

**FULL APPLICATION: REDESIGN OF EXISTING CAR PARK AND AMENITY AREA AT DUNFORD BRIDGE CAR PARK, BROOK HILL LANE, DUNFORD BRIDGE NP/B/1119/1241 JK**

**APPLICANT: NATIONAL GRID**

**Summary**

1. The application site straddles the Peak District National Park boundary at Dunford Bridge and hence two applications have been submitted; one to ourselves (in whose area the substantive application site area lies) and the other to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
2. The Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) car park is currently a large area of tarmac with a bus stop by the entrance and an equally spartan amenity/picnic area at the eastern end next to the TPT access gateway.
3. This scheme would provide a defined layout for 40 cars with landscaped car parking bays, improved surfacing and safety features with speed bumps along the central circulation route. There would also be an enhanced bus waiting area making use of the existing shelter and stop along with provision of a new dedicated bus tuning circle area. Additionally there would be a defined parking area for horseboxes and an enhanced amenity/picnic area with grassed areas and new tree planting. Defined footways would be provided in the main car park and a surfaced accessible link path from the TPT is also proposed up to the other TPT access point in front of the Stanhope Arms. The existing access route through the car park into National Grid's operational land to the south would be maintained.
4. The proposal would bring a substantial improvement to the layout, landscape impact and functioning of the car park and enhance the visitor experience with the improved facilities. The proposal does not increase parking numbers and is supported by local stakeholders. It follows the pre-application advice from the Authority and accords with our landscape conservation and recreational policies. It is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions to secure control over detailed design matters.

**Introduction**

5. This car park enhancement proposal arises from stakeholders wishes as part of the 'Peak District Visual Impact Provision Project' (VIP). The VIP project aims to reduce the visual impact of National Grid's existing high voltage overhead electricity line upon the community of Dunford Bridge and the surrounding landscape by removing a 2km section of the overhead line and 8 associated pylons and placing it beneath the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) from Dunford Bridge to Wogden Foot Local Wildlife Site adjacent the TPT some 3km to the east. The project as a whole has been supported by Authority officers in pre-application stakeholder discussions and as the site straddles the National Park boundary. The undergrounding of the line is 'permitted development' but associated works have been subject to two separate applications for planning permission. The very minor and uncontentious section in the Park was approved at the last Planning Committee with Barnsley MBC likely making a decision on the substantive part of the application site outside the Park at their June committee.
6. As part of that project a section of the Dunford Bridge Car Park is required for one of the construction accesses. It is planned that parking will still be available in a limited capacity (20 spaces inc. 2 accessible and space for a horsebox) during the main project works and would be clearly segregated from the works access. Should permission be granted

for these projects the car park enhancement would take place following completion of the main VIP undergrounding project.

### **Site and Surroundings**

7. Dunford Bridge is a small hamlet lying below Winscar Reservoir and its dominating embankment dam wall on the north-eastern edge of the National Park. The former Woodhead railway line emerges from the Woodhead Tunnels beside the hamlet into a cutting which runs under Windle Edge Road, the main road through Dunford. The tunnels and cutting are operational land for National Grid (NG) as the tunnels house the main electricity line which was placed in the tunnel to avoid the harm to the landscape from an overhead line. The line rises back to overhead pylons at Dunford and roughly runs parallel to the route of the old railway line running eastwards away from the village parallel to the river Don and which is now used as part of the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT).
8. A large car park in the centre of the hamlet on the east side of Windle Edge Road provides a main access point for the TPT and serves as a hub for the many visitors using this section of the trail. Access to the NG operational land and tunnel portals is also through the car park.
9. Some 66m to the south of the car park and immediately north of The Stanhope Arms there is a further separate entrance off Windle Edge Road which provides both shared access to the TPT and a vehicular access up onto the moorland south of the TPT
10. Within the car park there is a bus stop and shelter in the south-western corner and an amenity/picnic area at the western end, but no other services. The car park has a gentle slope which falls away from the entrance toward the east. Beyond the east boundary of the car park the TPT path leads down to link with the old railway track bed. To the south of this access path, and opposite the amenity/picnic area the land slopes down to a grassed area before another steeper slope up to the southern access track in front of the Stanhope Arms.
11. Access onto the TPT is through a gateway feature at the east end of the car park where a pathway which leads down to the join the old railway line route. The first part of this access from the car park is shared with a vehicular track which stays north of the TPT and the river Don to provide access via a bridge to the agricultural land north of the Don and some water company infrastructure.
12. The National Park boundary angles from north-west to south-east cutting through the western end of the amenity/picnic area leaving just a sliver of it within the National Park and the rest of the amenity area and most of the TPT access pathway within Barnsley MBC area. The whole of the car park, the TPT gateway feature along with approximately the first 20m of the access pathway beyond is inside the Park along with the majority of the area of grass and scrub depression lying to the south between the two TPT access paths. The Park boundary then turns to run eastwards down the southern side of the old railway line boundary wall to exclude the whole of the TPT from the National Park.
13. The moorland south of the TPT is designated in the PDNPA Landscape Character Assessment as falling within the Moorland Cloughs and valleys landscape character type within the Dark Peak Landscape character area. It is also designated as Section 3 Moorland Natural Zone, CROW access land. The car park and a section of the TPT is also lie within flood zones 2 and 3 of the Don.

