# Fife Council approves 703-bed student housing at Kilrymont despite local opposition



# Plans for Student Accommodation at Kilrymont Approved Amid Neighbourhood Concerns

In a controversial decision, Fife Council has approved plans for a significant student accommodation project at the former Madras College site in Kilrymont, St Andrews. The approved development will comprise 703 student beds, adding to approximately 400 rooms already in operation or under construction in the area. This move comes as the landscape of housing in St Andrews faces ongoing challenges, particularly in catering to the rising number of students.

Developers, Scotsman Developments, assert that their plans are a necessary response to the chronic shortage of purpose-built student accommodation in St Andrews. The company claims this initiative will relieve pressure on the local housing market, enabling more homes for residents and families in the town. They expressed satisfaction over the council's approval, highlighting the planned creation of additional amenities such as community-use facilities alongside the accommodation.

However, the project has not been without opposition. Local residents and a number of councillors fear that the influx of more than 1,000 students into a predominantly residential area will drastically alter the community’s character. Councillor Ann Verner, a member of the Scottish National Party, voiced her discontent, stating, “I’m really, really upset this has got this far... It’s going to kill that part of town altogether.” Her apprehension extends to potential noise disruption, especially late at night, as a large number of students returning from events could lead to significant disturbances.

Fellow councillor Jane Ann Liston echoed these sentiments, highlighting the dramatic difference between the earlier proposal for 102 residential units and the current approval for over 700 student beds. “What we agreed before was 102 dwellings... now we’re having instead is over 700 people. That’s quite a different kettle of fish,” she remarked. Such comparisons point to a growing concern regarding density and sustainability within St Andrews' residential framework.

To address potential issues associated with the development, Fife Council’s planning officer, Sarah Hyndman, indicated that a dedicated management company would oversee the student accommodation, ensuring resident conduct is monitored and inappropriate behaviour is addressed through rental agreements. The planned addition of CCTV and a shuttle bus service to encourage public transport use aims to limit car traffic and improve safety in the area.

Despite the objections, some councillors have shown support for the project. Donald Lothian, a Liberal Democrat councillor, noted the accommodation’s potential attractiveness, albeit with a recognition that it does not completely align with what had originally been envisioned for the site. He stated, “It’s not exactly what’s been anticipated for many years… but I think it’s probably acceptable in planning terms.”

The approved development, resulting from a narrow vote of 6 to 4 in favour, raises important questions about the balance between providing student accommodation and addressing local housing needs. With St Andrews reported to hold a vast proportion of Fife’s Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), stakeholders are keenly aware of the implications for its community fabric. The tension between fostering a vibrant student population and maintaining residential life is poised to be a pivotal issue in any future discussions regarding housing strategies in the area.

As St Andrews braces for this substantial increase in student population, the long-term impact on neighbourhood dynamics remains to be seen. The challenge now will be to find a way to integrate the needs of both students and residents in a manner that upholds the character and quality of life in this historic town.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/), [[2]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/st-andrews-former-madras-college-to-be-massive-student-accommodation-block-4090320), [[3]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/hundreds-of-student-bedrooms-in-phase-three-of-major-st-andrews-development-4835632)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/), [[4]](https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/plans-for-703-student-bedrooms-at-former-madras-college-in-st-andrews)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/), [[5]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/st-andrews-student-accommodation-development-would-safeguard-community-pool-says-developer-4455409)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/), [[6]](https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/plans-for-703-student-bedrooms-at-former-madras-college-in-st-andrews)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/hundreds-of-student-bedrooms-in-phase-three-of-major-st-andrews-development-4835632), [[4]](https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/plans-for-703-student-bedrooms-at-former-madras-college-in-st-andrews)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/), [[3]](https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/hundreds-of-student-bedrooms-in-phase-three-of-major-st-andrews-development-4835632)

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## Bibliography

* <https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/5239277/st-andrews-kilrymont-student-accommodation-approved/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/st-andrews-former-madras-college-to-be-massive-student-accommodation-block-4090320> - Fife Council has approved plans to transform the former Madras College buildings and grounds at Kilrymont into a large-scale student accommodation block. The development will feature 209 student bedrooms, a café, a convenience store, and a deli, aiming to address the shortage of suitable housing for students in St Andrews. The existing three-storey school building, a B-listed structure, will be repurposed, retaining as many historical features as possible. The project is expected to provide much-needed student accommodation while preserving the building's historical significance.
* <https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/hundreds-of-student-bedrooms-in-phase-three-of-major-st-andrews-development-4835632> - Scotsman Developments Ltd has unveiled plans for Phase 3 of a major development at the former Madras College site in St Andrews, proposing over 700 new student bedrooms. This phase aims to provide 703 bed spaces within 132 accommodation clusters, along with the retention and refurbishment of the existing sports hall, community-use facilities, and pool hall. The development seeks to address the chronic shortage of purpose-built student accommodation in St Andrews and alleviate pressure on existing housing stock operating as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).
* <https://www.scottishconstructionnow.com/articles/plans-for-703-student-bedrooms-at-former-madras-college-in-st-andrews> - Scotsman Developments Ltd has revealed plans to create 703 more student bedrooms at the former Madras College in St Andrews. The builds are part of the firm’s Phase 3 plans for the former playing fields within the northern part of the Kilrymont site. A total of 703 bed spaces are proposed within 132 accommodation clusters, and developers plan to retain and refurbish the sports hall, community-use facilities, and pool hall. Scotsman Developments says that St Andrews has the highest number of HMOs in Fife, claiming that the historic town has 85% of the kingdom’s total of 974 in St Andrews alone.
* <https://www.fifetoday.co.uk/news/politics/council/st-andrews-student-accommodation-development-would-safeguard-community-pool-says-developer-4455409> - Developers have vowed to protect an existing community swimming pool as part of a major student accommodation development in St Andrews, if plans are approved. The former Madras College swimming pool could be protected and retained for community use as part of a major student accommodation development in St Andrews. Scotsman Developments Ltd has submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PAN) this week signalling their intent to apply for full planning permission after a 12-week public consultation period. They hope to see up to 600 new student beds built at the former Madras College campus site on Kilrymont Road.
* <https://www.scottishhousingnews.com/articles/plans-for-703-student-bedrooms-at-former-madras-college-in-st-andrews> - Scotsman Developments Ltd has revealed plans to create 703 more student bedrooms at the former Madras College in St Andrews. The builds are part of the firm’s Phase 3 plans for the former playing fields within the northern part of the Kilrymont site. A total of 703 bed spaces are proposed within 132 accommodation clusters, and developers plan to retain and refurbish the sports hall, community-use facilities, and pool hall. Scotsman Developments says that St Andrews has the highest number of HMOs in Fife, claiming that the historic town has 85% of the kingdom’s total of 974 in St Andrews alone.