

## **CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL**

### **OBJECTION 44 – DUDDINGSTON PARK RESIDENTS – DAVID CONNELLY AND 49 OTHERS**

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

This is a formal objection to the proposed private bill for Portobello Park. We object to the whole bill and do not think it should proceed. We live in homes close to Portobello Park, and we use the park for recreation.

Over the past few years the council have made a number of serious errors in planning for a new Portobello High School, discounting sensible options and wasting a huge amount of time and money on an illegal choice. Even now, instead of properly exploring the “fall back” sites, the council are spending all their time and resources pursuing a build on Portobello Park. They have refused to carry out site analysis at the potential Baileyfield site because if they are not successful in purchasing the site the costs are abortive, yet they are ploughing resources into resubmitting a planning application for Portobello Park when they still do not have the legal right to build on it. As council tax payers, we strongly object to funds being spent in this way.

We also strongly object to the Scottish Parliament being asked to devote attention to this matter which is essentially a local matter for Edinburgh Council, albeit that bringing the solution to a national platform like this will have implications for other parks across the country. Edinburgh Council should be expected to observe the laws of our country. Firstly they tried to ignore the law, not believing that local residents would challenge them, and now that the Court of Session have unanimously ruled against them, they still refuse to accept the law, believing that it is reasonable for them to ask to be exempted from it.

The reputation of the Scottish Parliament will be diminished by intervening and micro managing the affairs of local authorities at a time when greater autonomy and responsibility has been handed over to them. There is nothing so exceptional about this situation that it deserves special treatment, and if this bill goes through, then it will be the green light to other local authorities in respect of the appropriation of common good assets, and a view that they can have dispensation from observing the law.

Please take these concerns seriously. We look forward to your reply.

17 June 2013