

Craigmillar residents to meet to discuss Cairntows development

by Oonagh Brown

Craigmillar residents are meeting tomorrow night 19 April to discuss regeneration plans for their local park.

The meeting is being held at the Hays Community Business Centre where locals will be discussing a recent planning application to build flats and shops in Cairntows Park. The application made by New City Vision in partnership with PARC life development company, has created outcry from the Craigmillar community.

Local campaigner, Bob Bell spoke to The Edinburgh Reporter about the importance of the local community attending the meeting. He said:- "We want to get as many people to attend the meeting as possible, to ask the developers if they ever asked the community if they supported this application." He went on, "There is already an abundance of available commercial property in the area. PARC had to pull back on its own development of homes in the area as they were not selling."

[PARC](#) claim that it is their aim to create affordable housing, new primary and high schools, 300,000 square feet of commercial and retail stores and a number of open woodland areas throughout Craigmillar, and also state that these developments will transform the lives of residents by providing job opportunities, leisure facilities and more efficient transport.

Though the community supports most of the development's aims, Mr Bell stated that many people are outraged. This is because they feel the park should be improved and developed as a park

and not as a housing development.

He said:- "The Parks Department have just spent a large amount of money in improving the park's facilities for example new benches and a community woodland has been added. Only last month new iron railings were installed in the park."

Councillor Maureen Child also told The Edinburgh Reporter that she is opposed to the proposed development as she is not convinced the development will benefit the community. She said:- "I have an acute concern that the green spaces and playparks promised through the urban design framework and the plans for the new Craigmillar Town Centre are going to be lost as the development unfolds."

As Councillor Child is campaigning against the development, she can no longer vote at the upcoming planning committee, which will make the decision on whether the application should be accepted. Yet she feels it is a worthwhile decision. As she said, "I do not often bail out of that responsibility, but have decided to do so in this particular case to help with the local campaign. I will oppose the development of Cairntows Park, as I did the development of the Viridor waste transfer site at Portobello."