

CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL

OBJECTION 51 – URSULA WRIGHT

I wish to object to the total bill which will enable building on our Public Good land, Portobello Park.

Why I am objecting to the bill

I have lived in Portobello and Duddingston all my life, and we do not have locally, much land for playing football, walking 'off-road', particularly between Joppa and Duddingston, and general public open space, with large trees which act as a 'lung' for Edinburgh's air. Many local playing fields have been built on over the last 50 years. This small tract of land is a precious amenity and acts as a lovely green gateway to where I live and work. Particularly as the Development Plan shows future planned building up to the bypass all the way round the East of the City.

The A1 is the key road into the city, the first thing that tourists see as they enter the city boundary is this lovely park with mature trees. (I have a tourist business so anything which enhances my guests experience of my area is really important). My guests choose to experience staying in a leafy suburb with open park land. I also love being able to cross the railway bridge and walk through the park on our evening constitutional walk.

I also thought that the court was the final say about whether to build or not, I find it worrying that the council does not agree with the law of the land and seeks to change the law, this is a really dangerous precedent.

How my interests would be adversely affected by the bill

I anticipate loss of income from visitors, why bother staying in built up suburbs when you can stay in built up city centre places which are closer to the sights? The experience of staying out here with mature parks and seaside is significant. My guests love being able to walk through the Park after a day of 'rubbernecking'. Portobello Park is a real tourist draw, in these days of healthy living, there is nothing nicer for my tourists who do morning runs to run across the park, as part of their 'circuit'. The open aspect the park gives the area is so important, and must not be underestimated.

I am terribly worried that this bill will open the gateway to other councils building on common good land, look how developers in Glasgow continue to 'nibble' at Glasgow Green. Or will Edinburgh council decide to build on Inverleith Park?

I do not feel safe in a society where if the council does not get its way it seeks to change the law to suit it.

23 June 2013