Please see attached my objection against the proposed fencing of Iping and Trotton commons.

E Petrie

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To the Planning Inspectorate  
COM 749

Objection to the fencing of Iping and Trotton Commons

I am writing to you at my concern over the plans to fence Trotton and Iping common. I have lived, walked and ridden over this land for much of my life. As a child, endless summers were spent playing and making camps all over the area, in company with my sister and our local friends. Frequently our adventures involved us with our ponies. Having to negotiate gates would have been not only extremely difficult but I suspect impossible. Both my sister and I frequently rode out alone and again the presence of gates would have meant that we would have had to dismount which would result in us being stranded. The alternative would have been for us to ride along the roads, which are extremely dangerous, especially as many vehicles go round the blind corners at high speed.

The wildlife policies on the culling of so called imported species, also seems as un-researched as it is destructive and irrational. Why the many should be sacrificed for the few, (who themselves in many cases are no more indigenous than the species you seem to be out to exterminate) continues to remain an illogical mystery to me and many others I have spoken to. One of my favourite things used to be walking in the late dusk, when the common has a very unique and enchanted feel. This was in part due to the twisting paths, where you could endlessly double-back on yourself without feeling as though you were. Another magical element to our common was the bird song, especially the night jars. Both of these privileges have been denied to us. Through the deforestation and ground clearing, these once charming sandy paths have been destroyed, to be replaced by bulldozer-made highways of deep mud, with about as much romance as the M6. The sounds of the night jars has also ceased in relation to the level of these clearing activities. I find it hard to believe that this is coincidence.

I have long been concerned at the management of our beautiful common and the current scheme of fencing it just seems to be yet another chapter in a long line of mismanagement and ill-thought out policies. As a nurse, it is heavily impressed upon us that our day to day care and practice must be rooted within well researched, evidence based practice; I find it hard to believe that management of our common is not deserving of similar practice.

SWT would do well to read the research report by English Nature, published in 2001, which is very detailed and rigorous which shows that grazing can in some instances be successful but can be the wrong policy in other situations.

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