

THE THORNEY ISLAND SOCIETY

PREPARED FOR
THE STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS

RELATING TO
THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL BILL

1. The Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills reported on 18 May that certain private business standing orders of both Houses were applicable to the Holocaust Memorial Bill and had not been complied with. These are Standing Orders 4, 4A, 10, 11, 38 and 39.
2. At its meeting on 13th June, the House of Commons Standing Order Committee decided to dispense with the above standing orders listed subject to certain conditions, and commented on the presentations of what it termed the memorialists that it would request the Government to behave in a more consultative manner in relation to the current Bill given its nature and history.
3. The Thorney Island Society (TTIS) is a registered charity and recognised amenity society for that part of the City of Westminster which includes Victoria Tower Gardens. TTIS's involvement in the project reflects the unprecedented level of interest of local residents affected by the project over the last seven and a half years. TTIS and its members have no concerns, and have expressed no concerns about commemoration of the Holocaust in a manner appropriate to its victims and to their community, but it has consistently opposed the proposed location because of its environmental effects on the heritage and flora of Victoria Tower Gardens as well as on local residents. The non-compliance with Standing Orders has further affected local residents.
4. The Holocaust Memorial Bill now seeks to suspend or disapply the part of the London County Council Act 1900 (the 1900 Act) that prevents building and operating a memorial and learning centre in Victoria Tower Gardens. TTIS drew the Government's attention to this difficulty presented by the 1900 Act in early 2019, well before the Planning Proposal for the Holocaust Memorial was submitted to Westminster Council. Delays since then have therefore been of the Government's own making, not least because of the expensive legal battles and appeals that they have fought on this issue, which could have been avoided if the design for the project had been carried out or amended in a manner that respected the provisions of the 1900 Act.
5. TTIS has accepted the decision of the House of Commons Standing Order Committee to dispense with the above Standing Orders, but nonetheless feels it incumbent upon them to ask the House of Lords Standing Orders Committee to rule that the standing orders listed above should not be dispensed with in respect of the Holocaust Memorial Bill.

6. One further matter should be taken into account by the House of Lords Committee: if this Committee were to decide not to dispense with the standing orders and the Bill were then to be withdrawn, a new Bill could quickly be introduced. The intervening period would make it possible for a different proposal for the project to be developed which might not require the passage of a bill at all and should thus deliver the project faster.
7. TTIS therefore respectfully asks the Committee to rule that the standing orders not complied with in respect of the Holocaust Memorial Bill should not be dispensed with.

(signed by)

DONALD PECK

for and on behalf of

THE THORNEY ISLAND SOCIETY

15 June 2023