

PRESS RELEASE

- **WOODLAND ON LIVERPOOL'S PROM THREATENED BY REGENERATION DEAL**
- **WATERFRONT IS 'UP FOR GRABS' AS COUNCIL READIES ITSELF TO GIVE YET MORE PUBLIC LAND TO PRIVATE DEVELOPER**
- **EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE CITY COUNCIL TO MEET FRIDAY 27TH APRIL 2007**



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Liverpool, Tuesday 24 April 2007... Property Developers, Langtree McLean, are currently proposing the restoration of the 'Japanese Gardens' at the long-neglected Garden Festival Site in South Liverpool.

But Lucy Page, resident of St Michael's - Liverpool 17, is fronting a campaign that says the garden restoration threatens to be at the cost of the destruction of 'Liverpool's Landscape' on the Prom.

The fate of the promenade in front of the Garden Festival Site is to be discussed by the Executive Board of Liverpool City Council in a meeting on Friday 27th April 2007 – at 8.30 a.m.

To pay for the restoration of the fancier bits of the Garden Festival Site, property developer, Langtree McLean, wants to build over 1300 luxury apartments on the waterfront site.

Unfortunately this means that Langtree McLean also wants to build on most of the woodland that has grown up since the area was the site of Liverpool's International Garden Festival of 1984.

And the property developer's plan also means grabbing quite a bit of what has previously been part of the public prom and building on it.

It seems from Liverpool's Council Agenda (for the Friday 27th April meeting) that the developers, Langtree McLean, need some of the public space on the prom to be given to them so that they can install concrete columns on the land to support the 7-storey-high apartment blocks they propose for the site. After that they promise "the land will not be developed".

According to Lucy Page the whole scheme means a huge loss to Liverpool as a City as well as those who currently use the prom – and a wildlife devastation for the 100 plus bird species that fly in and out of the woods along the river.

Liverpudlians seem to agree with her. In a single day of standing on the promenade Lucy's campaign gathered hundreds of signatures saying that the proposed development of the Garden Festival Site was on the wrong lines.

Now there's a growing campaign of people trying to stop property developer Langtree McLean building the more destructive parts of their scheme - especially their plans to cut down the trees that front the prom.

Lucy Page has already sent more than 450 'detailed letters of objection' (from people all over Liverpool) to the Council's planning officers.

The next step for Lucy is when the campaign makes a presentation against the developers at the Council's planning meeting in May.

Lucy says; "The Festival Garden Site is currently a beautiful landscaped woodland of carefully chosen trees, which stretches uninterrupted over more than 1/3 of a mile alongside the river Mersey. These trees were planted for the Garden Festival in 1984 – and in many cases were even then mature specimen saplings."

"I wonder if it is wise to tear down the natural growth of 20 years - of a full human generation - just to plant a bit more concrete to meet the financial demands of a developer's banker or even the calendar demands of our Year of Culture."

"It's time for the early birds on the Executive Board of the City Council to think very carefully about Langtree McLean's plans."

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Note to Editors:

Re following pages

P3 includes table summarizing 400+ adult signatures across Liverpool.

P4 ecological detail about the Garden Festival Site

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	404
Liverpool 10	-	Liverpool 20	7	Birkenhead/ Wirral	37

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 (it might be third – I walk it and worry) 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.

ENDS