

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A 4 STOREY BLOCK OF 9 FLATS
AND A COMMERCIAL UNIT,
45M NORTH OF 14 CANONMILLS, EDINBURGH,
Planning reference 23/06328/FUL.**

**Formal planning objection
on behalf of
the owners at 3/4 Warriston Road,
Canonmills, Edinburgh.**

15 October 2023



1 John's Place
Edinburgh
EH6 7EL

**Proposed development of a 4 storey block of 9 flats and a commercial unit,
45m north of 14 Canonmills, Edinburgh, Planning reference 23/06328/FUL.**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 We have been asked by the joint owners of the adjacent properties at 3/4 Warriston Road, Canonmills, Edinburgh, to review and comment on the recent planning application which has been submitted for the property at 45m north of 14 Canonmills, Edinburgh Planning reference 23/06328. There are 15 properties within this development and this report is designed to provide a collective objection to the proposed new development.
- 1.2 We have reviewed the documents attached to the application and would comment as follows: -

2.0 General overview

- 2.1 The application describes the site as an “underutilised” piece of ground and fails to mention that it is actually a total of 21 car parking spaces, consented as part of the Canon Court aparthotel a number of years ago. These are located as a block where the new building is proposed with a further 3 spaces to the north side of the access road into the site, the area proposed for the new bin storage area. We have visited the site on a number of occasions and note that the majority of the existing spaces are being used, presumably by some of the guests staying at Canon Court. As a result, we would dispute the claim that the site is underutilised. The report makes no reference to the existing use, the fact that it was part of the earlier consent, and whilst there may now be planning policy support to reduce the number of parking spaces, the impact of this is not defined in the submission.
- 2.2 The general form and massing on the proposed new building appears to be out of character and scale with the surrounding historic buildings.
- 2.3 It should be noted that the site is located within the southeast corner of the Inverleith Conservation Area. This includes the existing buildings at 1-2 Warriston Road and 1-4 Munro Place and little consideration has been given to the design massing and specific orientation of the proposed new building.
- 2.4 With specific regards to the architectural character, the Inverleith Conservation Area states the following:-

“The design of interventions should be based on a sound understanding of context. Policy DES1 of the Edinburgh City Local Plan and Proposed Local Development Plan requires that design should be based on an overall design concept that draws upon positive characteristics of the surrounding area to create or reinforce a sense of place.

The Council’s planning guidance generally states a presumption for sandstone and other traditional, natural materials where these form the predominant palette in the surroundings of the development.

- *High quality, innovative modern designs and materials are not precluded, but proposals must be able to demonstrate their respect for the historic character of the host building and the area.*
- *The cumulative effect of multiple developments within the same street or area should be taken into account.*

We believe that the proposed scheme fails to take into account these requirements and fall well short of the requirements for a new development in the conservation area.

- 2.5 The two immediately adjacent blocks at Warriston Road and Munro Place are 3 storey with pitched slate roofs. The new block is proposed as being 4 storey with a large 12 .65m high largely blank gable some 1.8 metres from the rear garden wall of 1-2 Warriston Road. This clearly overshadows the garden ground and whilst we note that the attached sunlight report states that this is not an issue, we are not convinced that, as the new block sits directly to the southeast of these gardens, that there will not be a significant loss of sunlight to these gardens in the morning for much of the year.
- 2.6 In addition, there are apartment windows shown on both the northwest gable which look directly into the existing windows of 1 and 2 Warriston Road.
- 2.7 The massing of the block also sits directly in front 1-2 Munro place and again whilst we accept there is no such thing as a right to a view the massing will undoubtedly be detrimental to the residential amenity of these existing properties.
- 2.8 In reviewing the Daylighting and Sunlighting Report prepared by Hollis, we note the following:-

2.8.1 The daylighting section notes that there are 9 rooms in the surrounding buildings which are directly affected by the new development, 3 in 3B Warriston Road, 5 in Munro Place and a single window in Canon Court. All of these rooms fail to meet the BRE standard ADF target and the development clearly would have an impact on them. We understand that all of these rooms are reported to be living rooms

2.8.2 Perhaps more concerning is the fact that the proposed block is 4 storey and when tested against the 25-degree VSC rule, as set out in section 2.10 of the Edinburgh Design Guidance, they fall well short of these requirements. We have marked up a copy of the submission drawing 21054.020009, site sections, to show the extent of this failure.



2.8.3 It is noted that the bedroom windows to the northwest elevation of the new block would only be approximately 18 meters from the existing bedrooms to the rear of 2 Warriston Road.

2.8.4 In addition, it is noted that the southeast elevation, which is a 4 storey blank gable is only some 9.5 m from the front elevation of 1-2 Munro Place.

All of the above appears to confirm the initial view that a four storey block of residential accommodation is too large and overpowering for this particular site.

2.9 In addition we are disappointed by the lack of design in the new block (see also pt 2.2). The existing buildings surrounding the site have their own individual characters, whether that is the aparthotel of Canon Court, the historic tenemental blocks at Warriston Road and Munro Place or the more recent development at 3 & 4 Warriston Road. The proposed block is unimaginative and could be located anywhere. It shows no respect to the surrounding environment and is simply a 4 storey flat roofed block plonked onto the site.

- 2.10 It also appears that there is a lack of usable amenity space to serve the number of flats proposed in this area, but there does not appear to be information defining this. This would require to be checked and confirmed as being compliant.
- 2.11 Moving on to policy, in our view the current proposals fall well short of the requirements set out in Local Development Plan policies. In particular we consider that it fails to comply with the following:-

Policy Des 1 Design Quality and Context

Policy Des 4 Development Design – Impact on Setting,

Policy Des 5 Development Design – Amenity and Policy

We have summaries below our concerns in respect of the proposed development and these policies.

“2 Design Principles for New Development

The Council encourages innovation and well designed developments that relate sensitively to the existing quality and character of the local and wider environment, generate distinctiveness and a sense of place, and help build stronger communities.”

“Policy Des 1 Design Quality and Context

Planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that the proposal will create or contribute towards a sense of place. Design should be based on an overall design concept that draws upon positive characteristics of the surrounding area.”

“Policy Des 4 Development Design – Impact on Setting

Planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that it will have a positive impact on its surroundings, including the character of the wider townscape and landscape, and impact on existing views, having regard to:

- a) height and form*
- b) scale and proportions, including the spaces between buildings*
- c) position of buildings and other features on the site*
- d) materials and detailing”*

2.12 In addition, we note that the Edinburgh Design Guidance states the following:-

2.1 Height and form

Match the general height and form of buildings prevailing in the surrounding area.

Where new developments exceed the height of neighbouring buildings ensure they enhance the skyline and surrounding townscape.

2.2 Scale and proportions

Harmonise the scale of buildings including their size and form, windows and doors and other features by making them a similar size to those of their neighbours.

Where the scale of proposed new development is different to that of surrounding buildings, ensure there is a compelling reasoning for the difference.

Again, this proposed development fails to comply with these design principles.

2.13 Finally we note that there are already 6 public objections to this application. AS noted above this pert has been prepared on behalf of the joint owners at 3/4 Warriston Road and should be considered as a multi person objection.

2.14 Against the background of this review, we feel that the Council should have no alternative but to refuse this application as currently submitted as it fails to comply with these policies.