



**Epping Forest
Heritage Trust**

24th July 2026

Planning Application EPF/2401/25 - Land South of Ivy Chimneys Road, South Epping - Up to 270 dwellings (Use Class C3) including surface water drainage and all other ancillary infrastructure and enabling works, strategic public open space, with vehicular access from the new junction on to Ivy Chimneys Road; all other matters (internal access, layout, appearance, scale and landscaping) reserved for subsequent approval.

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.

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). It now faces the gravest threats that it has seen since it was first protected by the 1878 Epping Forest Act.

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

That is why we have the following comments on this application:

- We do not object in principle to this proposal as it is on a site designated in the adopted Local Plan for housing development.
- We share the concerns, however, expressed by the Conservators and Natural England about the proposed Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG).
Given the close proximity of the Forest SAC, the provision of a high quality SANG, protected from traffic noise from the M25, will be essential to reduce likely increased visitor footfall in the Forest. There appears to be insufficient information in the application to enable this judgement to be made particularly given the importance the shadow HRA appears to attach to the SANG as the main means of mitigating damage from visitor footfall and associated vehicle trips.
- At the same time as believing the SANG should be improved, we also believe that access to the Forest should be properly secured to the Forest on foot via the footbridge over the tube line and footbridge over the M25. That is because we believe that if people do choose to visit the Forest, which we assume they will do, it would be preferable for them to be able to do that easily, in all weather conditions by walking rather than jumping in their cars and driving. That means a high quality, sign posted path from the site to the Forest.
- Vehicle exhaust emissions and tyre and brake particles damage the Forest SAC and vehicle trips should ideally be minimised to reduce this. Given the sustainable location of the site within walking distance of Epping High Road and the Underground Station (as described in paragraph 2.1.4 of the Planning Statement), we believe that consideration should be given to reducing parking spaces when the matter comes forward in a later planning application. The Local Plan Policy T1 on

Sustainable Transport is clear that the sustainability of the location is a factor in such considerations.

- We remain very concerned, however, not least after Planning Committee discussion of the related application earlier this month (EPF/0181/26 - Green Acres, Ivy Chimneys, Epping, CM16 4EL), about how the various planning approvals will be coordinated, and how the elements of the Masterplan and Design Code protecting the Forest delivered, when planning applications for the Epping South development are being made piecemeal. For example, when will the wider offsite improvements required to the local road network and other sustainable travel measures to reduce vehicle trips in and near the Forest be assessed and all necessary funding secured? We believe that the Council should develop and publish a plan indicating the number of planning applications expected, and approximate timings, to ensure that the approach to the whole Masterplan area is joined-up and comprehensive.

We believe the above issues are significant and need to be taken into account by the planning authority as it considers the above application.

Yours faithfully

Peter Lewis

Chief Executive

Epping Forest Heritage Trust