

Plans to build on Cairntows Park scrapped



The meeting arranged by locals has now been cancelled due to the success of the campaign

Controversial plans to build on Cairntows Park in the Craigmillar area of Edinburgh have been scrapped.

The decision comes ahead of a local meeting on Monday, arranged by protesters opposing the plans.

Property developers New City Vision in conjunction with local organisation PARC had planned to build a range of mixed-tenure homes on the green space.

Harry O' Donnell, Chairman of New City Vision, said: "We have taken the decision not to proceed with planning permission for a variety of reasons.

"First and foremost, however, we were aware of the considerable local opposition to our proposals. We are a company that thrives on working closely with local communities, developing positive and long-term relationships in order to ensure our considerable investment meets local needs, across all levels.

"The level of local opposition for these proposals, as they stood, indicated to us that any positive working relationship moving forward would be difficult to sustain over the longer-term."

Chair of PARC, Councillor Tom Buchanan, added: "PARC exists to support development in Craigmillar and we are keen to see companies such as New City Vision put forward proposals for the area. New City Vision

has an excellent track record in areas where they get local community buy-in, creating investment and employment opportunities for local people.”

Cairntows is a highly popular area in Craigmillar for football, studying or even just to sunbathe, so much that residents launched a campaign to try and save the green space.

The Save Cairntows Campaign was fronted by local man Robert Bell, who said: “I am delighted to announce that Eric Adair of PARC has informed me that they have decided against proceeding with the proposed development of Cairntows Park and that the planning application has been withdrawn.

“With regard to the Park’s future, Mr Adair confirmed that if there was ever a case to look at the park again, it would be many years down the line and would be looked at as developing on a Public Park as opposed to this application which was based on the existing regeneration plan.

“I would like to thank everyone for their interest in this campaign; there has been good dialogue from both sides of the fence that has resulted in what I feel is the right outcome.

“It is very reassuring that a communities feelings have been taken into consideration.”

As well as being important to locals Cairntows is an important green space to many voices in authority. Councillor Maureen Childs, Labour Councillor for Portobello and Craigmillar, was extremely pleased with the company’s decision: “I am delighted that PARC has seen sense and drawn back from the brink of an ill-conceived proposal which has been contrary to Statutory Local Plans since time immemorial. A good decision and better made late than continue any longer.

“This means the local community have won an excellent campaign and they should take strength and credit from that. That said, it’s a campaign they should never have needed to mount if

there had been a better sense of the local furore that would be unleashed.”

MP for Edinburgh East Sheila Gilmore also welcomed the decision: “Just days before the local community were gearing up to take the developers to task at a public meeting, PARC and New City Vision have seen sense and pulled this plan to build over green space.

“Save Cairntows Park should be proud of their cast-iron fight to save Cairntows Park. Cairntows was always the wrong place to build and Parc should be looking to build on existing brown space.

“NCV have plans for building on the Taylors site which already has planning permission and at Niddrie Mill School where they promise to retain the old building. I look forward to seeing their detailed ideas for these sites.”