

Representation - Friends of Panshanger Park (FPP)
Joint Examination of Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan 2013-32 (WHLP) and East Herts District Plan 2011-33 (EHDP) – Birchall Garden Suburb East of Welwyn Garden City

Hearing Representatives:

Rab Harley, Treasurer Friends of Panshanger Park, Member of Herts County Council (HCC) Strategic Advisory Group for Panshanger Country Park.

Kate Harwood, Conservation & Planning Officer Hertfordshire Gardens Trust & The Gardens Trust Conservation Committee. Also Member of HCC Strategic Advisory Group for Panshanger Country Park, Member of Panshanger Repton & Brown Heritage Committees, Vice-Chair Friends of Panshanger Park

FPP Submission:

The Friends of Panshanger Park are committed to protecting and enhancing the historic and natural environments of the Grade II* listed Panshanger Park, as it opens up as a Country Park with full public access.

Panshanger Park is a significant element of the strategic green corridor as promoted by the Central Herts Green Corridor Group and as envisioned by the principles of the 'Salisbury Line'. It maintains a valuable green corridor between the towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hertford along the Mimram river valley. The Friends are supportive of the ecological evaluation and comments of Hertingfordbury Parish Council relating to BGS. We would wish to see ecological networks and species throughout the corridor, including Panshanger Park, protected.

The Friends are also aware of the extensive work done by Welwyn Garden City Civic Society and that of the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust and are fully supportive of their conclusions.

Matter 7 Historic Heritage

There are a number of historic heritage assets within or close to the site, some of which are of national significance. In preparing Local Plans the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to recognize that heritage assets as irreplaceable resources that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The Beacon Report commissioned by EHDC & WHBC recognises the special nature and significance of Panshanger Park. However it does not thoroughly examine the impacts on the setting, present adequate evidence or follow through its conclusions. It is unclear on

recommendations for mitigation and how mitigation could satisfy NPPF requirements.

The 2017 HCC- Tarmac S106 agreement, which will restore the Capability Brown landscape adjacent to Panshanger Lane and Cole Green, has not been considered by the Councils. This restoration and further public access, will provide an additional heritage experience and requires further consideration with regard to affects on the setting, and therefore the significance, of the Grade II* Park to the east.

Inspectors Question (33) Is there an evidence base that has assessed the sensitivity of development to the nearby Heritage assets, including montages of the views affected (as recommended by the Heritage Impact Assessment produced by the Councils by Beacon Planning?)

The recent (2017) Historic England publication 'The Setting of Historic Assets' Planning Note No.3 provides clarity on the importance of setting and views. In comparing this advice with the Beacon Report and its evidence and recommendations. It is evident that the sensitivity and cumulative effects of BGS on Panshanger Park have not been correctly considered.

As example the photomontages submitted are not of sufficient quality to be able to consider reasonably the effect on historic viewpoints across connected historic landscapes.

Conclusion

The development of BGS will, in the format and locations suggested, significantly harm the setting of Grade II* Panshanger Park. It would also affect ecological networks that emanate from the Park.

The site as proposed should be removed from the Local Plans.