Addendum Appendix B

Nature Trail Concept – Chorleywood Parish Council

Part of the Stewardship agreement is to promote education on the Common.

The Parish Council derived a concept to encourage people to look at Chorleywood Common in a different light. The Parish Council have understood and listened to those wishing for a play space on Chorleywood Common but want to ensure that anything put in is environmentally friendly and in keeping with the natural surroundings.

The Nature trail was agreed which delivers a project which spans the generations and hopefully will bring cohesion to the community.

Why have a Nature trail

* Only 21% of children aged 8–12 are connected with nature.
* To dispel perceptions that nature is dangerous and dirty.
* The Dens and carvings will provide destination points for children whilst the Trail provides a convenient loop-walk for all visitors
* Through the provision of more family-friendly experiences, a greater understanding of the benefits and heritage of the Common can be gained.
* The Nature Trail will work in tandem with the Parish website, which will have special pages on flora and fauna found on the Common
* Planned new signage and information boards on the Common will refer to the Nature Trail and offer in situ information about the immediate locality
* Parish Rangers will incorporate elements of the Nature Trail in their growing programme of educational visits on the Common with local schoolchildren.
* Treasure Hunt-style clues can be posted on the Parish website alongside a special children’s map for families to download and print
* Answers to the clues could take the form of carved animals & symbols built into the Nature Trail
* The path of the Trail introduces children to natural structures providing additional play experiences in-keeping with the natural context of the Common
* The Nature Trail lends itself easily to special and seasonal events

On considering the Wildwood Den Concept the parish council need to consider a number of issues.

Safety is an important issue for Parish Councils to consider. Detailed below is a statement from David Yearley – head of Play Safety at RoSPA about the Wildwood Dens

*“The Wildwood Den concept offers children a wonderful experience . They ar free to engage in play and the natural environment, without being bound by the constraints of off-the-shelf playground equipment. The designer considers the principles of the playground equipment standard, so as to eliminate unnecessary risks, yet encompasses the concept of a living ,changing play space.”*

Written confirmation from Natural England has been received stating that they are happy for the project to progress. They state in their correspondence ‘*regarding the issue of play equipment provision on Chorleywood Common and looking on the Wildwood UK Website, I belive you have found a very favourable solution to the Challenge imposed. To summarise, I can endorse your proposals.’*

The Planning Inspector was also contacted with regard to a Section 38 application of the Commons Act 2006 who have confirmed that a S38 application will not be necessary stating ‘*Works allowed by a scheme (of regulation) do not generally need consent under Section 38, on top of that, the structures would be small and of minimal impact.’* However, Three Rivers District Council would still need to apply due to the size and scale of the project.

Due to the open nature of the Wildwood Den, the Open Spaces Society does not believe that this type of equipment impedes access.

The infrastructure is only the start of the project as this will also be followed with downloadable materials, from the Council’s website and with the use of QR codes to give valuable information about the special aspects of the Common flora and fauna. Much of this will be achieved in house with no additional cost other than staff time.

It is considered that the Nature Trail could be a lasting legacy for the community to enjoy the common but at the same time learn about the vital environmental importance of the site.



