

London Parks & Gardens responds to historic decision on progress of the Holocaust Memorial Bill, with plans to build on Victoria Tower Gardens

With noble intent, the Holocaust Memorial Bill proposes to remove legal protections for a public park in order to build the National Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens next to Parliament. Last week's historic decision by Parliamentary authorities to reject the Government's preferred plan to effectively 'fast track' this Bill, (the first such rejection since the 1970s), was based on a challenge by London Parks & Gardens (LPG) and our partners. This welcome ruling means that alongside the plan's advocates, reasoned and respectful concerns about rescinding laws which prevent building on public parks will now be heard by MPs and Peers.

London Parks & Gardens remains committed to supporting a fitting Holocaust Memorial and to tackling antisemitism. We will now join those, including Holocaust survivors, urging MPs and Peers to avoid building on a public park in order to fulfil these worthy goals.

This is the latest in a long series of regrettable setbacks for everyone hoping to see this project delivered, but the blame for delays sits with the Government. Through this long process, LPG – the charity charged with protecting London's historic parks – and its partners have successfully challenged a sorry slew of government errors right up to the High Court, which have ill-served this important cause.

Had the government originally adopted a legal plan and listened to reasoned feedback, a fitting Memorial would have been delivered years ago and full public access to a riverside park protected.

Whilst it is not LPG's place to propose an alternative to the current plan, we hope that the Government will fulfil the Holocaust Memorial Commission's noble ambition far sooner by listening and building on a location which does not require new legislation.

ENDS

21 May 2023