

Comments for Planning Application 22/02682/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: 22/02682/FUL

Address: Flat 6 2 Saunders Street Edinburgh EH3 6TQ

Proposal: Change of use from residential to short-term lets.

Case Officer: Lesley Porteous

Customer Details

Name: Mr Andrew Buchan

Address: 1/23 Saunders Street Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Residents Association

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I moved into 1/23 Saunders Street 11 years ago and met Scott Garcia shortly after. He is a perfectly decent and dependable individual and goes the extra mile for his tenants and has always helped with matters relating to the communal building including the installation of a full new security system last year which has greatly improved the stair environment. I am a trustee of the Saunders Streets residents association that takes care of matters concerning the block and I am more than happy to recommend him as a landlord and a host.

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Customer Details

Name: Mrs Joanna (Business owner) Tarnowska

Address: C team Cleaning 35 Moredunvale Way Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I have worked with Scott Garcia and his wife as their co-host and cleaner for their short-term lets for over 5 years. I have always found Scott to be a pleasure to work with. I manage a cleaning team of up to 10 people and without work from Airbnb and short-term lets my business would probably close. My cleaning business is our principle source of income. I clean Scott's properties between guest stays. Any issues in the communal stairs are either addressed directly or reported to Scott and he manages the repairs personally. I instruct my staff to always be respectful of the stair environment and to be friendly to the people who live there. My cleaners try to be as quiet as possible when cleaning the flats and only work between 11am and 4pm to keep noise and disturbance to a minimum. We don't need to carry anything other than 1 bag of laundry to and from the property as vacuum and cleaning products stay permanently at the property. On average we would visit each property 10 times per month between guest stays as most stays are between 3 and 4 nights.

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Case Officer: Lesley Porteous

Customer Details

Name: Ms Emma Nolan

Address: 69/3 Montgomery Street Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I have known Scott Garcia and his wife since 2014, first as their yoga teacher, as their friend, as godmother to their son and as now as co-trustee with Scott for our yoga charity. I have always known him to be a responsible, thoughtful and caring person and have witnessed first-hand the care he takes in hosting guests in his home and properties over the last 7 years, providing a clean, safe and welcoming space and facilities for guests to enjoy some time away from their own homes. I have also seen how much care he takes in maintaining good relations with neighbours, keeping them informed with group communications and creating stair Whatsapp groups, being considerate of their peace and privacy and asking their guests to be considerate too, as well as helping to maintain cleanliness and good condition of common property areas for the benefit of all the residents.

Regards

Emma Nolan

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Case Officer: Lesley Porteous

Customer Details

Name: Mr Simon Illingworth (Business owner)

Address: The Safari Lounge 21 Cadzow Place EDINBURGH

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Tourists coming to the area mostly via short-term lets make up a big part of our customer base. Our lunch and dinner custom would take a big drop in numbers without short-term lets.

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Customer Details

Name: Ms Rachel Stockton

Address: 6 (PF1) Bothwell Street Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:

The Garcias have been friends and neighbours for around 5 years.

In that time Scott has worked hard to restore and maintain flats that had seen better days - this includes improving communal areas to the benefit of everybody in the stair.

Scott and his partner actively encourage their guests to support local business.

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Customer Details

Name: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:

I am the applicant's sister and help him with the running of his short-term lets since he relocated with his family to Peebles a year and a half ago. I do not help with the day to day running but act as a local contact for guests if they have any problems during their stay. I live just 5 mins walk away from most of the properties. Having lived in many of the flats myself over the years I know the specifics of each property and can generally quickly help guests with any occasional problems they might have, either in person or over the phone if Scott is unavailable. Scott tries to be the best host he can be and does more than his share in the communal areas, changing broken lights and financing small repairs.

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Customer Details

Name: Ms Jackie Oudney

Address: 27/4 Edina Place Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:

I was a direct downstairs neighbour of Scott's for 5 years while he ran his Airbnb from the property and in this time I have seen him be instrumental in much of the stair maintenance either repairing himself or often funding and managing the repairs personally. I find him to be a very personable, conscientious Airbnb host - ensuring there are never any issues that would effect his neighbours, whilst maintaining his position as a responsible property owner.

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Case Officer: Lesley Porteous

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Fiona Kelly -

Address: 131/3 Montgomery Street Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I have known Scott Garcia as my direct next door neighbour in a block with 9 other flats. Scott and his wife are both absolutely wonderful neighbours. Scott regularly does repairs around the stairwell and communal garden, eg, changing bulbs, repairing the entry phone system and maintaining the garden. They are lovely people, offering any help needed to me and my family. Since renting out their apartment to Air BNB 5 years ago, I can honestly say there has never been an issue with their guests and I live directly next door sharing 2 walls so I would know. Further, they have always made it clear that if there are any issues, to contact them straight away and they would deal with it.

