



Chief Executive & Director of Environment: John Wood

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Contact: Mr J Wood
My ref: JW/TS
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Date: 29 November 2017

Dear Stuart

Restoration at Panshanger Quarry, Panshanger Lane, Hertford, Hertfordshire and establishment of Country Park

It was good to catch up with you earlier this month on a range of issues and particularly on Panshanger.

I think we are both pleased that planning permission has at last been issued for the importation of material to Areas F & H in the south of Panshanger Park. We look forward to you setting up the new Heritage Committee soon to progress the issues relating to heritage and access in the Cole Green Area, in line with the requirements of the S106 agreement.

Our understanding is that mineral extraction of Areas F and H will cease by 31 December and that presumably you will therefore be able to remove the plant site very shortly afterwards. I think this heralds a turning point for Panshanger. We all recognise the first phase of the Park has taken too long to open but it is clearly a much valued and successful facility for the local community. However, the County Council still requires you to comply with the original S.52 obligation to create a Country Park in perpetuity for the enjoyment of the public, and I can see no reason why the rest of the Country Park cannot be opened up very quickly now.

The original S52 legal agreement was aimed at preserving the woodlands and wildlife of Panshanger, the establishment and management of a nature reserve and the creation, management and development of the Country Park to be enjoyed by the public. Additionally, it is now important to maintain and enhance the essential features of the historic landscape following its Registered Park status being confirmed in 1987.



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We would very much like you to now set a timetable covering the next 12 months for the implementation and opening of the remaining areas of land within the designated Country Park.

This needs to pay particular attention to the historic core and the setting of Listed Buildings, with reference to how public access is to be managed on a temporary basis in those areas, as well as suggesting temporary locations for country park facilities such as refreshments, toilets and car parking. The purpose of this is to allow the early opening of those areas of Country Park prior to the formal approval of the Management Plan.

It would be useful to have your timetable for this by the end of December so that everyone can be clear of your intentions in good time for next Spring.

You will be aware that the County Council also has an expectation that you will be submitting a new planning application shortly which will be a variation to the approved RoMP Restoration plan dated 2003, as that plan is now not going to be complied with. There are a number of issues that will need to be addressed. I suggest that you arrange a meeting with my Development Management team to discuss the proposed content prior to submission as soon as possible. Please contact Brian Owen and Felicity Hart directly on this.

From where we sit at the County Council, we are very aware that there are continuing tensions and frustration between Tarmac and some community representatives/organisations and also a degree of distrust. We hear it from both sides!

As we are at a turning point I suggest this might also be the opportunity to establish a new more constructive and collaborative way of working. Perhaps if we were to find an independent person, agreed by all parties this could broker a fresh approach. Clearly this would require 'give and take' on all sides with the common goal of getting the Country Park delivered. The County Council would be prepared to fund this initially. Please let me know what you think of this idea.

I am conscious that part of the problem is that the previous working groups have for a number of reasons, broken down and therefore there are no clear channels of communication for discussion of issues, or the delivery of projects in the Park. We need to address this if we are to restore confidence and trust.

I would suggest we disband the previous Member Advisory Group and instead set up a Panshanger Liaison Group which would meet quarterly and act as an information exchange with local stakeholders and elected Members. This would be your opportunity to keep everyone up to speed with your plans going forward.



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In addition there is a need for a technical/professional group to advise you on and help progress practical projects – a Panshanger Park Projects Group. This needs to include representatives from Hertfordshire County Council Planning, the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the Herts Garden Trust. This group would meet on an interim basis until the Management Plan is approved and the Management Committee required by the S52 agreement can be convened.

We would obviously need to agree the composition and Terms of Reference for each group but please let me know your views on these suggestions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Wood".

John Wood
Chief Executive & Director of Environment

