

- **400+ letters of objection to development plan delivered to Council Planning Department for Tuesday deadline**
- **Campaign To Save Garden Festival Site Gains Momentum**

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*(5 JPEG pictures are attached of Lucy Page, Chairwoman of the new **Save the Garden Festival Site** campaign, sorting through the "400+ letters of objection". A breakdown by area postcode in Liverpool of the people signing the letters of objection follows along with a copy of the basic objection letter.)*

Wednesday 18 April 2007... The new campaign to save Liverpool's landmark Garden Festival Site against "destructive development" gained more than 400 signatures at a demonstration on the Riverfront promenade on Sunday 15th April. The letters have now been forwarded to the Council's Planning Department in Dale Street.

Property developers, Langtree McLean Limited, plan to put 1300 flats and houses on the 88-acre riverside site and in a pre-emptive strike against possible objections have already felled more than a third of the trees on the site without notifying local residents.

Lucy Page, a local resident, who is fronting the new campaign against the plans of the property developers said: "The campaign has got off to a flying start with a really positive response from people across Liverpool to help save the beautiful landscape and the wildlife habitat of the Garden Festival Site.

"We had an incredibly busy day at the demonstration on Sunday with people queuing to sign letters objecting to the plans. Nobody wants to see this unique part of the riverfront destroyed – but unfortunately this is just what Langtree McLean are planning."

"Langtree McLean's actions in indiscriminately felling more than 1,000 trees on the site – ahead of planning permission – are a terrible omen of the fate which lies in store for the whole site if they are allowed to get away with their bully-boy tactics."

"People have been outraged by the destruction carried out by Langtree McLean," said Mrs. Page who is Chairwoman of the new campaign.

"On Sunday we were being approached by families where the parents could recall as schoolchildren that they had helped plant 'great big saplings' on the site. They couldn't understand why the developers were intent on destroying what has taken twenty years to grow. Everybody was horrified by the plans to build apartment blocks right along the promenade."

Tree stumps of more than 10" diameter can be seen across the cleared areas on the site.

The woodland at the Garden Festival Site was planted as saplings in 1984 to provide the backdrop to the display gardens, waterpark and Festival Hall at Liverpool's International Garden Festival of 1984.

The woodland consists of a more than 15 varieties of native or naturalized trees including: alder, beech, hazel, limes, maples, English oak, holm oak, Turkey oak, and American oak, rowan, Scots pine, poplars, silver birch, whitebeam, and willows.

Note to Editors:

Liverpool's landmark Garden Festival Site, the focus of a series of failed development plans over the years, has yet again become the subject of a public campaign following the unannounced felling of more than 1,000 trees by property developers in the second week of March.

A new campaign to *Save The Garden Festival Site* was set up after a public meeting of local people on April 1st was called to try to stop the indiscriminate clearing which had taken in about 1/3 of the trees on the site.

At the campaign's first meeting it emerged that none of more than 100 people attending the meeting had been able to stop the felling or had been given any explanation of why the trees at the Garden Festival Site were suddenly being cut down without warning.

Several local residents had contacted the developers (Langtree McLean Limited) to protest against the felling and pointing out that the bird nesting season had already commenced in an unusually warm early spring and that it was illegal to fell trees at this time under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act.

Others residents had contacted the City Council to complain that the developers had failed to notify the local community of their plans to clear the trees – saying they would have objected if given the chance.

As a result the people at the meeting agreed to set up a new campaign to try to defend the Garden Festival Site from what was described as 'smash and grab' destruction and a 'pre-emptive strike'. A mass "protest/celebration" was organized for the Garden Festival Site on Sunday 15th April.

Information and photographs of the site and what Langtree McLean Limited have destroyed were on display at this "protest/celebration" – and letters of objection to be sent to the planning department were available for people to sign.

Including children about 700 people visited Sunday's demonstration. The following table summarizes the Liverpool postcodes of the 400+ adult signatures to the letters of objection which have been gained by the campaign.

Postcode Area	Number of letters	Postcode Area	Number of letters	Postcode Area	Number of letters
Liverpool 1	6	Liverpool 11	5	Liverpool 21	-
Liverpool 2	2	Liverpool 12	14	Liverpool 22	1
Liverpool 3	9	Liverpool 13	16	Liverpool 23	-
Liverpool 4	10	Liverpool 14	8	Liverpool 24	2
Liverpool 5	6	Liverpool 15	18	Liverpool 25	11
Liverpool 6	8	Liverpool 16	11	Liverpool 32	2
Liverpool 7	8	Liverpool 17	140	Liverpool 36	12
Liverpool 8	52	Liverpool 18	25		
Liverpool 9	11	Liverpool 19	20	Liverpool Total	<u>404</u>
Liverpool 10	-	Liverpool 20	7	Birkenhead/ Wirral	37

Notes to Editors:

1. About The Garden Festival Site

The Liverpool Garden Festival Site covers some 88 acres next to the river about 2½ miles south of Liverpool city centre.

