

Report to Area Planning Subcommittee East

Date of meeting: 27th April 2011



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Subject: CONFIRMATION OF TREE PRESERVATION ORDER EPF/118/10 – Land to the north east of Eppingdene, Ivy Chimneys, Epping

**Officer contact for further information: Melinda Barham Ext 4120
Committee Secretary: G Woodhall Ext 4470**

Recommendation(s): That Tree Preservation Order 118/10 not be confirmed

Background

1. The land was being marketed for sale and the Tree Preservation Order was made strategically to pre-empt any proposals for development or clearance of the land
2. The parcel of land is approximately 7 acres in size and is bisected by a line of electricity pylons which effectively splits the woodland into two parts. A well used public Right of Way passes through the larger area of woodland and acts as an important link between Bell Common and Ivy Chimneys.
3. The trees within the woodland are typical of the area, and provide a valuable 'green corridor' for wildlife moving between nearby Epping Forest and other areas of woodland and open fields. The woodland represents the remains of part of the long standing field system, and forms a typical and valuable part of the landscape character of this area.

The Grounds of Objection

4. Two objections have been received.
5. Firstly from the Mr Low the seller of the land. The reasons for the objection are:
 - (a) That the Order be modified to take account of the original field boundaries and the line of the National Grid pylons through the whole woodland.
 - (b) That, no allowance has been given to two methane gas pipelines which pass through the woodland.
 - (c) The public footpath is rarely used and feels quite unsafe when walking alone.
The 'green corridor' leads to the M25 and is therefore not useful as a wildlife route.
 - (d) Only the field boundary trees and selected groups of trees should be considered for protection in order to preserve the views for surrounding residents.

The scrub, bracken and gorse should be flailed to open up the views and provide added security.

(e) The National Grid did not complete recent tree clearance work adjacent to their power lines.

(f) There is concern that the making of this Order will have reduced the potential value of the land, and that future owners may seek to have the Order removed and thus increase the lands value for onward sale.

(g) In not confirming the Order and allowing some clearance work the land would have some economical use and retain its value.

6. The second objection was received on the 7th April 2011 from the City of London. The reasons for objection are:

(a) The City of London completed on the purchase of this land on 6th April 2011.

(b) The land will be incorporated into Epping Forest and will be protected under the Epping Forest Act. As such its long term future is secure, and the Order is no longer necessary.

The Director of Planning and Economic Development comments as follows:

7. Had we not have received the second objection we would have addressed the previous owners objections with the recommendation to confirm the Order without modifications.

8. However, the acquisition of the land by the City of London, and its incorporation within the Epping Forest Act will protect and preserve it for the future. Land held under the Epping Forest Act can not be sold on and ongoing management of the land will be for the benefit of biodiversity and public enjoyment. On this basis the land can not be sold on for profit which was one of the previous owners concerns.

Conclusion :

9. With the purchase of this land by the City of London, its long term future is secure and it is therefore recommended that the Order not be confirmed.