

Please include my comments on the PEC agenda package for the meeting where this matter will be discussed.

I am writing to express my support for the *Conservation Master Plan Phase II for the Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA (South)*, dated June 2021. I also support the related amendments to the Official Plan and Zoning by-law.

I have a long-standing interest in protection of London's Environmentally Significant Areas, and I am very familiar with the Medway Valley Heritage Forest.

- Section 1.2.2 of the Conservation Master Plan (CMP) presents the Guiding Principles behind the development of the CMP. It is important to keep these principles front and centre when considering the plan. A key principle is this one: "The ecological integrity and ecosystem health of the ESA shall have priority in any use or design-related decision." The current CMP appears to be consistent with this principle.
- Section 3.4.3.7 describes the steps that will be taken to address trails that are being closed. I urge council to provide sufficient budget resources to enable this work. Having watched efforts to close trails in other ESAs in London, it seems very difficult to convince trail users to change their habits. It is even more challenging when the steps described here are not fully implemented.
- Section 4.2.3.6 discusses seasonal closure of a trail for the protection of at-risk plants. While this approach is commendable, I wonder whether trail users will respect the closure? This closure will be difficult to enforce.

In conclusion, I support this Conservation Master Plan. I urge council to adopt the CMP, and to approve the associated planning amendments.

Regards,

David Wake