

PANSHANGER COUNTRY PARK

Review of Legal Agreement & Owner Obligations

Introduction

The below documents are the approved planning documents pursuant to Panshanger Park for permission to extract, process and transport minerals. The obligations form a legal agreement.

Where details for restoration, excavation, landscaping, access and country park are not agreed, between the owner and council, the Secretary of State retains provision for his determination.

The Secretary of State also comments as follows in his decision:

The question of enforceability of the agreement is a matter for the Courts but the Secretary of State notes that the applicants regard themselves as being bound by the intentions of the agreement which they accept voluntarily and undertake to do whatever is necessary to implement the agreement.

Pursuant Documents

1 Secretary of State, Department of Environment decision - letter 13th May 1980.

- Decision following Public Inquiry and Inspectors report

2 County Planning Officer, Schemes and Plans approved - letter 30th July 1982.

- Scheme of Restoration and Working (Revised May 1982)
- Country Park Management Plan (Revised June 1982)
- Nature Reserve Management Plan (November 1981)
- Woodland & Wildlife Plan (October 1981)

3 Subsequent reviews of mineral planning permission at Panshanger.

- Application for Variation of Condition 12 (Processing Plant location)
Letter 25th July 1998, Head of County Development Unit
- Determination on new planning conditions
Letter 17th July 2003, Head of County Development Unit

4 Management Agreement (Dated 1979/1980/1981)

- Signatories: Messers Wallace, County Council, Redland Aggregates, Wildlife Trust.

Country Park - Commitments enshrined within the Legal Agreement

The Country Park was due to be developed and opened in three stages. Stage 1 to open in 1989 (Year 7), stage 2 to open 1992 (Year 10), stage 3 full opening 1995 (Year 13).

The extracts in italics below are quotes from the approved plans and schemes.

Cost estimates are based on the specific facilities promised for Panshanger Country Park in the plans as submitted by the owners. In assessing costs, comparison have been made with Country Parks across England and with reference to Natural England accredited standards for Country Parks In England. Recognition must also be taken of the Grade II* listed status of the landscape, gardens and buildings of Panshanger. The listing confers responsibilities on the owners to preserve and enhance the heritage assets within its boundaries.

The total establishments costs based on legal commitments: **£5.38 to £6.63 million.**

Park management costs (less parking revenues) **£250K per annum.**

Source: Country Park Management Plan (Revised June 1982)

Development & Management of the Country Park

- *Responsibility for developing the park lies with the Owners. (Planning Apps £150K)*
- *Further and more detailed information on the design and management of the park will be necessary before the park opens (Consultancy 100K)*
- *The Country Park will be managed by the Owner (250K per annum)*
- *Some form of regulation and control on a day to day basis will be necessary, this will be achieved by roving warden(s), these being found from the Panshanger. Estate Management Service. The wardens would also supervise the safety of persons using the park and provide visitors assistance to them.*

Car Parking Facilities

- *Car Park from the B1000 North Lodge, initially for approximately 150 cars. (£100K)*
- *Toilet Facilities x 3 Provided at or adjacent to each of the car parks and will be of a 'Portaloo' type with chemical action disposal. (£20K)*
- *Information boards about the park and its regulations will be erected near the car parks and in other locations. An explanatory leaflet will be produced for visitors giving a synopsis of the history, features to be visited. (£15K)*
- *Car Park at A414 at Birch Green, initially for approximately 100 cars. (£100K)*
- *Toilet Facilities (£20K)*
- *Information boards (£15K)*
- *Car Park at Thieves Lane, initially for approximately 50 cars. (£25K)*
- *Toilet Facilities (£20K)*
- *Information boards (£15K)*

Access: Footpaths and Bridleways

- *The Country Park will be complete with a system of permissive footpaths and bridle routes for pedestrians and horseriders.*
- *An integral part of developing the Country Park will be the creation of a new system of permissive footpaths, the effect of which will be to enable the public to enter the valley, to cross it and also to walk along the northern banks of lakes 1 and 3 including the Broadwater.*
- *Other links from the footpath network will lead to the picnic and viewing areas and the various features of interest.*
- *All bridleways and footpaths within the park and those outside being created as part of the development process, will be way-marked in accordance with the Countryside Commission's recommended practice.*
- *Natural features, such as trees and shrubs, will be used as a management tool, rather than fences, where appropriate.*
- *Where necessary bridleways and footpaths will be provided with drainage and/or surfaced with rolled or raised gravel.*
- *The existing statutory bridleway (BR12) from Thieves Lane will be extended from the edge of Blakemore Wood to link with the B1000 at a point opposite an existing bridleway leading into the countryside to the north (Bramfield/Tewin)*

- *A figure of eight permissive bridleways linked to the statutory bridleway will be established as will a private link to the stable block. Most of this permissive bridleway will be within the boundaries of the Country Park.*
- *Visitor Aids: Access points to all paths and features of special interest will be sign-posted/way-marked. (30K inc info boards)*
- *The public will be encouraged to witness the re-creation of a landscaped park and will be afforded adequate facilities to watch its development.*
(Total costs for footpaths, bridleways, waymarking: £1500K)

Provision of Picnic Areas & Facilities

- *The provision of picnic sites in association with the existing rights of way.*
- *Picnic Areas: Appropriate facilities such as benches, tables and litter bins will be provided. (£50K)*

Angling

- *In-season Angling will be available on a day-ticket basis from at least one of the lakes in the valley area.*
- *The lakes to be used for fishing will be suitably managed including any necessary stocking. Stocking is responsibility of owner (£50K)*

Bird Watching

- *Facilities for bird watching from hides will be provided x 3 (£40K)*

Catering

- *When refreshment facilities are provided in the area of the Orangery being near to the main car park, more permanent toilet facilities will be developed at this location.*
- *Catering: It would seem appropriate to make some provision at least during the period Whitsun to September for refreshments to be available from a kiosk at weekends. The most obvious location would be adjacent to the car park near to the site of the old house or by modification to the Orangery Buildings itself.*

Features of Special Interest

- *Features of Special Interest: The Owner will ensure that particular attention is given to the maintenance of the landscape character of the park and to the Orangery, the Great Oak, the garden remains, hydraulic ram, Broadwater, the River Mimram.*
(Costs for Catering/Orangery and other Special Interest Features £2000K)

Source: Nature Reserve Management Plan (November 1981)

- *These features, with their vegetation and wildlife must be carefully conserved, for example the string of islands in the Broadwater/Lake 3.*
- *The plateau woodlands lying north and south of the river valley are very important from a landscape point of view. They are to be managed with the particular aim of enhancing their ornithological interest.*
- *The new Lake 3 will be developed in such a way as to develop a rich aquatic fauna and flora and to maximize the occurrence of a diverse range of water-birds.*
- *There are possibilities for encouraging the development of heath on the western parts of Chisel Shelf. This would replace the heath areas lost in the area around the mansion site.*
- *Detailed site records exist for the various compartments. These records will be improved by further field surveys. It is especially important to keep the information up-to-date by careful monitoring throughout the extraction process. This monitoring will also be carried out in the other areas of the Park.*
- *Upper Broadwater: No direct effect of excavations.*
- *Lower Broadwater: No direct excavations.*
- *Preserve Hydraulic Ram.*
- *Existing Islands Management 4a,4b,4c Retain footbridge to east, but not to north*
Arrange for renovation of the old Hydraulic Ram.
- *Created Islands Management A5a Preserve Hydraulic Ram.*
- *Natural course of the river Lake 1 to Lake 3.*
- *D3 & D4 River Channel. The river bed is to be preserved. Measures should be periodically taken against silting up of the river bed.*
(Group Total £1000K-£2000K)

Source: Woodland and Wildlife Management Plan (October 1981)

- *A double row of staggered feathered and standard trees at 4 metre centres will be planted along approximately 1,930m of the estate boundary to provide a quick screen to the areas where gravel is being extracted. As these trees mature after the completion of the extraction programme they will permit filtered views over the restored land*
- *The long-term aim of the management is to create an area of woodland with trees of sufficiently different ages so that a succession of mature trees is guaranteed. It must, however be emphasised that for this objective to be reached, a permanent policy of replanting and thinning is essential.*
- *To preserve the parkland character of Panshanger new spinneys and clumps of trees are planted beside the new lakes to form an important part of the new Country Park*
(Group Total £250K – £500K)