

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2BR

Via email to: mayor@london.gov.uk

Date: 09 September 2015

Dear Boris,

Memorial 2007 – Hyde Park

I write on behalf of Memorial 2007, a registered charity seeking to erect the first national memorial to commemorate enslaved Africans and their descendants on a site in the Rose Gardens of Hyde Park. I enclose a copy of the correspondence I have received for your information.

As you will see, Miss Ekpenyon informs me that following a public competition the international artist Les Johnson has produced a powerful work which depicts the story of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

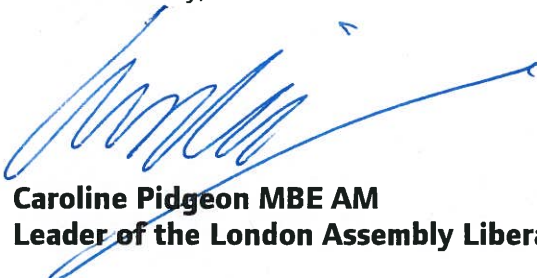
I understand that an agreement was reached with the Royal Parks some years ago to place this memorial in the Rose Garden of Hyde Park in a setting reflecting the flora of the African Diaspora. However, Miss Ekpenyon informs me that she has recently been told by the Royal Parks that unless her charity can raise £3.3 million by 30 September they will lose access to this site.

Given the urgency of the situation I would be grateful if you could investigate what steps can be taken to ensure that the memorial and wider educational aims of this charity are not put at risk. Separately I would be interested to learn what policies and procedures the Royal Parks use when considering proposals to erect new statues and monuments.

Clearly there are a number of historic structures and artefacts which have been accrued incrementally by the Royal Parks and form an important part of the built landscape. Within this context, it will be important that space is made available for new monuments and memorials where appropriate.

I trust you will do all you can to ensure that our parks continue to provide space for contemplation, inspiration and participation for all London's diverse communities.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Leader of the London Assembly Liberal Democrat Group