Here is a guide to the sort of letter you might want to send by email **BEFORE 23 MAY 2021** if you want your views to be heard.

We have summed up the criteria that the Secretary of State is required to consider before making a decision about Lambeth’s application for permission to enclose the "Events Site" (the large grassy area that is currently fenced off) for commercial events this summer. We have put these criteria in red.

We have summed up the sort of things you might want to say to address whatever you feel most strongly about. These bits are in black.

Alternatively, it is also great to write from the heart about how you use the Common and how these big commercial events affect you and why he should refuse permission to Lambeth Council to hold these events.

This is a one-off opportunity to make your objections to an independent and higher body, which has nothing to do with Lambeth Council and is specifically designed to apply the laws which protect Common land. So if you have objected before and feel disheartened, please do not be! This time we could really make a difference, if enough of us get round to writing.

If you are happy to copy samanthapalmer27@yahoo.co.uk into your email, we can update you as things happen.

Thank you for your interest!

To the Secretary of State, Defra

Via email to this address:

commonlandcasework@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Put this in the subject line

Ref COM/3273667 Clapham Common, London SW4

*The criteria that the Secretary of State must consider are under section 39 of the Commons Act 2006.*

* *The interests of persons having rights in relation to, or occupying, the land (and in particular persons exercising rights of common over it);*
* *The interests of the neighbourhood;*
* *The public interest, which includes the public interest in: nature conservation; the conservation of the landscape; the protection of public rights of access to any area of land, the protection of archaeological remains and features of historic interest; and*
* *Any other matter considered relevant (including the public interest in formal recreation).*

Dear Secretary of State

Application reference: COM/3273667. Clapham Common, London SW4

I write in respect of the application for permission by Lambeth Council under Article 12 of the Greater London Parks and Open Spaces Order 1967 to carry out restricted works on Clapham Common, London SW4.

*[The interests of persons having rights in relation to, or occupying, the land (and in particular persons exercising rights of common over it)]*

I am a resident of Clapham/near Clapham/London. I use the Common every day/every week. I like to use the Common to exercise/ walk the dog/ play with my children/ meet my friends/ relax and enjoy the open space and nature.

*[The interests of the neighbourhood]*

I live near the Common and I find these types of commercial events disruptive. The Common itself is a very unpleasant place to visit during the major events, such as the music concerts. Such events are noisy, create litter, lead to anti-social behaviour (alcohol abuse, drug taking, urinating/defecating, sexual activity) both on the Common and in the surrounding streets. Large parts of the Common are closed off to the general public for weeks and weeks at a time while the event is on, and then closed off again to repair the damage done to the Common by such events.

[*The public interest, which includes the public interest in: nature conservation; the conservation of the landscape]* Although Clapham residents have been subjected to more and more of these unwelcome commercial events over the past few years, this year more than ever, I have come to appreciate the wide open spaces of the Common. I have found just being on the Common, amongst nature, to be an excellent way to relieve the stress of the pandemic. I am concerned that the more we have these events, the more it disrupts our use of the Common, both during the event and during the inevitable post-event reinstatement, where we cannot use large areas of the Common whilst we wait for the land to recover.

The Common has become increasingly degraded by overuse from commercial events and the vehicles and rigging and fencing required for them. The damage done is reaching a point at which the land cannot be repaired between events.

Large numbers of people depend on the open space of the Common, especially those having no outdoor space of their own. In particular, the large grassy area referred to by Lambeth Council as "the dedicated Events Site" is not an events site. It is the largest and most used and most loved area of grassland on the Common.

I would urge you to refuse Lambeth Council's request to use our Common for these sorts of events. I would like to be able to use and enjoy the Common in peace without having to fight off these disruptions to our Common.

Yours faithfully

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Remember the deadline is May 23, so the sooner the better for objections!