

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 October 2019 15:10  
**To:** Community Asset Transfer <communityassettransfer@glasgow.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Community Asset Transfer request Cathkin Park

I am writing to express the strongest possible objections to the proposal for a community asset transfer of Cathkin Park to the Jimmy Johnstone Charitable Trust.

There are numerous concerns regarding this proposal, not least of which is the transfer of a publicly owned space into the hands of a small number of private individuals who are not based in the community or who have demonstrated that they have the community's interests or benefits at the heart of their proposal.

Firstly, the main concern is the flawed assertion of consultation with the community and demand for this proposal. The business plan sets out that 40 questionnaires were submitted as evidence of consultation.

The methodology for this questionnaire is not detailed in the business plan. No details have been given as to the questions asked, the times of day the participants were using the park, where they came from, how a random sample of respondents were selected. Without knowing which questions were asked and what information regarding the proposal was presented to the respondents this questionnaire is deeply flawed and cannot be assumed to give a true picture of local feeling.

I live in close proximity to the park and not one of my neighbours had heard of this proposal or been consulted, as the residents who would be most significantly affected by the proposal.

The PE teachers from the local school Holyrood Academy, who use the park with their pupils on a regular basis have not been informed of this proposal and have recently invested in an artificial football pitch for use by the school and public. Indeed the business plan makes no reference to the relationship this proposed provision would have to other football, sport and community facilities already in existence in the area, such as Toryglen indoor football arena, Govanhill Baths, Queens Park football, tennis and bandstand and Lesser Hampden, who provide a Youth Football development programme.

The Jimmy Johnston Charitable Trust and the Academy have no information on any of their social media detailing this proposal. Surely if there is huge demand for this facility the organisation taking responsibility would be happy to keep the local community and other potential supporters clearly informed of their plans?

The local community council have also not been consulted (they have been copied into this letter)

In all this suggests a hurried proposal, with no real appetite for true community consultation

Secondly there are serious concerns regarding the business plan and constitution of the Charity. The constitution states that there is a minimum of 3 directors of the charity, with no rotation of directors. These individuals are described in the business plan and according to the constitution can be directors of the trust in perpetuity.

There is no evidence presented that these individuals have the correct track records to run a facility of the type they are suggesting. They state that will be seeking further directors, but no skills gap analysis has been provided, or plan for how the necessary skills and backgrounds of director will be sought. There is no provision in the constitution of the charity for how any local voices or decision-making power will be represented on the board.

Therefore, the power over this publicly owned space is being sought by individuals who do not live in the community and no provision has been made for community voices on the board or indeed properly qualified people with experience of running community asset provision.

The business plans lay out the numerous reports into the benefits of sport provision, but there no real plans for what exactly the Trust will be delivering and how these activities and “events” will directly influence the issues laid out in these reports.

The business plan also states that there will be employees of the Trust but no job description for this person or persons has been provided.

The business plan also states that the provision will be to encourage young people from the surrounding area to participate in sports activities and to promote diversity and inclusion, but no safeguarding plan has been provided or assurances of how equalities, diversity and inclusion will be achieved. This also does not give confidence that these individuals are experienced enough to deliver a facility like this.

The business plan does also not give any indication of how the “ownership” of the area being requested will be policed. It seems hard to understand how an area of significant size will be monitored, given that at present this is an open access area for anyone in the community to use. Are the eventual plans to enclose this area, thus depriving the local community of access to green, free space? This will take the current equal access away from the general community and enhance provision for a small select group who participate (and I am assuming pay) for access.

There is no mention in the business plan on the impact of this proposal on local residents and how this will be mitigated. For example events may well attract an increased demand on already overstretched car parking space and increased congestion and noise in a quiet residential neighbourhood.

There are also several issues regarding the proposed financial projections. There is no evidence provided regarding the Trustees’ success and track record in fund raising yet there are projections for approximately £27,000 in grants and donations in the first year of operation. This is an extremely ambitious target for a new organisation with no track record. It includes grant funding from Glasgow City council, which seems bizarre given that the Trust have bought the lease for £1 annually and are expecting the council to then fund them to provide activities.

There is also a target of £3300 for lets, which again suggests charging for what is at present free provision.

For me this proposal smacks of other similar proposals that have recently involved selling off publicly owned green spaces for commercial gain, including recent proposals to sell Mount Florida bowling club to property developers, the proposal to sell the Queens Park Recreation

ground for the building of a care home, the selling of the Children's Wood in the West End, again for property development. The City Council's own Green Space policy should preclude any transfer of assets such as Cathkin Park, which has been a public space for 52 years since the demise of Third Lanark Football club (The ground taken over by GCC to prevent a scandal of corrupt property development)

I hope you will consider these serious concerns and objections to yet another attempt to remove from the people of Glasgow what belongs to them and refuse this proposal.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature block]

Cc [Redacted list of recipients]