brae, access to a future station there “could be possible from within the site”.

They added: “Because the form and location of a potential future station is unknown there is no reasonable case to be made that the development of Station Brae would prejudice the future development of an unidentified station location.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

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Station Brae, Portobello. Image: Google.



Station Brae withdrawn development. Image: TRB Developments