

CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL

OBJECTION 35 – LAURA ROSS

This objection was signed by the objector and reproduced in typed (electronic) form by the clerking team

I am objecting to the Portobello Park Private Bill, which is being promoted by the City of Edinburgh Council. I object to the whole of the bill.

My reasons are as follows:

Three senior judges of the Court of Session ruled last year that Portobello Park cannot be built on as it is inalienable common good land. City of Edinburgh Council should not be pursuing a private bill to get round this ruling. The law has spoken and they should abide by it.

The park deed clearly says that the land should be kept for public recreation purposes for the people of Edinburgh in perpetuity and this original purpose should be retained.

The council has identified other suitable sites for the rebuild of the school, i.e. the current site and Baileyfield at Portobello High Street, both brownfield land. One of these options should be progressed instead of trying to build on public parkland that belongs to us all.

This bill, if successful, would set an example for other councils to follow and take common good land to develop for inappropriate purposes. This could set a precedent that would put common good land and green space across Scotland under threat.

My interests would be affected because if a precedent was set, it could be used again by Edinburgh or by other councils to change the use of common good land. Access to green space is proven to have significant health benefits and a precedent being set could put at risk my parks and green space, which I use regularly. This would lead to a reduction in my amenity and have a negative impact on my health, both physical and mental. I also believe that my interests are affected by the fact that I am an Edinburgh resident and the park forms part of Edinburgh's common good. The consultation carried out prior to the bill being lodged was Edinburgh-wide so that is a recognition of this fact.

I regularly use local parks with friends, family and their children – specifically Victoria Park, Portobello Park and Inverleith Park and regard them as absolutely vital community resources that should be safeguarded.

Please take my objections seriously and reject this bill.

23 June 2013