

To Rob Egan,
Case Officer

Planning Application PL/0202/21

Dear Rob,

Herewith Friends of Panshanger Lane Response to the Car Park Application

FPP considers the triangle on the old haul road a more suitable site for a car park than the one suggested by the previous application. In general FPP approves the locations of all the elements of this planning application. As far as detail goes, we approve the toilet block and horse box café; preventing parking on the road; moving the electricity cables underground and the provision of recharging points and cycle stands, although we have some improvements to suggest for some of these. Also we consider that there are details which are missing.

FPP has the following detailed comments:

- The number of car parking places has been increased to 173 which considering the width of 2.4m we consider to be too many for this area. 2.4m is the parking standard minimum. The tendency in recent years has been for larger cars to be built so that people in SUVs which can be 2m wide will struggle to easily open their car doors. In particular parents will struggle to get children in and out of their car seats and people will struggle to remove cycles from car roofs. This situation may be mitigated to some extent if parent and child bays were provided. There seem to be none indicated on the car park drawing. Some of the major users of the park currently are families and we would expect this to continue if not increase, so the provision of a significant number of parent and child bays is surely a necessity.
- A coach bay has been included which will be very intrusive in the views along the haul road and from the parkland. If this bay is to be included we suggest that it should be screened at either end with appropriate trees and shrubs. We further consider that coach drivers may find negotiating the bends in the car park difficult, especially the one near the paying machines where people including children will mill around. This particular bend seems likely to be a pinch-point.
- We understand Tarmac wanting to gain revenue from the car parks but we have reservations as to how successful this will be. We think that people may well park on Panshanger Lane rather than pay for parking. Also some local authorities, such as WHBC, which had an ANPR system in its car parks a few years ago has since abandoned it because of the number of complaints about the payment of fines.
- Landscape Plan 1, showing the entrance from Panshanger Lane, shows barriers on the inward and outward lanes of the road. Is it intended to provide these barriers as well as ANPR?
- The cycle racks could be better placed as they are in the views to and from the parkland; nearer the toilet block would be more appropriate and it would reduce the clutter in this area. There should be more of them if HCC's sustainable transport vision is to be followed. HCC has run Hertfordshire Cycling since 2014 to encourage more people to cycle.
- The car park would be more pleasant (especially on hot days) and look visually less intrusive if trees were planted between the rows of cars as originally proposed. The lack of soft landscaping in this area would have been clearer if a mock-up showing parked cars had been provided.
- We can see no indication of where waste and dog poo bins would be sited. They should be

- close to the buildings and within the car park.
- We assume that information boards, maps and sign posts will be provided close to the site but these are not indicated in the plans supplied.
 - The design and placing of any welcome board and an indication of parking charges situated by the entrance is also not shown on the plans provided.
 - Assuming parking charges are imposed, we would welcome an indication of reduced rates for residents of Hertford, Welwyn and Welwyn Garden City. This is common practice in other country parks as is the provision of daily, monthly and/or annual reduced rates.
 - No lighting is indicated. Presumably this is deliberate since we understand that the car park will be closed at night, e.g. at dusk or a specified time. If any lighting is provided we request that it be low-level, solar-powered lighting.
 - FPP understood that soil bunds would be used to discourage people parking on the side of the road. We consider the use of wooden posts is not advisable since, unless a large number of these are used, cars will, or will attempt to, park between them causing disturbance to the grass surface and probably knocking some posts over.
 - We note that there is no provision for emergency vehicle access to the café/toilet area. We consider that visitor safety should be a priority and that the owner's duty of care requires a suitable access and plan.
 - FPP considers that a defibrillator should be available within the park and this car park would be an ideal place to site one, say on the side of the toilet block.

Extra Comments.

FPP is disappointed that this car park application has been submitted in isolation. A complete and thorough management plan specifying, among other things, a total car park solution is urgently required and should have been provided before this application was submitted.

The provision of this car park will not mitigate the need for a car park in the north of the park, e.g. at the stables or on a site nearby. People with a disability cannot at present, and will not with this proposed car park, be able easily to get to see the oak, the remains of the orangery & conservatory or the site of the old house with its views. At the very least there needs to be a car park for those with disabilities, situated near the flat land at the north of the site with an entrance via the north lodge.

Historically there was a bus stop by the north lodge which is on a regular bus route. It would encourage more people not to use their cars if they could make use of a bus from Hertford North, Welwyn Garden City or Welwyn North and comply with the aims of HCC's sustainable transport policies.

Although not a part of this application FPP wishes to draw the attention of HCC to the future need of a pedestrian crossing on Panshanger Lane with the imminent development of housing on the old airfield site. This is an oft-used cut-through and vehicles travel along it at significant speed.

Yours sincerely,
Geoff Cordingley, Hon Sec. Friends of Panshanger Park