## **Proposal**

14. The redesign of the existing car park and amenity area with additional landscaping, including resurfacing to provide 40 demarcated parking spaces including 4 accessible spaces, a dedicated parking/turning area for horseboxes (space for 2/3), a formal turning area for the public bus service, and a redesigned amenity area which will include accessible picnic benches, seating and information boards. The proposal also includes a new accessible path link with associated minor re-grading between the car park and amenity area across to the section of the southern Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) access path, immediately north of the Stanhope Arms.
15. Along with detailed plans the application is supported by a Design and Access Statement, An Environmental Key Issues Report (with appendices covering an asbestos management plan; A Construction Environment Management Plan and Sustainable Drainage System) an Arboricultural Report and Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

- A. That the application for that part of the site lying within the National Park be APPROVED subject to the following conditions**
  1. Commence within 3 years
  2. Carry out in accordance with specified submitted plans and supporting statements subject to following conditions and or modifications
  3. Submission of precise details of both hard and soft landscaping measures including details of all street furniture for prior written approval with implementation provision. Notwithstanding what is in the arboricultural report and impact assessment, the details shall include for the retention of hedge group H2 within the submitted scheme, unless otherwise agreed with the Authority.
  4. The provision of two electric vehicle (EV) charging points within the car park with prior submission for written approval of the details and location together with implementation provision.
  5. The detailed plans required by condition 3 shall include the provision of minimum parking bay dimensions of 2.5m x 5.0m.
  6. Submission of a waste management plan for approval.
- B That Barnsley MBC be advised that PDNPA have no objections in principle and strongly support that part of the application proposal lying outside the Peak National Park within Barnsley MBC subject to the following recommended amendments/conditions;**
  1. The small area of species rich grassland included in the application site area and proposed to be incorporated into the north-east corner of the extended amenity area grass habitat shall be retained and the plan in this area amended to take account of this consideration.
  2. Furthermore it is requested that there shall be no tree planting in the remaining species rich grassland.

3. **All other mitigation measures, and species rich grassland restoration, should be adopted as per the VIP LEMP and in the report, section 4.7.1.6, included with this application ‘Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Peak District East Dunford Bridge Car Park Redesign Environmental Key Issues Report. November 2019,**

### **Key Issues**

- The impact of the development on the character and appearance of the car park and its setting in the local landscape.
- Impacts on trees.
- Impacts upon local residential amenity
- Ecological Impacts
- Flooding/drainage issues

### **Consultations**

16. Barnsley MBC as Highway Authority - no objections to this application.
17. Barnsley MBC Planning - no objections or comments on the proposed alterations to the car park.
18. Dunford Parish Council – “Support the application. The area will have improved with the removal of the pylons. And the improvements to the car park area with tie in with tourist developments nearby. This in turn will provide employment for local people. And enhance the lifestyle of local properties”
19. Environment Agency – No objections
20. Natural England – No objection. Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites.
21. PDNPA Transport Team – Support and make the following detailed comments:
22. Overall, the proposed scheme is acceptable within the Transport Policies referred to above. The scheme will deliver an enhancement to the existing car park, with demarcated parking bays and an adequate turning circle for service buses to access the site. The scheme will also provide bespoke horsebox parking set aside from the main car park. This should enhance safety for horse riders loading or unloading away from the movement of cars and vans accessing the main car park.

