

July 23, 2021

To: Chair and Members Planning and Environment Committee & London City Council

From: Holden and Carey Rhodes, Owners of 1633 Gloucester Road, London

Subject: Medway Valley Heritage Forest Environmentally Significant Conservation Master Plan (CMP) (South) Phase II Public Participation Meeting – Meeting Date - July 26, 2021

Further to my correspondence to Council, dated April 17, 2018, we very much appreciate the dedicated hard work and consultation that has taken place between the City and the various parties referred to in the April 25, 2018 Council Resolution.

I have read the correspondence, of even date, submitted by our neighbours, George and Syd Sinker and agree with the matters set out therein.

Given the proposed changes, we are now in support of the Conservation Master Plan as amended, with the following caveats:

1. Trail status remain as a Level 1 trail; and
2. Removal of the Green Acres Access

Status Quo for Trail:

I think it is important to reiterate Section 2.2 of the Report to the PEC wherein it states as follows:

“Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) such as Medway Valley Heritage Forest are considered as the largest, highest quality areas within the City’s Natural Heritage System. ESAs are identified in the London Plan as ‘areas that contain natural features and perform ecological functions that warrant their retention in a natural state.’”

The Medway valley is an ESA and not a park or other type of recreational area. As such, increasing the intensity and refinement of the trail system would seem quite contrary to the protections afforded an ESA. The level of destruction to upgrade a Level 1 trail to something more intense (firm and stable) would require deforestation and a great deal of construction as the delta from Gloucester Road to the valley floor is upwards of 100 feet in various areas. Additionally, I am not aware of public demand for this sort of destruction within the ESA so unclear as to the motive for the City to proceed with it. There is an excellent alternative that provides far greater accessibility and parking to the area through the Elsie Perrin Williams Estate which is City owned/managed.

Green Acres Access Removal:

For the reasons stated in the correspondence of George and Syd Sinker, we agree that this access point is not necessary or desired by the neighbours most closely affected or by the public generally and that an encroachment agreement ought to be entered into with the owners of 74 and 84 Green Acres Drive.

Sincerely,



Holden & Carey Rhodes