

Owner of historic house objects over 'dark shadows' and immigrants

The owner of an historic house next to a major new housing plan for Edinburgh said the local community does not deserve a 'whole load of immigrants' moving in, during a council meeting.

Andrew Parnell, who owns Caroline Park, next to the Granton Waterfront regeneration project, hit out at the latest application for the land, which includes 847 new homes alongside retail units, an energy centre and school.

He told a meeting of City of Edinburgh Council's development management sub committee the proposals were far removed from original plans agreed during discussions over the years between planners, developers and his estate.

And he accused the council of trying to 'ameliorate' the standards at the site to suit itself or developers.

He told the committee: "I understand the need for housing but the community in this area deserves better than a whole load of immigrants moving in."

Mr Parnell added he, himself, was 'an immigrant' having been born in Edinburgh but not in Granton and he pointed to proposals which include buildings which will be built beside the Elizabethan Caroline House and its gardens creating 'dark

shadows' all day impacting on plants and wildlife on the land.

Councillors approved the plans which are the first phase of a £1.3billion regeneration project to transform the waterfront.

It includes 847 'net zero ready' homes to be built in partnership with Cruden Homes on the city's largest brownfield site with nearly half affordable housing with a low carbon heating network planned and primary school.

Work on the first phase of what is being described as Edinburgh's newest quarter built around the Granton Gas Holder is due to begin next year.

Mr Parnell's concerns over the impact on Caroline Park sparked demands from one councillor for him to explain his immigrant comment, however committee convenor Councillor Hal Osler ruled it was not material to the planning decision before members and moved on.

Councillors welcomed the application for the first phase of the project.

Councillor Lezley Marion Cameron said: "This has been a long time coming and I am extremely happy and comfortable with the quality of what we are agreeing today."

Following approval of the application council leader Cammy Day said: "This is welcome news for Edinburgh as we can continue our exciting plans to transform the north of the city into a thriving, environmentally friendly, new neighbourhood.

"After declaring a housing emergency last year it is vital that much of the housing provided will be affordable. Using the latest advances in technology the homes will also be energy efficient keeping bills down for our tenants as well as helping the city to transition to net zero and meet our other climate goals."

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter