Local News

LAX trees in holding pattern

By Ian Gregor

DAILY BREEZE

19p1 “It’s just ludicrous to have the trees the way they are,” said LAX
neighbor Barbara Griffin. “Whoever put them in did so without
thinking what they were doing.”

Ninety palm trees illegally planted by Los Angeles International
Airport workers on the airfield’s northwest boundary remain in place
because LAX is waiting for the state to approve its plans to remove
them and landscape the area, an airport spokeswoman said.

The California Coastal Commission in April ordered the airport to
remove the trees after agreeing with environmentalists who claimed that
the Mexican fan palms were non-native vegetation that could harm
sensitive plants and insects in the adjacent dunes area. The site is a
federally designated recovery area for the endangered El Segundo blue
butterfly.

But the airport doesn’t want to remove the trees until the commission
signs off on its new landscaping, watering and fencing plans, said LAX
spokeswoman Gail Gaddi. The airport’s landscape consultant
recommended that workers protect sensitive plants around the palms
while they remove the trees, Gaddi wrote in a recent letter to nearby
residents.

LAX is close to completing plans detailing the number, type and
location of new plants the airport intends to install. The airport will
have 60 days to remove the palm trees once the commission reviews
and approves the plan, Gaddi said.

“We’re trying to make sure we get this done in a timely fashion,”
Gaddi said in an interview.