### **Design of transport infrastructure**

23. With regard to specific policy areas, the scheme offers a design improvement over the existing car park. This edge of Park location already provides onwards walking, cycling and horse riding access to the Tran Pennine Trail, thus satisfying Policy T1F.
24. The details provided within the application indicate that the measures to improve the access to the car park are in keeping with Policy DMT3 parts B and C. The provision of an improved walking route from Dunford Bridge in close proximity to, but bypassing the car park entrance also supports part B of the policy.

25. It is unclear whether the applicant has taken account of the Peak District National Park Transport Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) in designing this scheme. Mostly, the scheme is in accordance with the SPD. However, should any changes be made to the current design, we would wish to see the SPD used to influence the design.

*The public Rights of Way and Trail Network*

26. The proposed scheme is in accordance with the policies on the Rights of Way network, delivering a more accessible non-motorised link between the main road in Dunford Bridge and the Trans Pennine Trail. The development does not impinge on the existing Trans Pennine Trail, and in essence makes good on the temporary access arrangement during the VIP project.

*Parking*

27. The scheme is in keeping with our existing parking policies. It will result in a better parking facility for visitors to the site, without any overall increase in parking capacity. The delivery of demarcated bays should lead to the more efficient use of the car park. The Peak District National Park Authority has its own adopted Parking Standards, which apply to this development. These standards set a minimum parking bay size of 2.5 x 5.0m.
28. The reduction in impermeable hard surfacing along with greater use of reinforced grass and soft landscape is welcomed. This should help to capture surface water run-off as well as improve the overall appearance of the site.

*EV Charging Points*

29. Given the national imperative to move away from conventional internal combustion engine vehicles and towards electric vehicles, we are a little disappointed that EV charging points have not been included within the proposals for this site. Whilst electric vehicles still only make up a small percentage of the national vehicle fleet, this is expected to change significantly over the next decade. We would wish to see the developer assess the practicality of providing a minimum of two EV charging points within this car park. There may be practical reasons why EV charging points are not an option for this site at this time. If this is the case, then at the minimum, the installation of ducting and cabling for future installation would be a useful compromise.

*Recreation Hubs*

30. The Peak District National Park Development Management Policies (2019) document refers to development of a Supplementary Planning Document for Recreation Hub Sites (paragraphs 5.13 and 5.14). This work is ongoing, but it is worth noting that one of the sites that was audited in the development of this SPD is Dunford Bridge Car Park & Trans Pennine Trail Access. The audit indicated that Dunford Bridge was a location that would benefit from an improvement to the existing facilities. The proposed scheme should improve amenity for users, whilst the additional soft landscaping and planting should bring net environmental benefit to the site.

*PDNPA – Ecologist*

31. The application includes a small area of species rich grassland that has been protected as part of a localised resource during the VIP scheme. This undermines the Ecology

Stakeholders approach to protecting these habitats where we can. (*Officer Note; This small area lies outside the Park within the Barnsley MBC section of application site area*) The area affected is proposed as amenity grass habitat and there is no reason not to retain the existing species rich grassland in this area. We recommend that this is amended to take account of this consideration. We would ask that there is no tree planting in the remaining species rich grassland. All other mitigation measures, and species rich grassland restoration, should be adopted as per the VIP LEMP and in the report, section 4.7.1.6, included with this application 'Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Peak District East Dunford Bridge Car Park Redesign Environmental Key Issues Report. November 2019,

PDNPA – Archaeologist

32. There are no archaeological comments or concerns on this application.

PDNPA - Landscape Architect

33. Strongly supports the proposals – Follows pre-application advice - subject to agreement over appropriate detail being secured.

PDNPA - Rights of Way Team – Support the proposal.

34. Welcomes this proposal and the positive impact it will have in encouraging access to the Trans Pennine Trail, nearby Access Land, and concessionary routes in the area.
35. The provision of an accessible link between the car park and the Stanhope Arms is supported, as is the provision of horse box access and the increase in designated car parking for disabled users.
36. The Trans Pennine Trail and the proposed diverted route offer easy access routes suitable for promotion as Miles without Stiles and which are further supported by the redesign of the carpark and amenity area.
37. Signage indicating works should be regularly inspected and replaced as necessary. All path surfaces should be maintained to a suitable standard for all users including those with accessibility issues. We note that banksmen will be employed and would wish to ensure that recreational users – and particular equestrian users and those with accessibility issues – are not unduly delayed by works.

