**Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre**

**Clarification Note on the topic of entry fees**

**Prepared by Paul Downie, Deputy Director, Holocaust Memorial Team MHCLG**

1. The proof of evidence provided by David Dorward (CD 8.36), Area Planning Officer at the City of Westminster, referred to the question of free public access to the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. Mr Dorward’s evidence suggested that the applicant had previously given a commitment to free public access, which is not the case. This note seeks to clarify the position.

***Evidence from David Dorward***

1. Mr Dorward’s evidence (CD 8.36) includes the following paragraph in his ‘Other Considerations’ section:

*Free Public Access*

6.1 The council understood that it was the intention that free public access would be provided to enter the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre for the lifetime of the development. This was stressed at pre-application stage when discussing ticketing strategies. The application documentation also states that the site would be ‘Free to enter’ (Section 5.9 of The Visitor Management Strategy, December 2018)‘ (CD 5.8). The applicant has since resiled from this concession during recent s106 negotiations.

***Decision on Entry Fees***

1. No decision on whether entry should be provided free or subject to a charge has yet been taken. As explained in the evidence provided by Rt Hon Ed Balls and Rt Hon Lord Pickles (CD 8.01), co-chairs of the UK Holocaust Memorial Foundation:

A decision on whether any entry fees should be charged will be taken by Ministers ahead of the opening date, drawing on an assessment of expected running costs as well as the likely impact on visitor numbers. (Para 17)

***Visitor Management Strategy***

1. Mr Dorward’s evidence referred to the Visitor Management Strategy, submitted as part of the planning application (CD 5.8). Section 5 of that strategy deals with the ticketing strategy, as explained at para 5.1:

This section outlines the recommended strategy for the sale and validation of tickets to be implemented by the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre. The key to implementing the correct approach takes into consideration the effect this will have on local residents, existing users of Victoria Tower Gardens and the safety of visitors to the site.

Due to its location, the projected maximum of 1 million visitors a year to the Learning Centre, it is important to minimise the impact of people wishing to visit the site.

The client proposes 100% advance booking for entrance into the Learning Centre therefore it will not be possible for visitors to acquire tickets at the Entrance Pavilion. Instead tickets will need to be pre-booked prior to their visit.

1. The focus of the ticketing strategy was clearly on the practical arrangements around booking and checking tickets, with particular attention given to avoiding any build-up of queues. The practical arrangements for booking tickets would allow different pricing arrangements to be made. The commitment to 100% advance booking is key here: if all tickets are to be booked in advance then the price of tickets would not affect throughput of visitors arriving at the Memorial.
2. Mr Dorward refers specifically to section 5.9 of the Visitor Management Strategy, the ‘summary’, which includes the following paragraphs:

The constants for the building capacity and the possible throughput, combined with industry trends illustrate that even with high demand, small party sizes (which take longer to process), and at the busiest times during the day, it is possible to comfortably manage the UK Holocaust Memorial entrance and keep queue lengths to a minimum, and in the majority of cases with no queues forming at all.

The timed ticketing and allocation management will ultimately be configured to accommodate 410 people per hour taking into account the site being ‘Free to enter’, and the potential for no shows. Maintaining an increased allocation will help on quieter days where the remaining capacity will still allow visitors to book at the last minute.

1. The main message of these paragraphs clearly is that arrangements for ticketing can be made which keep queue lengths to a minimum. The reference to “the site being ‘Free to Enter’” is relevant to the assessment of time that would be taken to handle payments and which meant "not being delayed on entry": as the strategy assumes advance booking of tickets, the flow of visitors will not be affected by the need to make payments on entry.

***Conclusion***

1. Contrary to Mr Dorward’s assertion, there has been no previous commitment to provide free public access to the Memorial and Learning Centre.
2. A decision on whether any entry fees should be charged will be taken by Ministers ahead of the opening date, drawing on an assessment of expected running costs as well as the likely impact on visitor numbers.