

Councillors set to approve Merchiston development despite multiple objections

A 168 flat development in Merchiston with two parking spaces is set to be approved by councillors – despite over 150 objections from members of the public.

Most objections relate to the low number of parking spaces, with both being for disabled persons only. New residents would also not be eligible for residential parking permits in the local area.

The former Caledonian Brewery, located off Slateford Road, is set to be redeveloped into flats and offices after stopping running in 2022.

Some 164 comments were received from locals about the development, with 152 in opposition.

One read: “I am alarmed that there are only two car parking spaces proposed for 100 new properties.



A rendering of the Caledonian Brewery development | Image via Edinburgh Council planning portal





“The proposal will cause chaos in surrounding streets where parking is at capacity. This is very poor planning.

“For the sake of the existing community, please insist that the developers build more parking spaces into their plans.

Another said: “As a long-term resident, parking has always been an issue around the area. The public transport at peak times will be overloaded.

“I am not a car owner, but have been, and the challenges of parking for myself and visitors has been difficult.

“The proposed development will, unless there are changes to the parking, cause disruption and distress to the area.”

But a report for councillors says that the site is ‘well-suited to the proposed low-parking strategy’, and said that the surrounding area served as a 20-minute neighbourhood, with many amenities within walking distance.

The developer will be required to pay £83,000 towards the provision of four car club parking spaces in the area.

Officers are recommending that councillors are approving the scheme, and stress in a report that the low parking level is in compliance with the city's development plan.

The 4, 34, 35 and 44 Lothian Buses services stop right outside of the new development, providing frequent services towards the city and to points west.

Some locals wrote to the council supporting the development. One wrote: "This is an attractive scheme with a character derived from retaining some historic buildings.

"The consultation process conducted by the applicant's agent has been very good."

One 'neutral' objector spoke in support of the parking level, saying: "It's good to see a see a housing development with no resident parking allocation.

"It is an inner city location, well served by public transport, a new path and a carshare. So a car should not be necessary for everyday use.

"They do however need to make provision for delivery parking, tradespeople and a carshare space. They must provide secure parking for bicycles and larger strollers for this to work."

A total of 365 bicycle parking spaces are proposed for the development, with 277 being secure spaces in the basements of two of the proposed flat blocks.

The development would include four new housing blocks. Two of them would extend from the existing historic building, while two would be freestanding six-storey blocks.

Most of the original brewery would be retained, with the remaining historic buildings becoming parts of the flat blocks

or being used for office space.

Some of the site will be demolished, including industrial spaces difficult to convert into flats and a part of the complex that was built in 1994.

One studio flat will be built in the development, along with 65 one bed flats, 67 with two beds and 35 with three.

Some 40 of the flats will be affordable, all located in one of the two new freestanding blocks.

The brewery opened in 1869, running for over 150 years before its closure in 2022. At the time it closed, it was producing beer for Heineken, including Deuchars IPA.

Its operations were taken up by Belhaven, which runs a brewery in East Lothian.

By Joseph Sullivan Local Democracy Reporter