

Please quote: VG/CML
Your reference:
Date: 9 June 2014
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Mr. C. Hurrell

Via Email

Dear Mr. Hurrell,

Questions to HBC Parks Department re. Ecclesbourne Glen landslips

Your emails and recent follow-ups to the Parks department have been forwarded to me. I understood that all your queries were to be dealt with at your meeting with Councillors and representatives of the Planning Department. I'm sorry for the delay and will now add Parks-specific comments.

You ask whether we were aware of incremental developments at Rocklands, what we think of the developments, what actions we have taken to prevent developments, what consultations we have held, whether we objected to developments and how we responded to public queries.

The Parks Department was not aware of incremental developments at Rocklands and therefore did not take any action nor consult anyone on these developments. We did not receive any public queries on these developments until after the major 2014 landslip. Our view of the developments would be in line with the assessment in the geotechnical survey, that is, if surface water runoff from the developments contributed to the groundwater level variations and thus land instability, they would have contributed to the damage in the country park. The major factor in the landslip, however, was the extreme weather conditions.

The Parks Department does not have enforcement power over developments on private land.

With regard to a landslip in March 2013, you ask similar questions about what we knew, when we knew it and what we did about it.

The Parks Department was aware of the fissures in the footpath on HBC land. We assessed the situation with the County Rights of Way team resulting in the closure of the public footpath. We did not investigate developments in Rocklands as we were not aware of them.

Then you ask about pollution of the SSSI, whether it is protected, whether pollution has been measured, how we will prevent drainage runoff, was sewage draining into the SSSI. You also mention reports of asbestos and whether there will be a cleanup operation, who will pay for it and whether prosecutions will result.

As of this writing, we have no evidence of pollution by either sewage or asbestos. The sewage arrangements at Rocklands have been investigated by the Planning Department; sewage does not drain into the SSSI. There have been at least two visits by Environmental Health regarding asbestos fragments and burning of asbestos, with results reported to you. At this stage, there are no plans for a cleanup operation in the country park. There are no plans for any intervention in the landslip area at this time as the land is still moving and therefore dangerous.



I have been asked by Cllr Hodges to arrange a meeting with you and Cllrs. Hodges and Poole to discuss aspects of countryside management or the Ecclesbourne Glen landslips that were not fully covered at your meeting with Planners. Cherry Longley will be contacting you to find a convenient date and time. If you have further questions, perhaps we can deal with them when we meet.

Yours sincerely,



Virginia Gilbert
Head of Service