**Representations**

Trans Pennine Trail national office

38. Supports these proposals and provides the following comment and a number of detailed points (summarised);
39. Welcomes the enhancement of the current Dunford Bridge car park facilities following a part-closure for undergrounding works.
40. Dunford Bridge Car Park is a well-used facility on the Trans Pennine Trail as a gateway to Peak Park or into Yorkshire. The improvement to accessible parking and facilities will be welcomed by users and the accessible link between the car park and the Stanhope Arms is a great improvement to the current connecting route and will enable users of all abilities to also enjoy the facilities offered by the Stanhope Arms (*Planning Officer Note; Guest house accommodation, camping facilities and a café extension at The Stanhope Arms approved and under construction*)

41. The key does not include the reinstatement of the Tour de Yorkshire artwork.
42. Picnic tables should also accommodate wheelchair access.
43. Sustainability – tree planting should ensure future growth will not impact on the proposed facilities.
44. Further comments are provided relating to the management plan issues:
  - Should include horse riders as users of the Trans Pennine Trail.
  - National Grid to ensure that Trail users are not held for long periods of time by banksmen.
  - The ease of use by Trail users during the programme of works is paramount.
  - Signage and maps should be checked at regular intervals by National Grid.
  - A grassed strip for horses is definitely needed and should not be ‘considered’.
  - Trans Pennine Trail still requests the diversion route is retained to provide both a circular route and a route that could be re-used should an emergency closure be needed by National Grid in the future.
45. A letter of support has been received on behalf of the South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Area of the Ramblers who state;  
They are increasingly using this area for recreation and well-being and the removal of the Pylons will be a benefit not only to us but also the residents. We already use car park both as a start point and a meeting point. Improved local services will lead to more visits and benefit us all.
46. Friends of the Peak District support the proposal and make the following comment in relation to tree planting. At present views of the car park from the surrounding slopes and roads are well filtered or obscured by trees. However there would be some tree loss around the eastern boundary of the car park which would not be replaced due to the constraints associated with planting close to the undergrounded 400kV cable<sup>1</sup>. We are uncertain how this would affect the visibility of the car park from two viewpoints – looking west from Windle End Road and from the northern edge of the Thurston Moor Open Access Land. We therefore suggest that there should be more trees between the parking spaces, as shown on plan P10727-00-002-101 between spaces 5-8 and 9-12. This would also provide welcome shade.

## **Main Policies**

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

47. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales: Which are; to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public. When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to; seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Parks.

48. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect when first published in 2012. The latest version of the NPPF was published on 19 February 2019. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and policies of the Development Management Policies document 2019. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.
49. Para 172. Of the NPPF states that 'great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'
50. Para 110. Of the NPPF states: that applications for development should:
- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
  - b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
  - c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
  - d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
  - e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

#### Peak District National Park Core Strategy

51. Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2 and GSP3 together say that all development in the National Park must be consistent with the National Park's legal purposes and duty and that the Sandford Principle will be applied where there is conflict. Opportunities for enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon and development which would enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park will be permitted. Particular attention will be paid to impact on the character and setting of buildings, siting, landscaping and building materials, design in accordance with the Design Guide and the impact upon living conditions of local communities. Core Strategy policy GSP4 highlights that the National Park Authority will consider using planning conditions or obligations to secure the achievement of its spatial outcomes.
52. Core Strategy policy DS1 outlines the Authority's Development Strategy, and states that the majority of new development will be directed into Bakewell and named settlements, with the remainder occurring in other settlements and the rest of the countryside.
53. Policy L1 identifies that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.
54. T1: Reducing the general need to travel and encouraging sustainable transport



Policy T1 focuses on reducing the need to travel and encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport. For this application, the key parts of policy T1 are: -

- A. Conserving and enhancing the National Park's valued characteristics will be the primary criterion in the planning and design of transport and its management.
- C. Modal shift to sustainable transport will be encouraged.
- F. Sustainable access for the quiet enjoyment of the National Park, that does not cause harm to the valued characteristics, will be promoted.

55. T3: Design of transport infrastructure; focuses on ensuring that transport infrastructure is of a scale and design that is in keeping with the setting of the National Park. The adopted Peak District National Park Transport Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) supports and provides extra clarity to this policy approach. For this application, the key parts of policy T3 are: -

- A. Transport infrastructure, including roads, bridges, lighting, signing, other street furniture and public transport infrastructure, will be carefully designed and maintained to take full account of the valued characteristics of the National Park.
- B. Particular attention will be given to using the minimum infrastructure necessary and also to make transport interchanges welcoming and safe.