If I can be of any further help, please do not hesitate contact me

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Customer Details

Name: Mr Roy Buchanan

Address: 131 (2F3) Montgomery Street Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment:Ellie and Scott have been my direct downstairs Neighbours in one of their properties . In the years that they have been renting their property out there's never been any problems with their guests but occasional general stair and building problems crop up where Scott is very quick at responding and helping out. Scott has given me his phone number in case of any issues. Both Scott and his partner Ellie are a delight to talk to while passing in the stair. They are always positive minded and enthusiastic about life.

Roy

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Case Officer: Lesley Porteous

Customer Details

Name: Mr Chris Denmark

Address: 2F2, 2 West Norton Place Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I have known Scott for 11 years. His property shares its lounge wall directly with my bedroom and I have never had any problems with noise etc, over the 6 years he has hosted Airbnb guests. I have found him to be a reliable and responsible owner of the property. He set up our stair committee with another owner which has been invaluable in facilitating our ongoing building improvements. Contact me on 07917 653 586 if you require any further information
Chris Denmark

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Customer Details

Name: Mr Grant McNeil (Business owner)

Address: The Mash Tun Pub 154 Easter Road Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The Mash Tun was here before Airbnb's and we can remember a huge uplift in custom post-Airbnb. Around 50% of our lunch time trade is from tourists who only get to the areas outside the city centre because they stay in Airbnb's nearby. It's a worry what we'll do if it stops.

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Customer Details

Name: Mrs Joanna Susik

Address: Sapphire Shine Ltd. (Property Maintenance) 7/14 Lochend Park View Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I helped Mr Garcia with property management at this short-term lets in Edinburgh. My company employs 22 people and calls in tradesmen, laundry services and other staff sub-contracted to deal with any specific maintenance issues if required. The loss of good Airbnb and short-term let hosts would put an end to a huge amount of economic activity in the area and would have a huge negative effect on my business and the businesses of the people I work with. We take great care to work harmoniously with the other residents in the stairs and discuss this with all staff. Staff are instructed to be polite to other residents, work as quietly as possible and to generally be respectful of the peaceful stair environment. Any material issues in the stair are reported back to the owner by the cleaners and generally addressed promptly and often at the owners expense. Our cleaners sweep up any litter found in the communal stairs when they visit. Under normal circumstances staff would generally only need to access properties 10 times per month to clean between guests. Access inside the properties is generally only between the 11am check-out and 4pm check-in times of guests. I find Mr Garcia to be a very conscientious and considerate owner who routinely puts care for residents before his own convenience.

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Customer Details

Name: Mr Asif Awan

Address: 2 (GF3) West Norton Place, Edinburgh

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Having being a resident and now a landlord in Edinburgh for over 6 years, I have to admit I'm very indebted to the support Scott has provided the flat stair committee. From small maintenance changes to helping start the stair committee resulting in countless improvements in full repaint, damp proofing and renovation of the stair. Scott has hosted Air bnb guests at his property for over 7 years but they have never been a problem to me or, I believe, anyone in the stair.

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Customer Details

Name: Lord Cockburn Association

Address: 1 Trunks Close, 55 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1SR

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Amenity Body

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: It is our view that in this residential shared access context the proposed change of use is not in accordance with Policy Housing 7 'Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas' as it would have a materially detrimental effect on the living conditions of other residents sharing common external spaces and access areas, and so should not be permitted.

In addition, the proposed change of use is not supportive of either Scottish Government Housing policy on More homes - "everyone has a quality home that they can afford and that meets their needs" or Scottish Planning Policy on "socially sustainable places" and "supporting delivery of accessible housing".

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Customer Details

Name: Dr The Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland

Address: 15 Rutland Square, Edinburgh EH1 2BE

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Amenity Body

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: The AHSS Forth & Borders Cases Panel has examined the proposals for the change of use to short-term let within the New Town Conservation Area, and objects.

- 1) The proposals only relate to one property within the tenement, which is accessed from a shared stair. This would have a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, and limits the future of the flats not included within the application.
- 2) The change of use would contribute to the unsustainable growth of the short term let (STL) sector in Edinburgh. The economic benefits of tourism for Edinburgh are clear, and we celebrate the role that our architectural heritage plays in this sector. However, the current rising rate of STLs threatens the sense of place and community which are part of the city's attraction, and this is especially acute in the World Heritage Site.
- 3) Scottish Government Research has highlighted the links between STLs and the negative impacts of reduced availability of affordable housing, congestion and reduced quality of life through noise and disturbance (People, Communities and Places, October 2019, pp. iv-v)
- 4) With particular reference to architectural heritage the responsibility for the care and maintenance of communal areas and aspects of joint responsibility in listed buildings and conservation areas is diminished by the increase of short-term occupants.

The change of use does not respect the special characteristics of history and place reflected in the building's designation and location in the World Heritage Site, and would increase the negative impacts caused by the growth of STLs in Edinburgh.

The proposals contradict Edinburgh Council's Local Development Plan policies DES1 (Sense of place), DES5 (amenity of neighbours/refuse and recycling facilities), and HOU7 (Materially detrimental effect on the living conditions of nearby residents). We therefore object to the

application.