The riverside promenade provides uninterrupted pedestrian and cycling access to Garden Festival Site from the Albert Dock.

Up to the Garden Festival Site the promenade is directly fronted by housing or industrial properties. The Garden Festival Site provides the first real “green” break on the promenade – with a wide strip of sloping grass land in front of the beautifully landscaped woodlands which stretch without interruption for over ½ mile along the promenade.

The woodland is within the Festival Site itself – currently behind a wire fence largely hidden by foliage.

The woodland at the Garden Festival Site was planted as saplings in 1984 to provide the backdrop to the display gardens, waterpark and Festival Hall at Liverpool's International Garden Festival of 1984.

The woodland consists of a more than 15 varieties of native or naturalized trees including: alder, beech, hazel, limes, maples, English oak, holm oak, Turkey oak, and American oak, rowan, Scots pine, poplars, silver birch, whitebeam, and willows.

More than 30 species of birds are presently breeding in the woodland at the Garden Festival Site including: blackbird, blackcap, bullfinch, carrion crow, chaffinch, chiffchaff, collared dove, dunnock, goldcrest, goldfinch, great spotted woodpecker, jay, linnet, magpie, mallard, mistle thrush, moorhen, robin, song thrush, sparrowhawk, stock dove, blue tit, coal tit, great tit, long-tailed tit, whitethroat, willow warbler, woodpigeon and wren.

Three grassland species of birds - bunting, skylark and meadow pipit - also breed in the land to the south east of the Garden Festival Site.

Several species of bird which actually nest outside the area such as Swifts, House Martins and starlings also use the Garden Festival Site during the breeding season.

Species which have bred in recent years include Tawny Owl, Lesser Whitethroat, lapwing, grey partridge and lesser redpoll.

The Garden Festival Site's success as an attractive landscape and a thriving habitat for wildlife is in strong contrast to what the developers and the council have so far achieved elsewhere along the promenade.

This successful landscape and habitat is now under threat yet again – this time by the proposed development by Langtree McLean Limited.

Promotional material published by Langtree McLean Limited in November 2006 shows a succession of seven-storey high apartment blocks directly overlooking the promenade and cutting to pieces the existing uninterrupted woodland landscape.

2. Letters of Objection

Letters of objection to the proposed development needed to be with the Council's Planning Committee by April 17th. This is an example of the letter given out at the Garden Festival site on April 15th.

Dear Mr Clark

Objection to Planning Application ref 060/3442
(former Liverpool Garden Festival Site, Riverside Drive, L17)

I object to the above planning application on the following grounds:

1. Damage to Green Wedge

The proposed development of 1,374 dwellings plus ancillary services is on land designated in the Unitary Development Plan as Green Wedge to be used for recreational and wildlife purposes only. It borders the Mersey estuary which is by far the most important environmental asset in Liverpool, of designated international importance for wildlife. It also builds upon the most attractive area of undeveloped coastline close to the centre of Liverpool. The ugly and badly designed "finger development" damages the views along the Prom. In addition, the management plans for the site will severely damage existing wildlife; in particular, excessive tree felling and damage to the grasslands. Lancashire Wildlife Trust believes the whole site should be regarded as of Site of Nature Conservation Value status for planning purposes.

2. Disturbance of the Landfill and Hazardous Materials

Any large scale development of this site involves extensive disturbance of a former municipal tip containing unknown amounts of toxic and hazardous material. Its disturbance will cause serious danger to the health and safety of the site workers, the people who will eventually live there and everybody who lives near by. The developers' plans to deal with this issue are grossly insufficient. A full scale Health Impact Assessment is required.

3. Traffic Impact

Riverside Drive already suffers severe traffic congestion for long periods of the day. Contrary to the developers' claims many households are bound to want one or more cars. This will lead to a substantial increase in traffic, causing more queues and tailbacks and a serious risk of gridlock, for instance at the Jericho Lane junction. The developers' proposals to tackle this are totally inadequate.

4. Housing

The Garden festival Site is not within a designated Housing Market Renewal area and therefore the level and type of housing development proposed in this area is contrary to planning and development policy.

Yours sincerely

Date

Name

Address