

Mr Tony Walker,

Date: 05/11/2024

Dethick, Lea & Holloway Parish Council

Dear Mr Walker,

Thank you for your letter of the 21st October on behalf of the Parish Council regarding the landslip on Leashaw Road.

As you note, I do fully understand and appreciate the local community concern over the landslip on Leashaw Road, which sadly occurred following the previous separate landslip on Lea Road that the Council repaired and reopened. I also recognise the frustrations these challenges cause your parish and residents.

Whilst I haven't been the Cabinet Member for the whole of this time, since becoming the portfolio holder, along with highways officers, I have tried my best to regularly speak with you, the Parish Council and residents, including attending the most recent public meeting and providing at least monthly updates (sometimes more frequent!). We have also tried to listen to feedback and concerns in the interim, which has included the recent installation of additional diversion signage for the community and businesses.

Whilst I agree the road has been closed for two years due to the landslip, as you know, the road was initially under the control of Severn Trent because of their nearby major infrastructure assets, and the site was passed back to the County Council a year ago; we share your disappointment that Severn Trent chose not to pursue a collaborative repair scheme after the time they had the site, and we do remain open to this option with them too.

Nevertheless, since taking back the site, we have worked, and continue to work, to progress a solution and permanent design repair for the road. As you know, we did initially look at a one carriageway reopening, but sadly this wasn't feasible or possible within the constraints of the site.

I know the Parish Council would wish to see greater progress, but I hope you will understand this is a very complex, specialised and technical piece of work. We also need to be sure that the solution and design will work – none of us would want to be in a situation of a recurring landslip on the site because the designed solution hadn't fully incorporated a local geographic individuality. The current situation is that

the geo-technical report is concluded and is now informing the detailed work on the designed repair solution for the landslip site. Once that is complete, over the next few months (in terms of a final design), we will need to progress the feasibility of the designs and adapt this to any on-site constraints. This will include liaising with affected private landowners as well as other local asset holders such as Severn Trent. This is because the final solution is expected to be invasive and have a significant localised impact – but the current design work is looking at potential mitigations for this ahead of that consultation and discussion stage with those who will be most impacted.

With regards to the replies you have had from others, if I am honest, which as you know I always try to be, I think it isn't the most helpful that nationally and regionally there has recently been an unwillingness to collaborate on this issue. From our communications to date, I hope you'll appreciate we have always tried to be above politics as we know this issue impacts everyone, and we should all be striving to work together to resolve it. I remain open to discussing this at every level, and I hope the upcoming national and regional budgetary announcements and reviews will reflect our strong and evidenced campaign for additional highways maintenance funding as well as for an additional landslips fund. We will see whether the Budget announcements support this in any way when the detailed breakdown for Derbyshire becomes apparent. I know the recent media attention has focused on the A57/Snake Pass, but this has also served to highlight the wider issues communities in the county face with landslips, including yourselves.

I hope this provides you with an update on the ongoing work to progress a solution to the landslip at Leashaw Road. Whilst I again understand, and I think to be fair we all share, the local communities' frustrations, I hope you will agree, and forgive my candour, that taking legal action against the County Council with regards to this matter will not progress things any quicker as we are already working towards that solution we all want. Moreover, it risks sadly simply costing all taxpayers and residents legal fees, as well as unnecessary delays and distractions, which could be better placed towards further supporting that solution we are already working actively towards.

I therefore hope this answers your queries and we can continue to work collaboratively together on getting this issue resolved – and I do hope the other recipients of this letter note that proactive and collaborative approach we have taken to date, and take action to support us in that regard.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Charlotte Cupit
Cabinet Member for Highways Assets and Transport