



SAVE TREES IN GUNNERSBURY

7 October 2009

Dear Mayor,

I live near Gunnersbury Park, in west London, which every August hosts the London Mela – an event which has your support as Mayor.

Gunnersbury Park was once owned by the Rothschild family and has many listed buildings, as well as being a listed Park, acknowledged to be one of the most beautiful in London. After many years of underfunding by the two Councils who now own it – Ealing and Hounslow – the buildings are in danger of falling down and the Park's sporting and other facilities have deteriorated alarmingly or disappeared altogether.

The Councils engaged a firm of consultants to produce an Options Appraisal for the regeneration of the Park and how to fund such regeneration. Unfortunately the option the consultants proposed, costing a staggering £38 million, could only be funded, they said, through the sale of 5.6 acres of the Park for a housing development of 96 houses and a block of flats – a plan which would require the destruction of 400 mature trees. A questionnaire for residents to vote on the future of the Park was unfortunately patchily distributed locally and allowed no other option apart from the one proposed by the consultants, or doing nothing. (In a survey by a local paper 94% of those who responded voted against the proposed plan.)

Local residents have come together to form a pressure group called Save Trees In Gunnersbury – STIG – to fight to preserve the green spaces of the Park, which is Metropolitan Open Land, in a conservation area and subject to a restrictive Covenant prohibiting commercial use. The loss of 400 trees, opposite a primary school, so close to the M4, would increase air pollution by depriving us of a much needed 'lung'.

Whilst wishing to see the buildings preserved, STIG would like the Councils to seek other means of funding that do not involve the destruction of 400 trees. We would respectfully like to ask you to exercise your influence and your powers of persuasion with the two Councils, urging them to think again and save the green spaces of our Park.

Yours sincerely

Giuseppina Ortu (on behalf of STIG)