



Statement by Calton Hill Conservation Trust on the Calton Hill Drive access barrier, 10 July 2024

The Calton Hill Conservation Trust have strong concerns about the open access barrier on Calton Hill Drive and we ask for the following to be considered:

1. Calton Hill is a historic site of national and international importance. A public park since 1725, the hill belongs to the Common Good of the people of Edinburgh. The hill itself, and six of its features, are included in the Common Good Asset Register. It is one of six premier parks in the city.
2. Council policy is against allowing general traffic in parks. *"The council ... agreed: ... that our parks should be public spaces for all to enjoy, and that the presence of cars and large vehicles was not consistent with that."* (3.6/3.6.1, Response to motion by Councillor Hyslop — Safer Parks, 7 March 2023).
3. As indicated by City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) notices at the entrance, Calton Hill Drive is *only* open to authorised vehicles; yet the barrier gate has been left open for many years, and general traffic is free to drive up the hill at all hours.
4. The access barrier entry mechanism dates back to around 2017. As far as we know, it has almost never been operational. It was repaired on 20 February 2024, and we understand that CEC have already costed additional features to ensure maintenance staff, local businesses, and people with accessibility needs can access the Hill as necessary.
5. The current unlimited vehicle access poses an unacceptable danger to pedestrians, particularly children, and wheelers. The lack of a safe footpath and limited space for passing vehicles further compounds these risks.
6. Unauthorised vehicles, at all times of day and night, bring up items resulting in litter and anti-social behaviour. This includes food packaging, gas cylinders, amplifiers, fireworks, and even electric generators. The resulting noise pollution especially impacts local residents.

Accordingly:

The Calton Hill Conservation Trust ask the City of Edinburgh to take action to set a date for closing the barrier to general unauthorised traffic of no later than 1 October 2024.

Simon Holledge, Chair
Susan Poupard, Vice Chair
Calton Hill Conservation Trust