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EXCLUSIVE

by Gary Fitzpatrick

THE people behind the £30 million Harvard-style executive school being considered for Pittencrieff Park are not interested in any other location in Dunfermline, says MSP Scott Barrie.

Opponents of the project going ahead in the Glen have suggested it could be built elsewhere in the area.

However, that's a non-starter according to Mr Barrie, who has been kept up to date with the plans throughout the process.

The Dunfermline West MSP admits to having had initial reservations about

the possibility of siting it in the park but on balance believes it should go ahead there.

And he believes the prestigious nature of the educational establishment would require an "iconic" site.

However, opponents point out that the park was gifted to the people of Dunfermline by Andrew Carnegie and it should stay unspoiled for future generations to enjoy.

A feasibility study is currently being carried out into the park as a location and an announcement is expected soon.

Local opposition is gathering momentum with a petition being started up to block the scheme.

Mr Barrie said, "One of the advan-

tages I have is that I've known about this for a long time and know that the people behind the project want the iconic setting of the park.

"They're not interested in any other location in Dunfermline. I would ask people to weigh up whether the fantastic opportunities offered by this prestigious project are outweighed by the disadvantages of it being located in the park.

"I don't think they are but other people will have other views.

"I initially had reservations but on balance would be in favour of it going ahead.

"I want to see Dunfermline on the international stage and the economic

and business advantages would make it a win-win situation. For example, Lauder College would see great benefits."

Angus Hogg, chairman of the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, said, "The trust will continue to have the interests of the park at heart.

"As a member of the public, I too enjoy walking in the park with my family and grandchildren.

"A project like this was always going to be controversial but we're not yet at the stage where there are any plans to look at and come to a decision on them."

He said he did not think local opposition would cause those behind the proj-

ect from ruling out Dunfermline.

"I don't think they're naive and there were always going to be people opposed to it," Mr Hogg added.

The companies behind the project are the Mace group – involved in such high-calibre developments as the new Royal Bank of Scotland HQ and the London eye – and Limekilns-based management consultants Hardie Associates.

Meanwhile, construction work will start in October on a new headquarters for the Dunfermline-based Carnegie trusts on the edge of park.

The £2 million building will go up on the site of the former children's cycling area next to Pittencrieff Street.

CONCERN: The clock's ticking for Fife's economy warns bridgema-

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