



PORTOBELLO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

52 Brighton Place
Portobello
EH15 1LX

10th June 2016

Head of Planning
City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court
Edinburgh

Dear Sirs

REF: 16/02052/LBC & 16/02052/FUL

Portobello Community Council objects to the above applications concerning 14 Bath Street, Portobello.

16/02052/LBC

Having publicized the proposals and encouraged people to give their views, it is clear from the responses that the existing building is held in high regard by people and is of considerable local importance. Whilst the building may not be in the best of conditions, and has been altered over the years, it is still highly valued for its architectural style, its history within the community, and as a functional space. The overwhelming majority of people responding to the application have expressed the desire to see the building continue to function in public use, and the possibilities for that must be explored in detail. When it comes to the arguments put forward by the Applicant as to why the building is no longer viable we have concerns, in particular with the following passage:

"4.02 The first enquiry was made by the Local Community Council. This Body proposed to utilise the property for general community purposes including meetings, local events and promotions. This bid fell when the Community Council were unable to demonstrate the ability not only to fund the essential every day running costs but also to finance the necessary conversion costs."

This paragraph from the Applicant's supporting statement is untrue. Portobello Community Council has made no enquiries about the building, has not made any proposals to use it for general community purposes, has not investigated any such possibility, and has not undertaken any assessment of financing such a proposal. It is concerning that such incorrect information has been provided, and we also note that incorrect drawings have been submitted that exaggerate the height of the existing building's front elevation. Given these clear errors we feel the veracity of all claims made as part of the submission must be scrutinised carefully, with supporting evidence provided. The Listed status of the building is a recognition of its local importance and that designation should not be set aside without robust examination, especially when there are parties interested in continuing the use of the building.

16/02052/FUL

The responses to the proposed housing development have been overwhelmingly negative. Concerns have been expressed about the scale, massing, over-development, over-shadowing, and the impact of traffic and access in what is a very congested area. Many people have also commented on the poor design quality of the proposals in what is a Conservation Area.

In short we feel that: the Application has failed to demonstrate a case for the demolition of what is a highly valued local building; that the proposed re-development would be detrimental to local character and amenity; and that local opinion seems decisively in favour of rejecting both applications.

Sean Watters, on behalf of Portobello Community Council.