56. Policy T6 protects the Public Rights of Way network from development. It also seeks the continuity of the Trans Pennine Trail, irrespective of any future reinstatement of the Woodhead Railway. For this application, the key parts of policy T6 are: -

- A. The Rights of Way network will be safeguarded from development, and wherever appropriate enhanced to improve connectivity, accessibility and access to transport interchanges. This may include facilitating attractive safe pedestrian and cycle routes between new residential or industrial developments and the centre of settlements. Where a development proposal affects a Right of Way, every effort will be made to accommodate the definitive route or provide an equally good or better alternative.
- B. The Manifold, Tissington and High Peak Trails, and other long distance routes, will be protected from development that conflicts with their purpose. The continuity of the Trans Pennine Trail and the Monsal Trail will be retained, irrespective of any future rail use, by realignment if required.

57. T7: Minimising the adverse impact of motor vehicles and managing the demand for car and coach parks; seeks to reduce the impact of motor vehicles on the setting and special qualities of the National Park. For this application, the key parts of policy T6 are: -

- C. Non-residential parking will be restricted in order to discourage car use, and will be managed to ensure that the location and nature of car and coach parking does not exceed environmental capacity. New non-operational parking will normally be matched by a reduction of related parking spaces elsewhere, and wherever possible it will be made available for public use.

#### Peak District National Park Development Management Policies (2019)

58. Policy DMT3 Access and design criteria; adds detail to Policy T3, whilst the adopted Peak District National Park Transport Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2019) supports and provides extra clarity to this policy approach. For this application, the key parts of policy DMT3 are: -

- A. Where new transport related infrastructure is developed, it should be to the highest standards of environmental design and materials and in keeping with the valued characteristics of the National Park.
  - B. Development, which includes a new or improved access onto a public highway, will only be permitted where, having regard to the standard, function, nature and use of the road, a safe access that is achievable for all people, can be provided in a way which does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality and where possible enhances it.
  - C. Particular attention should be given to the need for the retention and where possible enhancement of hedges, walls and roadside trees. Where a proposal is for a new access to improve a substandard access, a condition will be applied requiring the substandard access to be closed up in an appropriate manner, which where possible enhances the streetscape.
59. Policy DMT5 Development affecting a public right of way; this adds detail to Policy T6, setting out the criteria that any replacement routes should meet, where an existing right of way is lost to development. For this application, the key parts of policy DMT5 are: -
60. A. Where a development proposal affects the route of a public right of way, either the definitive line of the public right of way should be retained, or, in exceptional circumstances, where retention of the definitive line is not possible, the developer will be required to provide an alternative route that:
- (i) is of equal, or preferably, of an improved quality compared to the original; and
  - (ii) has similar or improved surface appropriate to its setting; and
  - (iii) wherever appropriate, is of benefit to users with special needs, including those with disabilities; and
  - (iii) is available before the definitive route is affected or, if this is not possible, until the development is complete, a suitable temporary route is available before the definitive route is affected; and
  - (iv) is as convenient and visually attractive as the original.
61. B. Where development occurs, opportunities will be sought to provide better facilities for users of the rights of way network, including, where appropriate, providing links between the development and the rights of way network, including the National Park's Trail network.
62. DMT7 Visitor parking; is one of three policies that provide additional detail to Policy T7, and deals with visitor parking. For this application, the key part of policy DMT7 is: -
- A. New or enlarged car parks will not be permitted unless a clear, demonstrable need, delivering local benefit, can be shown.
63. DMC1 requires applications with a wide scale landscape impact to provide a landscape assessment with reference to our Landscape Strategy and Action Plan. DCM1 C says that where a building is no longer needed for the purposes for which it was approved and its continued presence is harmful then its removal will be required by use of planning condition or planning obligation.

64. DMC3 says that where development is acceptable in principle to will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, protects and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place. It also provides further detailed criteria to assess design and landscaping, as well as requiring development to conserve the amenity of other properties.
65. DMC5 says that applications for development affecting a heritage asset must clearly demonstrate its significance including how this will be conserved and where possible enhanced and why the development is desirable or necessary. DMC5 E says that if applicants fail to provide adequate or accurate detailed information to show the effects of the development on significance the application will be refused.
66. Amongst other things, policy DMC13 states trees and hedgerows, including ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees, which positively contribute, either as individual specimens or as part of a wider group, to the visual amenity or biodiversity of the location will be protected.
67. Policies DMC11 and DMC12 require development to achieve net gains in biodiversity and for applications to be supported by adequate information to allow us to conclude that development will not harm sites, features or species of wildlife, geological or geomorphological importance.
68. Policy DMC13 states that trees, woodlands and other landscape features should be protected during the course of the development.
69. DMT3 and DMT8 require development to be served by safe access and satisfactory off-street parking in accordance with our parking standards in appendix 9 of the development management policies.
70. Policy CC3E seeks the reuse on site of construction and demolition waste with appropriate off-site disposal where required in cases of on-site disposal/reuse being inappropriate.
71. CC5: Flood risk and water conservation; seeks to safeguard floodplains, secure an overall net reduction in flood risk and encourages sustainable drainage schemes SuDS.

## **Assessment**

### Principle of the Development

72. The proposal seeks to improve an existing poorly designed and laid out car park and amenity facility making them more fit for their purpose as a recreational and tourism resource at this key access point on to the TPT.
73. The proposal would maintain current parking levels and would accord with adopted policies DS1 and T7. Consequently there are no objections to the development in principle, and the main issues in the determination of this application relate to whether the detailed design and landscape impact are appropriate for this setting as well as any impact upon local amenity and any other valued characteristics.

### Detailed design and layout

74. The overall design and layout of the car park represents welcome enhancement and improvement to this facility and follows the pre-application advice given by the Authority.
75. Plans show the retention of the same access point off Windle Edge Road with just a minor and acceptable modification to shorten the stone wall at the northern side, otherwise the existing boundaries all remain.
76. The proposed layout is straightforward and logical with a tarmac central driveway (fitted with two speed reduction humps), which would lead eastwards from the entrance to a formal bus turning 'roundabout' at the eastern end. Vehicular access off this turnaround will maintain vehicular access into National Grid's operational land to the south-west.
77. The car parking spaces would be formally re-arranged into marked bays located to the north and south of the proposed central spine road. Whilst the parking spaces themselves would be surfaced in grass-grid reinforcing to give a permeable green surface and 'softer' appearance, the central driveway and the circulation areas off it would be in tarmac. New tree planting and grassed areas would provide landscaping to define and soften the new bays/layout as well as help screen the parking. There would be 40 spaces including 4 dedicated accessible spaces. The layout and use of materials is considered acceptable and appropriate in this location and would also improve drainage by being more permeable through the use of grass grid and planted areas thus following SuDs principles.
78. The TPT access would be retained at the eastern end and vehicular access similarly restricted to 'access only' via a gate broadly in line with the existing TPT gateway feature.
79. The layout plan shows separate clearly defined routes for pedestrians accessing both the bus stop as well as those wishing to pass through the site to access the TPT. The bus stop and shelter would be retained in the same location on the south side close to the entrance with an improved footway link back to the main road. In the other direction the pathway would be extended and surfaced in tar dressed with buff chippings to provide a defined route across the car park to the gateway feature at the entrance to the TPT. The layout and use of materials are all considered appropriate and acceptable being a marked enhancement in safety and visual terms over the current basic tarmac car park.
80. At the eastern end just off the bus 'roundabout' feature and next to the TPT access, a defined area would be created for the parking of horseboxes/trailers with turning space. This would also be surfaced with grass grid reinforcing to give a 'green' appearance. There are no objections to this dedicated provision which is a welcome improvement to the TPT facility separating horses from manoeuvring cars. It is considered to be appropriately detailed and located. We note that the north-eastern quadrant of this area would fall outside the National Park and within the area administered by Barnsley MBC who have the separate application to determine for the small site area of this development proposal falling outside the Park.
81. Immediately to the east of the horsebox area the existing mixed hard surfaced amenity area would be enhanced with one surface for the seating area comprising tarmac top dressed with buff chippings. It is proposed that new tables/benches be provided and surrounding the seating area that there would be an expanded amenity grass area with additional tree planting. Only a small sliver of land in the south-western corner of the amenity area would be in the Park and there are no objections in principle to the improved of the amenity area which would be a significant enhancement over the existing provision.

82. There are however strong ecological concerns about the impact of enclosing a larger area of the current species rich grassland into the amenity area as well as to the further suggested tree planting. Our ecologist considers this would be harmful to its ecological interest and we have suggested in the above recommendation that Barnsley MBC exclude this area from the fenced recreation site and that additional tree planting proposed on the remaining species rich grassland area is omitted to protect the special interest.
83. Finally a new accessible pathway (all of which would be inside the Park) constructed in tarmac with tar spray and buff chipping dressed surface is proposed to link the TPT from just next to the amenity/picnic area across to the southern TPT access path immediately north of the Stanhope Arms. This would have a 'Z' shaped route to accommodate the length to maintain a shallow gradient across this grassy/scrub area to link to the southern access. The existing steeper and narrower link TPT path immediately to the east leading down to the former railway track bed would remain. The full accessible link path is a welcome enhancement in appropriate materials to match the TPT and there are no objections to this element of the proposal.
84. In the submitted plans and supporting material there is a clear indication as to the type of hard and soft landscaping to be employed with precedent images and some specifications sufficient to determine this application. There is however no definitive detail and therefore whilst we consider these to be generally appropriate and acceptable a planning condition would be needed to agree the precise details and ensure an appropriate degree of planning control and certainty over the details of what will be installed.
85. The arboricultural impact assessment shows that a small number of young/semi-mature trees and a section of new hedgerow would need to be removed from the site in order to facilitate the development. Also, the report finds that other than removal of some dead elms stems the remaining trees on site are in good order and require no action. Whilst it is accepted that most of the trees identified for removal are required to achieve the development, there is one area of concern relating to the proposed removal of hedging along the northern boundary. This currently provides good screening and a buffer between the development and the closest neighbouring houses. The report states it is required simply to facilitate the development. We consider that as it is sited on the boundary it should be able to be incorporated into the scheme rather than being lost and therefore a planning condition is suggested to retain and incorporate this area into the approval via the detailed landscaping works condition.
86. With the above suggested conditions we consider the proposal is designed to a high standard which would accord with our policies and guidance. There are therefore no objections to the overall design, layout and landscaping.

#### Landscape Impact

87. The site is already in use as a car park and sits at the bottom of the valley. The most obvious view is looking down from Windle Edge Road to the north-east where the current wide expanse of plain tarmac is clearly visible as a prominent and somewhat intrusive feature in the valley bottom which has a negative impact on the setting of the hamlet itself as well as the local landscape setting.
88. The proposed works would improve the visual impact from outside the site as a result of better screening of the parking from the additional planting and the improved variety of surfacing. These would substantially reduce the current expanse of tarmac replacing it with 'green' spaces and more planted areas which would help foil the areas

of parking. Other than the concern set out above about retaining the boundary hedging area, most of the trees on site will not be adversely affected by the proposed development as it is intended that most existing planting and perimeter boundary details would remain. These existing trees and hedges currently serve to reduce the impact of the car park in wider views, particularly screening the parked cars on the northern side from the key wider view from the north-east and more locally from neighbouring dwellings.

89. Subject to control over the precise details of the materials and planting species via planning conditions to ensure an appropriate mix the proposal is welcomed as it would bring a substantial enhancement in terms of its visual impact in the wider landscape over what is currently a useful but poorly designed and laid out car park.
90. Overall, we consider that the development would conserve and enhance the immediate area, the built environment and landscape in accordance with policies L1, DMC3, and DMC8 and DMC13.

#### Amenity Impacts

91. The site is already in use as a car park and is well screened in views from local houses. It is completely screened by the land form from the small culs-de-sac of Don View to the north and there are glimpsed views through the trees from the Stanhope Arms some distance to the south. From the nearest houses just to the north of the car park the existing boundary tree and hedge planting screen most of the car park. The proposed redesign would not bring the parking any closer to nearby residences nor result in an intensification in the use of the site. The additional landscaping and the arrangement of the spaces will reduce the visual impact of the car park for the local community and in the main views higher up from Windle Edge Road to the north-east as well as break up the current expanse of plain tarmac in the main view into the car park from the entrance point.
92. As a result, whilst there would be no discernible change in the use of the car park, the visual impact will be much improved and would enhance the amenity of the immediate locality.
93. The development therefore conserves residential amenity as required by policy DMC3.

#### Highways Impacts

94. The car park access point would remain unchanged, and the development would not result in any intensification of use on the site that would result in any highways impacts. The car park currently would accommodate around 40 cars but and the formal layout would ensure overall parking numbers would be maintained.
95. The highway impacts arising from the development are therefore considered acceptable and this view is supported by no objections being raised by the Highway Authority.

