



Devon Countryside Access Forum

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Mr J Avon
Stover Country Park
Newton Abbot
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TQ12 6QG

11 November 2019

Dear Mr Avon

Stover Country Park – Heritage Lottery Fund bid

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice "as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area..."

The DCAF currently has fifteen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

Stover Country Park is a well-used and popular country park situated close to Newton Abbot, a town that is expanding significantly. The DCAF visited the Park on one of its training days and was impressed by the Country Park, its visitor centre and engagement with the community, schools and volunteers.

The proposals accord with the aims of the DCAF to improve access and enjoyment of the countryside. The creation of 2.5 km of new footpath routes, accessible for mobility scooters, will enable more people to take advantage of the site and enjoy extensive walks. The Forum welcomes the proposal to have a further tramper buggy for use and the associated enlarged and improved accessible toilet facilities, to Changing Places standards. The improvement of cycle links to the Stover Trail is also appreciated.

Stover Country Park has the capacity to act as an increasingly important recreational hub as it is well-linked to other public rights of way and the Wray Trail, a multi-use trail which will eventually connect Moretonhampstead to Bovey Tracey and Newton Abbot.

It is well-served by public transport links which increases its accessibility to a wide range of users.

The project includes proposals to extend the use of amenity land at Stover for additional groups of people, for example by providing contacts and transport to enable vulnerable elderly people to venture out and, similarly, developing support for families who might not otherwise take advantage of opportunities to explore Stover. Ensuring such groups can use Stover will deliver a range of health and well-being benefits.

The Forum welcomes partnership approaches; agreements with Stover School and Sibelco UK Ltd to allow permissive access to woodland and interesting historical sites will enhance the visitor experience and enjoyment of the Park.

Stover Country Park is already established and has a strong community presence. Additional funding will allow the restoration of important historical buildings, improve the biodiversity and appearance of the lake and ornamental waters, and open up viewpoints. These features will provide an enriched experience for the many visitors who come to Stover and will safeguard the historic setting of the Park for the future

The DCAF has no hesitation in commending this project and hopes that the Heritage Lottery Fund will provide funding to allow this exciting and aspirational project to go forward.

Yours sincerely

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H. Winter
Forum Officer

Letter signed on behalf of Devon Countryside Access Forum.

*Chair: Sarah Slade
Vice Chair: Chris Cole*