

Autowash firm's car port blocked views of railway bridge

A vehicle valet firm has lost its bid for planning permission for a car port after planners ruled it blocked views of a listed railway bridge.

Auto-foam, on Eskbank Road, Dalkeith, had applied for retrospective temporary permission for the structure, used to cover cars which have been cleaned.

However they faced objections from locals who said the port, which is already in place, was a 'blot on the landscape' and blocked views of the historic 19th century railway overbridge at the bottom of the site.

The bridge, which is category B listed provides entrance to housing in Cemetery Road, next to the car wash firm.

Planners said the business was based on one of the main gateways into Dalkeith town centre at a point where the character of the area turns from commercial to residential in the Eskbank conservation area.

They said: "The surrounding houses are traditional in design and contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

"The proposed car port appears to be designed in a functional

industrial style. The appearance of the building takes no reference from, or account of, the surrounding area and is a design more suited to an industrial/business estate rather than within a conservation area at the entrance to the historic town of Dalkeith."

Planners said they received five objections to the car port which was described as being an "ugly, incongruous structure" with complaints it obscured the view of the historic bridge, adding "as such is a blot on the landscape".

Historic Environment Scotland described the bridge as of special interest because it was built after 1853 and crossed the dismantled North British Railway line.

Refusing planning permission for the car port, planners said: "The proposed car port has a significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area.

"It also has a significant impact on the setting of a category B listed bridge and therefore is not considered acceptable."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter