Dear Sir/Madam

I will also send a typed letter of the above to ensure that it is able to be utilised at the hearing.

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Re: Iping and Trotton Commons Fencing Application

Dear Sir/Madam

I write to commend the proposed fencing of Iping and Trotton Commons to allow grazing. I have been a volunteer land management worker at this site since its first working party in the early 1980’s.

Iping Common is a nationally important heathland nature reserve that has been managed for the last forty years by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. A wide range of techniques has been used to maintain the biodiversity of the site, including tree removal, controlled burning and turf stripping. Despite all this activity and expense the reserve has still not reached its full potential.

Grazing boosts species richness because it creates a much greater variety and number of micro-habitats. Some of these are essential for the rarer species that are found at this Site of Special Scientific Interest. A recent grazing trial at Iping common demonstrated the benefit on some of these species. Grazing was carried out on the site until the Second World War.

Grazing by a variety of large herbivores is now a standard tool for enhancing biodiversity of many nature reserves. Locally these include the neighbouring Stedham Common, Lavington Plantation, Lavington Common, Levin Down, Graffham Down and Ebernoe Common where gentle varieties of domesticated cattle, horses and sheep have helped maintain and indeed have improved the biodiversity of the sites. To many people these herbivores are in themselves an additional attraction of the site.

The proposed fencing line and gate placement have been specifically tailored to cause the least disruption to users of the site as well as having the minimal effect on landscape.

I trust the Planning Inspectorate will support the aims of this important nature reserve by approving the proposed fencing.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Sennitt