

# Opinion – Waste of money in Dumbryden Grove?

*UPDATE:- A City of Edinburgh Council spokesperson said:- “We have listened to the views of the residents of Dumbryden Grove and will respect their wishes. The proposal, which was only at the consultation stage, will now not be going ahead.”*

*Edinburgh Council wastes £75,000 of public funds and makes Edinburgh an uglier city at the same time!*

People who live in Dumbryden Grove don't want their currently green grove to be turned into a 'concrete/tarmac' quarter as a result of financially unsound investment.



One may argue that the look is not important and that the people who live here don't need the green around their houses. One may even argue that costs must be the first consideration. The council is investing £75,000 in order to save £100-150 of annual maintenance. Everybody will surely agree that this is extravagant and wasteful spending of public money.

The poorest quarters of the city were selected for further foliage removal in order to minimise ongoing maintenance costs. On closer inspection however this initiative is in our view a clear mismanagement of public money. All the idea is based on removal of public greenery e.g. grass within council housing estate and replacing it with tarmac and concrete. The tarmac is supposed to require minimum maintenance and thus save council money. But does it?



It was confirmed to us that the council agreed to invest £70,000 to concrete and tarmac these green areas and to deploy “Phase 2” of the project. This is estimated to cost up to

£5,000 for new trees and bushes around the small grove in small rootpots. We understand the accurate cost for Dumbryden Grove has not been calculated.



We do not believe savings from the projects were calculated.. The people of Dumbryden Grove therefore approached a qualified accountant to help them to estimate it. Dumbryden Grove area is made of three houses, eight doors with approximately 64 flats. The maintenance of this small square cannot require more than 10 hours of maintenance a year. Given the standard gardener charge, this should represent approx. £100-150/year. The pay back from the investment project is therefore more than 500 years. The accountant we consulted confirmed that no economically thinking person would invest in such a project.

We were advised to survey the areas where the project has been completed. We did look at the neighbouring areas. We believe that the Edinburgh council has given the word "hideous" completely new meaning. It is also apparent that the self-maintenance of those places failed. Trash and debris which would naturally decompose in the former greenery now lay on the tarmac. This gives Wester Hailes a deprived look of dirty concrete and tarmac with a minimum of foliage.



This waste of public money is executed against the background of disapproval from local residents. The people of Dumbryden Grove are united in their disapproval of this project. This is evidenced by the petition that was signed by 35 people in just four hours. It was also established that approximately 20% of these people have not been officially informed of the investment plan.



Will the council follow the will of the people who elected them? Will the Council consider the cost versus benefits analysis of the investment and start behave rationally as any other subject in this current economic environment? It certainly does not appear so. The building permission has already been granted and the council is now on track to waste your (=taxpayer's) money and make Edinburgh an uglier city at the same time!

On behalf of the people of Dumbryden Grove.

Submitted by [Ivo Novak](#)

