

Planning refused for hostel due to noise

Edinburgh residents living on a quiet close on a have successfully fought against plans for a neighbouring office to be turned into a 21-bedroom hostel.

The City of Edinburgh Council refused change of use of the site on Hardwell Close, off Pleasance, as city planners ruled visitors would have potential to cause “noise and disturbance, particularly late in the evening”.

Currently the base of Victim Support Scotland, the building was proposed for redevelopment by Hardwell Holdings.

Proposed changes to the exterior of the property included additional windows but the application was refused this week.

One local resident of more than 30 years, whose balcony overlooks the rear of the office, said in response to the plans: “I would inevitably be exposed to unpredictable levels of noise and disturbance.”

They said: “I have always been thankful for the quiet environment away from the noise of traffic and passersby on the Pleasance.”

Another added: “I have some concerns that, given the number of rooms planned, the hostel could become a significant source of noise, especially at night, in this otherwise quiet residential part of town.”

Others raised concerns about “lots of people arriving and departing or congregating outside to smoke” and “21 plus guests arriving and leaving on a cobbled street which is surrounded by tenements”.

Refusing planning permission, the council said although the physical changes to the building were acceptable, its use as a hostel was not.

“The change of use from offices to a hostel on this site would result in higher levels of use than at present, particularly later in the evening as the hostel will be open 24 hours,” planners said.

“It is anticipated that guests would access the property far more frequently than office users, and whilst the wider area is busy, with high ambient noise levels, the immediate vicinity is relatively quiet, with the tenements forming a buffer to the busier streets, such as the Pleasance.

“This would result in the rear of the tenements, where residents may have their bedrooms to avoid road noise, being subjected to high levels of noise disturbance late in the evening.

“Due to the potential for nuisance caused by the proposed use, this development would have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions of nearby residents.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

