

Victory for Save Leith Walk campaign

Following the unanimous decision by councillors today to reject the application by Drum to develop the building on Leith Walk, the campaigners have spoken to us. Here is what they have to say :

“We are delighted by today’s decision. It is a victory for Leith, for Edinburgh and for local democracy.

“It is also a victory for communities across Scotland. It is proof that if you organise and engage with local people, if you stay positive and refuse to give up, then you can have a say in how your area is developed. Rarely has Leith’s motto ‘persevere’ been more appropriate.

“We would like to thank the councillors at today’s meeting for listening to the people who elected them, opposing the demolition and recognising that the proposed development was wholly inappropriate for this site.

“It is testament to the strength of the objections raised today by Leith community councils, the Cockburn Association, residents, local businesses and the Save Leith Walk campaign that councillors have agreed with the community rather than commercial interest.

“We thank the many thousands of people who have supported this campaign, turned up to public meetings, workshops, bought T-shirts, lodged objections, signed petitions and shared ideas.

Your voices have been heard.

“This campaign has secured cross-party support and we would like to thank our local MSP, councillors and community councils and who have been steadfast in their objection to the proposed demolition and development at every step of the way.

“We know that this is not the end. Scotland’s flawed planning process gives developers further opportunities to push through their plans. But we hope that the points raised at this meeting mean that today’s decision is upheld in any potential appeals process.

“When public feeling is so strong, when residents, community leaders, business owners, architects, politicians and councillors are united in the belief that your proposals are a bad idea then it is time to go back to the drawing board. It is time for the developer, Edinburgh City Council and Edinburgh University to work with the Leith Walk community on a shared vision for this site which puts locals at the heart of the decision-making process.

“We celebrate today’s announcement but we know that there are more hurdles to cross.

The spirit and solidarity of this community means that we are ready to face those challenges and to contribute to a vision for Our Leith.”