

STL licence refused despite claims it would not be a party flat

An Edinburgh cabbie living in one of the city's most expensive postcodes has been refused permission to use his garage as a short-term let – despite arguing it would not become a “party flat”.

The council raised concerns that the small holiday accommodation unit in the Grange would result in too much disturbance to neighbours as visitors could “come and go frequently throughout the day and night”.

It comes just after with legislation requiring licensing and planning permissions came into effect at the weekend.

In line with the new regulations taxi driver Douglas Peden sought change of use of a garage in the back garden of his St Catherine's Place home to a short-term let (STL) including minor internal and external alternations.

In a letter to the council supporting the application someone claiming to be his friend of 10 years said he would “run this business very well” and have the “utmost consideration for his neighbours”, adding the garage was “well tucked away”.

This was rejected by local community group Grange Association however, who disputed the applicant's claims that the area was suited to visitor accommodation as it was “not some sleepy

suburb, but a central district of the capital”.

An objection from the Association argued the street “retains a residential ambience...and remains predominantly residential and is quiet in the evenings and weekends”.

Plans submitted to the council Mr Peden said the one-bed garage provided a “rare self-catering option in the city”.

The existing lock-up replaced one demolished in 2013 and was initially intended for taxi storage and maintenance, but was no longer needed for this purpose.

Plans added guest numbers would be limited to two people for a minimum of two nights per visit – saying this would “safeguard against the highly unlikely outcome that the proposed one-bedroom STL property might somehow be used as a ‘party flat’”.

Mr Peden also said anyone looking to book a stay with “a less than excellent or silent review history” would “simply be declined”.

However the arguments made did not stack up for planners or councillors, who rejected the proposals at the Development Management Sub-Committee on Wednesday.

In a report the council said: “The change of use of this property to a short term let (STL) will have an unacceptable impact on neighbouring amenity.

“Whilst it is recognised that there is an economic benefit to the city as a whole from the provision of tourist accommodation, in this case it does not outweigh the adverse impact on residential amenity.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

