



2nd June 2025

Dear Sir Gerald,

I am writing to address the security concerns raised regarding the proposed Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre adjacent to the Houses of Parliament. As a former Chief Constable, I have extensive experience in managing security for public buildings and events, and I am confident that the security measures planned for the Memorial are robust and comprehensive.

Proximity to Parliamentary Buildings

Several members of the House of Lords, including Lord Carlile, have expressed concerns about the proximity of the Memorial to the Palace of Westminster, suggesting that it could heighten security risks. It is important to note that the security arrangements for the Memorial have been developed in close consultation with the Metropolitan Police and the Centre for Protection of National Infrastructure. These measures are designed to ensure that the site is secure without compromising public access or safety.

Threat of Terrorism and the Planning Application Process

Baroness Fookes has advocated for a new full planning application to Westminster City Council, emphasizing the need to address increased security and environmental considerations since the original 2019 application. While the threat of terrorism has indeed evolved, the security design information submitted during the planning process has been thoroughly examined and found to be adequate. The Planning Inspector noted that neither Westminster City Council nor its advisers objected to the proposed security aspects of the plans.

Public Access and Safety

Concerns have been raised about maintaining public access to Victoria Tower Gardens during and after construction. The Memorial's security arrangements will be similar to those of other public buildings in Westminster, including facilities for bag checking and scanning at the entrance pavilion. Although admission to the Memorial will be free, all visitors will need to book tickets online, ensuring controlled access and enhanced security.

Demonstration-related Security Costs

Lord Howard of Rising has questioned whether operational cost estimates account for additional security measures to manage potential demonstrations at the Memorial site. The security plans include provisions for managing such events, and the costs have been carefully considered to ensure that they do not exceed reasonable limits.

Design and Security Integration

Some Peers have questioned whether the proposed design adequately addresses security considerations. The design has been developed with input from security experts to ensure that it mitigates potential threats effectively. The Memorial will be constructed using materials that can withstand graffiti and vandalism, and management procedures will be in place to discourage such activities.



In conclusion, while it is impossible to eliminate all risks, the security measures planned for the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre are comprehensive and have been developed with the highest standards of safety in mind. The Memorial's location next to the Houses of Parliament should not be seen as a vulnerability but rather as a testament to our commitment to remembering the Holocaust in a prominent and respectful manner.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lord Stevens", written over a faint, illegible printed name.

Lord Stevens of Kirkwhelpington Kt, QPM, DL, LLD