

## CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (PORTOBELLO PARK) BILL

### WRITTEN SUBMISSION FROM STUART AND KATE NICOL

We would like to comment on the general principles of the Portobello Park Private Bill being proposed by the City of Edinburgh Council to allow them to build a new school on Portobello Park. We agree that Portobello needs a new school, but this is the last large area of common good land in Portobello, and as such should be protected for the residents of Portobello and not used to build on.

- The bill if it becomes law will set a precedent and provide an easy route for other local authorities, which they would undoubtedly use, to appropriate common good land for other purposes, putting open space and common good land across Scotland at risk.

- This case has already gone to court which ruled that building on the Park is illegal and this ruling should be respected.

- The Council has identified suitable brownfield alternative sites for the school, which would provide excellent educational facilities and involve no loss of green space. One of these should be used.

- The implications of the loss of a sizeable and well-used piece of green space (25% of Portobello's parkland) would have serious consequences for the health and well being of local residents.

- There is serious doubt that the proposed "replacement park" on the existing school site would ever materialise. Even if it did, it is not as large as the existing park and would be situated alongside an existing large park, taking away green space from one area and adding it to an area that already has plenty.

- It is questionable as to whether the Scottish Parliament should be getting involved in **local** issues such as the provision of a new school.

We feel that this private bill would set a dangerous precedent which would lead to all sorts of abuse of common good land throughout Scotland.

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