

Skate park foes say council is rolling over court order

BY ROSEMARY BOLGER

A GROUP campaigning against the proposal to put a skate park in Albert Park has accused the Port Phillip Council of bullying by withholding its funds.

The Supreme Court had ordered the council to pay Save Our Park's costs from a previous VCAT hearing, which amounted to about \$70,000.

A letter from the council's lawyers to the lobby group states the council might not pay until mid-next year. Save Our Park spokesman Jonathon Raymond said the letter had a "bullying tone".

After the group applied for an adjournment to the hearing at the state's planning tribunal, an offer was made the week before the case was set to begin.

The group accepted the offer and successfully obtained an adjournment, arguing it had been unable to adequately prepare its case without the money.

"Objectors will now have more time and the funds with which to ensure our case is properly presented," Mr Raymond said.

The hearing to decide if a three-tiered skate park can be built on the corner of Fitzroy Street and Lakeside Drive won't take place until February next year.

Save Our Park has led the fight to stop the skate park going ahead on the site, arguing it should be located on the St Kilda foreshore.

Supporters of the skate park site have been angered by the extra delay caused by a "minority of greedy people".

"What we're talking about is depriving young kids of a facility to go and enjoy their sport. After 12 years, enough is enough," St Kilda local Keith Millar said.

Unchain Port Phillip, formerly Unchain St Kilda, and the Greens have declared they would scrap the plan if their council candidates were elected in this month's election, and Community Alliance of Port Phillip candidates have said they would review several locations, including the Albert Park Reserve site, again.

But Mr Millar said going back to square one would mean waiting up to another five years for a skate park to be built.

Illuminating blast from the past

Revolts and rebellions swept the world, Martin Luther King jnr and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated, and Australian prime minister Harold Holt was declared missing. That was the year 1968, the events of which are the subject of a new exhibition at Linden Centre for Contemporary Arts. Artists from Western Australia, including Laura Johnson, whose work is pictured left, have recreated the Apollo 7 satellite crash landing, protest cars and prime ministerial portraits. *Linden 1968* is on until December 14 at 26 Acland Street, St Kilda.



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