

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Common Good Land

There are specific regulations governing the management of Common Good. This is to ensure protection for assets held. This includes property that is considered 'inalienable'. This means that there is a restriction regarding the property, its purpose is clearly stated in the deed or gift to the Common Good Fund (often specifically dedicated for public use) or it has to be used in a certain beneficial way for a lengthy period of time (time immemorial).

The piece of land that is the subject of this proposal was gifted to the City in 1921 and has been used as public amenity land for time immemorial and therefore, is considered by the Council to be inalienable. The land was gifted with the condition:

“always keep and maintain the same as a Public Recreation Park and not to build on same or any part thereof any building except as are usual or necessary or expedient for the due equipment of a Public Recreation Park.”

It will be necessary to seek the consent of the Court of Session to any proposed disposal. Any application to the Court will include information about this consultation and the responses received. It will also have an impact on any likely timescales involved with selling the property should a decision be made to proceed with the proposal.

The information provided in the remainder of the document has been provided by Blackhall Community Trust as part of their Community Asset Transfer application.

Blackhall Community Trust

Blackhall Community Trust (BCT) was established as a company limited by guarantee (SC551774) in December 2016 securing charitable status (SCO47250) in March 2017. The Trust's objects are to:

- To advance community development within the Community, including urban regeneration
- To advance education, including early years and community learning, for the benefit of the public
- To provide facilities for recreation and sport and other leisure activities for the health and well-being of the public

The Community Trust is defined by the boundary of Blackhall Primary School catchment area

History of the Site

Blackhall Nursery 1999-2018 A success story in Ravelston Park Pavilion



June 1999 Vandalised and neglected



Aug 1999 Ravelston Park Pavilion is re-wired and refurbished



Sept 1999 14 children start Nursery and benefit from moving on to Blackhall Primary School together

1999 A team of local parents set up Blackhall Nursery in Ravelston Park Pavilion which had been vandalised and neglected. Work on Ravelston Park Pavilion took eight weeks. In September, Blackhall Nursery opened with two members of staff and 14 Blackhall children aged 3-5 years. Soon an afternoon class was added, creating places for another 14 children. Three extensions followed over the next eleven years.

Blackhall Nursery now offers free places to 60 local children.



Rose Garden, before and after: from muddy patch to well-used wild-flower garden with willow hides, open play space and cherry trees



Nursery Garden, before and after: from bare soil to much-loved outdoor play area with climbing equipment, playhouse and mini-pond



Nursery Extensions 2000 and 2008 One year later, demand for places led to a large extension and an increase to 48 places. Another extension in 2008 created places for 60 children. Despite this, Blackhall Nursery has never been able to meet all the local demand for places.



2018 In partnership with Blackhall Nursery, **Blackhall Community Trust** hopes to create more nursery places as well as a new community hub. We are consulting on possible site options for a revitalised Ravelston Park Pavilion.

1186
Number of children attending Blackhall Nursery since August 1999

253
Volunteer parents involved

25
Staff employed over 19 years

Our Improvements to Ravelston Park 1999-2009

- Lighting • Drainage work • Refurbished playpark
- Resurfaced paths • Basketball court • Bulb and tree planting




Nursery Provision

Blackhall Nursery, which currently works in partnership with CEC to deliver free Early Learning and Childcare places for eligible children, has been selected to pilot the Scottish Government's new Blueprint for 2020: Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare in Scotland – an excellent opportunity to build on its 20-year track record. Blackhall Nursery wishes to expand its facilities to offer more early learning and childcare provision (e.g. 40 places am/40 places pm for 600 hours in a blended model or to deliver all 1140 hours to a reduced number of children) in order to meet local demand. There are currently no providers in the Blackhall Primary catchment area who are able to offer funded Early Learning and Childcare places to eligible children so the sustainability of Blackhall Nursery is essential for parents and children and also for the Council and the Scottish Government as they aspire to deliver new targets **to give all children the best start in life.**

With the needs of the community and Blackhall Nursery in mind, BCT wishes to embark on a project which will develop Ravelston Park Pavilion to provide for all.

Community Facilities

The Trust's ultimate vision is to provide a welcoming, multi-age- group community facility which also provides a fit-for-purpose home for Blackhall Nursery. During Phase 1, this will be undertaken on a more modest scale, with small-scale meetings and activities taking place, such as Blackhall Community Trust's book group which currently meets in the building. Minor alterations could revitalise the building further e.g. adding to the amenity

of the park by providing an accessible toilet and storage for activities in the park and woods.

Once the building and land transfer to BCT ownership, the Trust will assume responsibility for Ravelston Park Pavilion, its maintenance and use. BCT intends to continue to lease the building to Blackhall Nursery and also to enable small group meetings and activities in Ravelston Park Pavilion whilst plans are prepared and funding put in place for Phase 2 of the project.

There are currently very few community facilities in the Blackhall area of the city and earlier community consultation carried out by the Trust (Jan 2016) identified the lack of meeting places for community events, a shortage of early years places at the nursery and a lack of sports facilities in the area. There are no community buildings serving the catchment area of BCT, with the exception of Blackhall Library.

The Benefits of Stage 1 are:

Community ownership of the building to provide a venue for small group activities

- The possibility of extending or adapting the existing building (as an alternative to the
- Phase 2 new build if necessary) to create more space for community activities
- The possibility of making adaptations for Blackhall Nursery e.g. providing lockable storage and creating a parent/staff room
- The opportunity to develop plans and put a funding package together for Phase 2

Phase 2 – Development of a new community facility

The **benefits of a new Ravelston Park Pavilion** for the people of Blackhall would be:

- Increased community cohesion across all age groups through access to a new local venue which will respond to local needs
- The opportunity to access more statutory funded Early Learning and Childcare currently denied to many local parents of three-year olds due to lack of capacity
- More recreational facilities and opportunities for all ages
- A better environment (less need to drive to access facilities elsewhere in the City)
- Improved health and well-being (more local walking, more exercise opportunities, less stress, year-round activities)
- Improved park facilities with separate access to a toilet and storage for equipment
- Opportunities to redirect funds back into the community, instead of paying to use facilities elsewhere e.g. football
- Overall, a safer, cleaner, greener Blackhall.

Timescales

Phase 1 will commence on the successful purchase of the pavilion by BCT and phase 2 will commence when funding has been secured.

Impact on Existing use

The preferred option for a new build (Stage 2) sees the current building replaced with a new and larger one tucked into the back of the site to minimise encroachment into the park. It maintains a strong relationship with the current site, thereby minimising any potential planning issues in relation to the neighbouring property compared with previous options considered.

Ravelston Park and Woods are also well used by different community groups and BCT would like to encourage the further expansion of this, e.g. to older people who lack confidence about using the local woods. The walking group uses local routes and has asked for wildlife walks on Corstorphine Hill and into Ravelston Park and Woods to get to know the local environment better.