#### Flooding Issues

96. The car park lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. It is potentially also at risk from reservoir flooding although this is acknowledged to be extremely unlikely as it would require a catastrophic dam failure.
97. The submitted environmental report notes that the car park comprises an area of previously developed predominantly hardstanding impermeable surface and the development (which maintains the existing use as recreational land) is anticipated to be

defined as water-compatible development within Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) hence is deemed to be appropriate development for within the flood zone.

98. However whilst the car park exists and the development is related to improvements to an existing facility hence the sequential test does not apply, no site specific flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application. However, the submitted report - Dunford Bridge Car Park Redesign – Environmental Key Issues Report; includes measures to reduce flood risk. It states that “no flood impacts are anticipated as a result of the development and the design of the project has followed the general principles of the SUDs strategy developed for the Proposed VIP Project. The car park has been designed to follow the existing car park ground levels where possible with a gradual fall to the south-east. Existing drainage pits will be utilised where possible and surface water will be directed towards soft landscaped areas. SUDs will include applying source-control techniques such as use of free-draining sub base areas and maximising the use of permeable surfaces through the inclusion of reinforced grass, additional wildflower and amenity grassland and proposed planting of native trees. Therefore, the Project is anticipated to reduce the rate of surface runoff in comparison to the existing baseline.
99. The new accessible link will constitute a hardstanding surface with the potential to increase the volume and rate of surface runoff generated. The surfaces will be composed of tar spray and chip to match the existing Trans Pennine Trail. In accordance with the principals of the SUDs strategy, the route will be laid at a similar elevation to the surrounding ground levels to maintain overland surface flow pathways. Overall the area of impermeable hardstanding will be less than the current baseline.”
100. Following the implementation of the measures outlined above, no adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed works.
101. The Environment Agency have now confirmed that they have no objections to the above approach and therefore we can conclude that the proposal accords with policy CC5 flood risk and prevention.

#### Ecological considerations

102. As previously mentioned above there is a small area of species rich grassland just outside the Park boundary that has been protected as part of a localised resource during the VIP scheme. This area has been included within the application site area in the application to Barnsley MBC and is shown as being incorporated into the amenity area. This would undermine the Ecology Stakeholders approach to protecting these habitats and therefore we recommend that Barnsley MBC exclude this area from being incorporated into the wider play/amenity area and that in addition no we would ask that there is no tree planting in the remaining species rich grassland. Subject to this recommendation and the adoption of the mitigation measures, and species rich grassland restoration, as per the VIP LEMP and in the ‘Visual Impact Provision (VIP) Peak District East Dunford Bridge Car Park Redesign Environmental Key Issues Report, there are no ecological objections to the proposals.

#### Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging points

103. NPPF Para 110(e) states developments should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations. Officers have therefore asked for the provision of 2 charging stations within the car park for EV charging. The applicant has confirmed their willingness to accommodate these within the scheme and are happy in principle for this to be conditioned. However, given these were not part planned and included within the application submission they are understandably hesitant about committing fully without understanding the full costs or

engineering issues with such provision. The main issue is that they do not own or control the local power supply which may or may not be available or indeed have the capacity to accept such connections without potentially incurring major upgrading/excessive costs. Officers recognise that these were not part of the application submission, and therefore further investigation will be needed, however we consider a condition to secure delivery of 2 EV charge points would not be unreasonable in planning terms. A suitable condition is therefore suggested to agree precise details of location and equipment. In the event that it subsequently turns out there are exceptional circumstances that would prevent delivery then the applicant could apply formally to the Authority to amend any permission with appropriate evidence to support their case which would be considered on its own merits.

#### Other matters

104. There are a number of matters raised in the representation from The TPT national office which, although entirely laudable, nevertheless are largely non-planning trail management issues or fall outside the remit of this application.

#### Conclusion

105. The proposed scheme would bring a substantial improvement to the layout, landscape impact and functioning of the car park to enhance the local environment and the visitor experience with the improved facilities. The proposal does not increase parking numbers and is supported by local stakeholders. It follows the pre-application advice from this Authority and accords with our landscape conservation and recreational policies. There would be a further enhancement to surface water drainage with new provision following SuDS principles. Subject to the above suggested conditions there are now no concerns about neighbouring amenity and the potential adverse ecological impacts on species rich grassland have been resolved. Other conditions are suggested to secure control over the detailed design matters and on this basis the proposal is therefore recommended for approval.

#### Human Rights

106. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

#### List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil

Report Author – John Keeley, Planning Manager - North Team