



**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

Letter to Epping Forest & Commons Committee ahead of the committee meeting on 29th May 2025

Dear Members of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee

I hope you are all well, and have enjoyed the Bank Holiday.

Ahead of your discussion on Thursday about the planned work to develop a Complementary Land Policy and to undertake a Complementary Land Appraisal, my Board has asked me to write to you to set out our position in relation to the Epping Forest Buffer Lands.

The Buffer Lands are an essential protection to the Forest. Indeed, our new strategy 2025-2030, sets out a strategic objective of supporting efforts to grow the Buffer Lands.

The Buffer Lands are the best possible protection against adjacent development damaging the Forest at a time when already 68,000 new homes are already planned within the Zone of Recreational Influence, and the government's changes to planning law and regulations threaten even greater development, with lesser protections, moving forward.

As members of the Committee, and de facto Trustees of the Epping Forest Charity, we do hope you will make the case for protecting the Buffer Lands, and indeed aiming to grow them in years to come. There can be no better protection for the Forest than being surrounded by green fields.

It may well be in the financial interests of the City of London Corporation to sell or dispose of the Buffer Lands for development or profit (although we wonder how this sits alongside their role as Conservators of Epping Forest under the Act), but we do not see how in any way selling the Buffer Lands can possibly be in the interests of the Forest, the Epping Forest Charity, or the Epping Forest & Commons Committee.

We are also deeply concerned that the change in terminology from Buffer Lands to Complementary Land already demonstrates a devaluing of the importance of these green spaces.


We hope that in all the discussions about the Buffer Lands that you make your opposition to any sale or development of the Buffer Lands absolutely clear.



**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

Epping Forest Heritage Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales 275076 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales 1339783.

Tel: 020 8508 9061
Email: admin@efht.org.uk
Registered office: The Warren Lodge,
Loughton, Essex, IG10 4RN



Your predecessors had the foresight to purchase the Buffer Lands to physically protect the Forest, in its natural aspect, and it is now your duty, as Charity Trustees, to do your utmost to continue to protect the Forest. We believe that the best possible way to protect the Forest from adjacent development, and all the added traffic, pollution and damage that will cause, is to retain and grow the Buffer Lands, not to diminish them in any way.

Best wishes



Peter Lewis
Chief Executive




**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

Epping Forest Heritage Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales 275076 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales 1339783.

Tel: 020 8508 9061

Email: admin@efht.org.uk

Registered office: The Warren Lodge,
Loughton, Essex, IG10 4RN





**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

Epping Forest Heritage Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales 275076 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales 1339783.

Tel: 020 8508 9061

Email: admin@efht.org.uk

Registered office: The Warren Lodge,
Loughton, Essex, IG10 4RN