

From: Mark Phelan <REDACTED>

Sent: 28 April 2022 18:19

To: Commercial Property <Commercial.Property@edinburgh.gov.uk>

Subject: Proposed community asset transfer Blackhall Community Trust of the Ravelston Park Pavilion and surrounding parkland, Craigcrook Rd, Edinburgh EH4 3RU

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to comment on the above proposed transfer and to register my strong objection to such a transfer taking place. The reasons are as follows:

1. While named a Trust and being a registered charity, “Blackhall Community Trust” is actually a company owned and operated by 3 or 4 individuals for the purposes of commercial trading. While the trading of the nursery has been in conjunction with Edinburgh City Council it is clear that any expansion of the nursery is in essence as a commercial enterprise. This property and land is a community asset, and simply because the company has “Community” in its name doesn’t qualify it as such. Even if it is currently registered as a charity what is to say this wouldn’t be changed in the future, once ownership of the land is secured?

If, what is fundamentally a commercial business, wishes to expand its operations it should do so from an alternative, commercial property purchased or leased from a landlord in the normally way a business would.

2. The proposed expansion of this building will result in more people visiting it. We completely reject the assertion in the business plan that it will “allow more people to walk to and use a local facility”. People that already come and pick up their children from the nursery drive from within Blackhall, park dangerously outside the entrance and on the streets immediately adjacent to it, blocking peoples driveways or access to the park itself which is meant to be kept clear for emergency vehicles. This is only going to be made far, far worse by the following proposal. We live opposite the gate to the park and on numerous occasions have had to ask parents of children at the nursery to move their cars and park more courteously, and have also had to raise complaints with the nursery themselves about it. There is absolutely no way this proposal will not have a hugely negative impact in this regard.

3. If this new proposal goes ahead this will result in this new building being used later on in evenings and at night. There is already often antisocial behaviour that takes place in the park, particularly during school holidays, with people making a racket, shouting and doing all sorts as they make their way up into the woods. This proposal is going to result in even more antisocial behaviour taking place and we, the local residents, will be the ones that suffer as a result. This trouble making behaviour will become more concentrated in the park as people will now have this building outside which they can hang around, making noise and potentially causing trouble.

4. The proposed new building will be a significantly larger building than that currently on site. It will have a substantial negative visual impact on the park, predominantly for us as residents but also for visitors to the area. As stated in my early comments, if the operators of the nursery wish to increase the size of their business, they should find a suitable building elsewhere for this purpose.

5. I find it impossible to understand how the proposed transfer also includes a huge swathe of land in addition to the land being taken for any new building. Why would this land ever be considered being included in the transfer? Why is land for the community being allowed to go into the

Ravelston Park – Representation 068

ownership of a limited company. What is to stop that land being proposed for another change of use to residential development land at some point in the future once it has been transferred?

There is absolutely ZERO benefit to the community for this land to be transferred and, if done so, it would set a very dangerous precedent. This could open the door to other apparent “charities” claiming they would like some more of the land in the park for an alleged “community use”.

This proposed asset transfer must not be allowed to go ahead. There are plenty of other buildings that could be used for community events. The church hall, Blackhall Primary School and Blackhall Library to name just a few.

We strongly object to this transfer going ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Mark and Sarah Phelan
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Sent from my iPad