

24 Westfield Road, Edinburgh



Student housing success in the west of Edinburgh for S Harrison Developments

CLIENT

S Harrison Developments Ltd

LPA

City of Edinburgh Council

STATUS

Planning permission granted

SERVICES

Planning, Heritage and
Townscape, Economics,
Sustainability

Our role

- Located to the west of Edinburgh's city centre, in close proximity to Murrayfield Stadium, the site accommodated a vacated furniture retail store, office building and a car park.
- We facilitated several months of collaborative working between S Harrison, ICA Architects and the council's planning officers at pre-application stage to resolve design and technical matters.
- We prepared a robust planning case for the development, justifying the proposal against development plan policy and rebutting the council's interpretation of their housing development policy and non-statutory Student Housing Guidance document.
- An application for planning permission was submitted to City of Edinburgh Council in April 2019.

Results

- The application for 394 student bedrooms was approved in October 2019 by City of Edinburgh Council's Development Management Sub-Committee against officer recommendation, with six members voting in favour of the development and five members voting against.
- The planning officer's committee report offered a single reason for refusal, which was that the proposal fails to deliver any mainstream housing on the site. We provided justification to the council that delivery of both student accommodation and mainstream residential development on the site would not be viable financially, socially or from the point of view of management and land use efficiency.
- Discussion at the committee meeting indicated that, on the whole, members did not think that the proposed reason for refusal was watertight, and that it was unlikely to be upheld by a Reporter if the application was refused and subsequently appealed.