

CAMPDEN HILL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

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MAYOR PLEDGES TO PROTECT SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS

Residents in Kensington & Chelsea have welcomed news that new London Mayor Boris Johnson has pledged to protect school playing fields from development in the face of attempts to see them deliberately run down and sold off.

Speaking at his first ever Mayor's Question Time at City Hall, Boris Johnson said he had appointed Kate Hoey to look at such matters and that he was concerned particularly where school playing fields were deliberately run down and disused ahead of being sold off.

The Mayor said: "I do think that we should be making use of disused playing space. I am worried that a lot of playing fields are being left to go to rack and ruin in the hope that they will be given planning permission to develop on them and I think that we should make sure that these places are used."

Residents in Kensington have been fighting plans by the local Council for three years to sell off a quarter of the Holland Park School site for private residential development. The Council claim that the playing field land is run down and that this is a major reason for disposing of the land,

even though the Council have been responsible for maintaining the school campus for over 20 years.

Local Residents Association Chairman David White said: "We welcome the comments of the new Mayor and will be asking him to look very carefully at the Holland Park School planning application. We will be pressing the new Mayor to reject the plans to dispose of this valuable site and to use his new planning powers to protect the land for use for school and community sport in the run up to the London Olympics. That would be a real legacy for the whole of London. We have also requested a meeting with Kate Hoey to discuss this vital matter."

Notes

The Mayor was responding to questioning on the London Plan. The exchanges can be viewed using the web-cast archive at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/webcasts.jsp> and were part of question 932 / 2008 tabled by Nicky Gavron AM.