Marina bid gets green light from planners

2000 homes and a hotel to transform Granton Harbour

ALISTAIR GRANT

MAJOR plans to transform Granton Harbour and pump more than £300 million into the economy could finally be set to become a reality.

A revised masterplan for the new Edinburgh Marina development – featuring 2000 homes and a hotel – was pushed through the planning committee this week.

But question marks still hung over a large retail and leisure centre pegged for the south-east of the site, with councillors delaying any final decision until more details become available.

Work is now expected to begin on the complex in the early spring, with construction lasting three years and a completion date of early 2019 pencilled in.

The move marks the culmination of more than ten years of plans for the harbour, which has seen its re-development stalled since initial blueprints were drawn up for a marina, hotel, flats and leisure facilities in 2003.

The current revised master-plan will see more than 2000 homes built alongside a 123-bed “conference and spa hotel”, 300-berth marina and community boatyard.

Developers said the project will be “the first new marina next to a capital city in Europe for several decades”.

And they hailed the council’s decision to approve much of the scheme as “a wonderful Christmas present for the people of Granton, who have been forced to live far too long with Granton Harbour in its current state”.

Kevin Fawcett, of Granton Central Developments, said the plans would be “nothing like Ocean Terminal” – focused instead on local artisans and small businesses.

He insisted the blueprints had the backing of residents, adding: “As far as I’m concerned, hand on heart, they have been very supportive. Those that live there are very supportive, as they bought into a dream ten to 15 years ago and ended up living in desolation.”

He confirmed the development would make room for any future extension of the tram line to Granton and Leith, as well as a potential fast-link ferry service to Kirkcaldy.

But David Miller, of Granton and District Community Council, insisted the plans were the equivalent to “throwing money down the drain”.

He said: “Granton Harbour is not big enough for a marina – it’s not deep enough either. This is Scotland. It’s not the French Riviera, it’s not the Bahamas.”
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"It’s going to cost far too much money, and they’re not going to get the money back. The marina is just going to be another black hole. There’s so much work to be done down there before they even start.

"Local people are not going to get any benefit out of this. I don’t know anybody round here who has actually got a job on these developments."

In a report to councillors before Monday’s meeting, planning officials recommended the city refuse the blueprints.

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