

**CONFIDENTIAL Minutes of the Special Meeting of the EPSOM AND WALTON DOWNS
CONSERVATORS
held on 5 DECEMBER 2011**

PRESENT-

Councillor Jean Smith (Chairman); Councillors Ben Cahill-Sawford, Liz Frost, Chris Long and Jan Mason (Epsom and Ewell Borough Council); Messrs Andrew Cooper, Rupert Trevelyan and Nigel Whybrow (Epsom Downs Racecourse); Mr Simon Dow (Horserace Betting Levy Board)

Officers present: Frances Rutter (Clerk to the Conservators), John Turnbull (Treasurer to the Conservators), Bob Harding (Head Downskeeper) and Tim Richardson (Democratic Services Officer).

- 1** CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: LAND OWNERSHIP. Rupert Trevelyan informed the Conservators that the Racecourse was not the freehold owner of the area of land known as the 'hatched ground' at the southern edge of Walton Downs, and marked on the Signed Map for the 1984 Epsom and Walton Downs Regulation Act. Whilst the leasehold for the land was owned by Jockey Club Racecourses, the freehold was held by an apparently dormant company.

The Conservators were informed that as the proposed flattening works to the Tattenham Straight included the use of material to be taken from the 'hatched area', the freeholder's permission had to be obtained prior to any works being undertaken. Epsom Downs Racecourse had contacted legal representatives of the freeholder with a view to negotiating a financial agreement for the use of material from the area, but had as yet not received a response.

The Conservators were informed that if it was not possible to come to an agreement with the freeholder with regard to use of material from the hatched area, the Racecourse would investigate the possibility of importing soil from a site located away from the Downs. The Council-appointed Conservators expressed concern at this possibility, in particular as it would not provide the ecological benefit that would be achieved through use of the 'hatched area' as a source of material. The Chairman emphasised the importance of the ecological benefits to be gained, and requested the Racecourse to continue its efforts to come to an agreement with the freeholder. Rupert Trevelyan informed the Conservators that this would be done.

The meeting began at 6.00pm and ended at 6.48pm.

JEAN SMITH
Chairman