



Crawford McGhie  
Acting Head of Operational Support  
Communities & Families  
The City of Edinburgh Council  
Waverley Court, Business Centre 1/2  
4 East Market Street,  
Edinburgh, EH8 8BG

17 November 2018

Dear Mr McGhie

#### THE FORMER ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PARK

At the meeting of our community council on 15 November, a group of local people, including a number from Portobello, requested a discussion on the future of the former St John's Primary School. They suggested that the community council conduct a formal consultation about stopping the demolition of the building.

We pointed out that the community council view had been submitted in the planning process and supported both the new park and the demolition. However, they asserted that there were new factors – such as the historic nature of the original funding for the school and the need for studios to replace those which are currently provided by the Edinburgh Palette in St Margaret's House.

They were accompanied by Richard Demarco CBE who explained that he had been dux of St John's and regarded it as an important part of the history of Portobello. He went on to say that the National Galleries of Scotland were building new archives at Granton, to which he planned to donate his own personal archive. However, he planned to make it a condition of his donation that part of it must be housed in the former St John's building.

The group requested the community council to call for the demolition to be halted. We proposed that the right actions would be to:

1. let you know that we had received this proposal, and thus it would be a public matter like all community council discussions.
2. publish this letter on our website.

This course appeared to be accepted by the group.

We understand that Edinburgh Palette has made no request to use the building and is focussed on its new site in Stanley Street and buildings elsewhere in the city. We know that the question of listing the building was raised in 2007 and rejected by Historic Scotland, in full knowledge of the history. The City Councillors present at the meeting explained the high risk of incurring costs from suspension of the demolition and the likelihood that significant works would be required to bring it back into use.

Given the timescales and that the demolition is underway, the community council declined to conduct a formal consultation.

This letter discharges the undertaking we gave.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Geoff Pearson".

Geoff Pearson  
Secretary