



29th April 2024

TRAF/8141 – Traffic order on Fairmead road

Epping Forest Heritage Trust

Epping Forest Heritage Trust (EFHT) is a membership organisation and charity dedicated to preserving and protecting Epping Forest, its flora, fauna, culture and heritage for people to enjoy now, and for generations to come. Our 1,000 plus members largely live in the various communities throughout the Epping Forest area. We have been engaged with and committed to the Forest for over 60 years and are a member of the Epping Forest Consultative Group run by the City of London Corporation.

Epping Forest is a hugely important ancient Forest, much of which is both a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), with iron age camps, 1,000 year-old trees and rare wood pasture habitat and species. It now faces the gravest threats that it has seen since it was first protected by the 1878 Epping Forest Act. Climate change, increasing levels of pollution and the acceleration of nearby developments have led to a reduction in the biodiversity of the Forest (flora and fauna). Neighbouring development, including plans to build 68,000 housing units in its vicinity, already threaten its resilience to pollution.

At the same time the Forest has the potential to help us tackle the crucial issues of our time: it helps us tackle climate change by reducing temperatures and capturing carbon; it provides

a vital amenity for people's health and wellbeing as a space to walk, cycle, ride, relax and enjoy.

It is therefore essential that we protect and preserve the Forest not just for our own current enjoyment, but also for generations to come, and for the sake of the planet.

That is why we strongly support your plans to permanently close the majority Fairmead Road to traffic as set out in your draft order.

We believe this will :

- help to create a safer and more pleasant environment for Forest visitors, whether walking, cycling or on horseback.
- reduce air and noise pollution in the Forest
- reduce antisocial behaviour, including but not limited to fly-tipping
- better protect the local environment of ancient woodland and its wildlife

Best wishes

Peter Lewis

Chief Executive

Epping Forest Heritage Trust