

CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL

OBJECTION 45 – JULIE THOMSON

Please record my full objection to the Portobello Park Private Bill, which is being promoted by the City of Edinburgh Council. I object to the whole of the bill.

Here are my reasons:

I understand three senior judges of the Court of Session ruled last year ruled 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 around this ruling. This is the law and the City of Edinburgh Council should not be allowed to contravene this.

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 and I strongly support this.

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 which would change our countryside and town green spaces further affecting children's ability to play outdoors.

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 park and green space, which I use regularly. I look forward to the weekends when I regularly visit friends in Park Avenue and I like to walk and sit in the park without driving to or taking public transport to alternative places. This would have a severe impact on my wellbeing. This is a people's park and must be kept as such.

I urge you to take my objections seriously and reject this bill.

1 July 2013