

Green light for purpose built student accommodation on Dunedin Street

Developers behind new Edinburgh student flats have had their plans passed on the second attempt, after the council previously raised concerns the building would 'overdevelop' the site.

Planners gave the green light for purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) on Dunedin Street following revisions which reduced the number of bed spaces from 73 to 65.

But neighbours were left up in arms after they claimed the council didn't notify them about the new application.

The site, home to a vacant car rental garage now set for demolition, sits beside another soon-to-be student halls with 155 beds, which was granted planning permission last September.



Existing warehouse. Image: Google.

Developers Dunedin Street (Edinburgh) LLP's original bid for 73 studio flats was refused around the same time due to it being too big and having insufficient outdoor space, amounting to "an over development of the site," the council ruled.

After going back to the drawing board they re-submitted plans in March this year.

While the height of the six-storey block was not reduced, the building was reduced in size and changed from being irregular shaped to L-shaped. The revised smaller block will instead have 41 studio flats and 24 shared 'cluster' flats, sleeping 65 altogether.

Plans stated: "The proposed development at Dunedin Street will replace an existing light industrial building with new student housing in a landscape that will improve the public realm streetscape and offer some new open space where residents and neighbours can socialise

"At ground level, an open landscape contiguous with the neighbouring development at Beaverhall Estate will provide

socially and environmentally valuable spaces and a connection to Beaverhall Estate's 'Makers Yard' and Logie Mill beyond.

"A courtyard to the rear of the building will provide a more private social space for the students as well as planting to improve the local microclimates, support biodiversity and also some sustainable urban drainage

"The roof terrace will provide a 'back garden' amenity for the residents, with some areas that can be planted and tended by residents if they wish. Planting on the roof will help create a sense of shelter for residents and also seasonal resources for local wildlife."

However some locals continued to object after the new proposals emerged, with one saying the development would have an "unacceptable effect on daylight in our building".

Another wrote: "The massing of the development is not justified and does not reflect local priorities in terms of affordable housing or proximity to education sites.

"The roof terrace will only be usable in the summer and will cause noise pollution to the surrounding neighbours."

Neighbours also complained they were not sufficiently notified of the new application in line with planning regulations.

"Due process was ignored in the fact that the residents of 21 Dunedin Street were not provided with neighbourhood notification despite being opposite the proposed development site," one said.

Despite the concerns city planners gave the go ahead on Thursday, July 18 and said work must commence within three years.

The council said the new proposal provided a "sufficient quantity of usable outdoor open space for the future occupants of the building".

They added: "The proposal would not amount to an over development of the site and would be keeping with the established urban grain and the character and amenity of the area.

"Therefore, the proposal complies with the development plan."

By Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter