

## CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL

### OBJECTION 41 – RHONA AND COLM FITZGERALD

We are writing to object to the City of Edinburgh Council (Portobello Park) Bill. We wish to object to the whole of the bill. The reasons for our objections are as follows:

1. A change in the law to allow appropriation of Portobello Park will set a precedent as it will encourage other Councils and public bodies to introduce bills to appropriate common good land across Scotland. Therefore the status of common good land will be endangered, this will affect everyone. It will adversely affect us as we regularly enjoy exploring parkland across the country during weekend trips and holidays, which are mostly spent in Scotland.
2. The City of Edinburgh Council is acting beyond its remit as a local authority in attempting to change the law of the land to suits its own policies. The law has spoken on this subject and the City of Edinburgh Council should accept the court's verdict. Local authorities should not be introducing bills to Parliament in order to pursue their own interests. This is bureaucratic intransigence on behalf of the City of Edinburgh Council. Councils should confine themselves to delivering local services within the law of the land. Parliament should legislate based on national concerns rather than on a single local issue. It is unwise for Parliament to change the law of the land on one very specific local subject. This is an ineffective use of Parliamentary time and resources. As council tax and income tax payers we object to both the City of Edinburgh Council and the Parliament inappropriately using our monies in this way.
3. Portobello Park is a local asset which enhances the community and benefits all. We enjoy using the park for family walks, exploring nature, ball games and jogging etc. The removal of this parkland amenity for leisure and recreation would adversely affect our family and many others in the local area. Common good land should be available to be accessed by the whole community and urban green space should be preserved as it has a beneficial impact upon our quality of life. This would all be lost should the bill be passed. There are alternative brownfield sites available for the school. It is therefore possible to preserve the facility of the park and also have a modern school with excellent facilities in the local area.

4. The Park is not a suitable location for a large secondary school due to the entrance being off a main trunk road (A1 road). The City of Edinburgh Council claim they will introduce measures to manage the traffic. The reality is that on a four lane, fast arterial trunk road traffic levels will be very high and speeds will be beyond current and proposed limits. The Council is being disingenuous by proposing 20 mile an hour speed limits knowing that the enforcement will be inadequate. This will compromise pupils' and residents' safety and accidents will be inevitable. A fatality occurred in Holyrood Park on the 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013, this is a 20 mile an hour zone which is regularly breached. We object to the bill as the appropriation of Portobello Park in order to build the school will bring danger to ourselves and our one year old daughter. In addition, there will be increased pressure on parking in the local area. This will make it much more difficult for us and visitors to park close to our property.

We hope you will give due consideration to our objections.

20 June 2013