

**15. FULL APPLICATION - FOR INSTALLATION OF SOLAR POWERED CAR PARK MACHINE AND ASSOCIATED BASE, PEDESTRIAN AREA AND SIGNAGE – HOOKS CARR CAR PARK, BIRLEY LANE, HATHERSAGE - NP/DDD/1122/1458 - EJ**

**APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**Summary**

1. The existing car park at Hooks Carr is a free car park owned and operated by the Peak District National Park Authority on its North Lees Estate.
2. This application is one of 13 submitted by the applicant as part of a wider scale implementation of charging in its car parks.
3. The proposal is to install a single solar powered ticket machine, with associated base and pedestrian standing area protected by two timber posts.
4. Although the description includes signage, advertisements are controlled under separate legislation and therefore where express consent is required it would be subject to a separate application for Advertisement Consent.
5. The machine is small in scale, dark coloured and appropriately sited and related to the current use as car park. There would be no harm to the landscape and therefore the proposal accords with Development Plan policy and is recommended for approval.

**6. Site and Surroundings**

7. Hooks Carr Car Park is located in the open countryside to the north-east of Hathersage on Birley Lane close to its junction with The Dale. The car park has around 60 spaces laid out in a long thin extended lay-bay, large enough for parking 1 car depth off the road. This car park is currently free to the public, and is popular with visitors to Stanage Edge which lies immediately NE of the car park.
8. The nearest dwelling is the Grade II Listed Farmhouse at Overstones Farm, some 400m to the east.
9. The site is designated Natural Zone lying within the Peak District Moors Special Protection Area, the south Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation and the Eastern Peak District Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest, CROW access land the Natural Zone: Section 3 Moorland, with a Landscape Designation as Open Moorlands.

**10. Proposal**

11. The proposal seeks full Planning Permission, for the installation of solar powered car park pay and display ticket machine, and associated base and pedestrian area.
12. The machine would be located to the centre, North-east of the car park with associated concrete and tarmac base with 2 timber posts (1m high 200mm wide) protecting the machine and pedestrian platform.
13. The would have a width of 47.5cm, depth of 37.8cm and a height of 173.4cm. This would be solar powered and black in colour.
14. New signage is also mentioned but as noted above advertisements are covered by a separate set of regulations and application process. Just for information purposes

therefore the proposed tariff board would be 850mm high and the sign setting out the regulations would be 350mm high.

**15. RECOMMENDATION:**

**16. That the application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Commence development within 3 years.**
2. **Carry out in accordance with amended plans showing the meter relocated and elevation plans detailed to show precise installation and mitigation to screen/colour concrete base.**

**17. Key Issues**

- Development in the Natural Zone.
- Landscape Impact
- Any impact to highways, and public safety.

**18. History**

19. 1998 – NP/DDD/1098/501 - Approval for extension to layby parking area from 25 to 60 spaces. Plans also showed creation of passing places between the site and road junction to the north west.

**20. Consultations**

21. Highway Authority: No Highway safety objections.

22. Hathersage Parish Council – Commented as follows;

(i) applying car park charges to the Stanage area would result in more drivers parking their cars on grass verges to avoid paying and this will have an adverse impact on the environment.

(ii) the design and appearance of the development ought to be in keeping with the natural environment and requested that the machine base is concealed within a natural stone plinth and grassed around the base to avoid the visual appearance of any concrete

**23. Representations**

24. During the consultation period, the Authority has not received any representations regarding the proposals.

**25. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

26. 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.

27. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been revised (2021). 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 particular Paragraph 176 states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.
28. National policy on the importance of biodiversity, cultural heritage and natural beauty is set out in sections 2; 15; and 16 of the NPPF (2021), amended from PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2012).
29. The Government continues to regard national park designation as conferring the highest status of protection as far as landscape and natural beauty is concerned. It also states that national parks make an important contribution to the cultural and natural heritage of the nation.
30. In the National Park, the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and the Development Management Policies (DMP), adopted May 2019. These Development Plan Policies provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. In this case, it is considered there are no significant conflicts between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and government guidance in the NPPF.

### **31. Main Development Plan Policies**

#### **32. Core Strategy (2011)**

33. GSP1, GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conservation and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage assets.
34. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles*. Requires that particular attention is paid to the impact on the character and setting of buildings and that the design is in accord with the Authority's Design Guide and development is appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park. In particular GSP3 (K): *adapting to and mitigating the impact of climate change, particularly in respect of carbon emissions, energy and water demand*.
35. CC1 – Climate change mitigation and adaptation. This policy aims to build in resilience to, and mitigate the causes of climate change. In order to achieve this the policy sets out that development must be efficient and sustainable in its use of land, buildings and natural resources. Particular reference given to CC1 (A): Make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources; and (B): Take account of the energy hierarchy.
36. L1– Landscape character and valued characteristics. This 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.
37. L3 - Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance. This policy relates to cultural heritage assets and their settings.
38. Both policies L1 and L3 say that development must conserve or enhance the landscape and cultural heritage of the National Park and other than in exceptional circumstances development that has a harmful impact will not be permitted.

39. T3 – *Design of transport infrastructure*. In Particular, T3 (A) concerning signage and furniture. Requires that 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.

40. Development Management (2019)

41. DMC2 A. Protecting and managing the Natural Zone sets out the exceptional circumstances in which development is permissible in the Natural Zone are those in which a suitable, more acceptable location cannot be found elsewhere and the development is essential:

(i) for the management of the Natural Zone;

or

42. (ii) for the conservation and/or enhancement of the National Park's valued characteristics.

43. DMC3 – Siting, design, layout and landscaping. This policy states that where development is acceptable in principle, its detailed treatment will be of a high standard that respects, protects and enhances the area's natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage whilst contributing to the distinctive sense of place.

44. In particular, DMC3 (B (IV)): access, utility services, vehicle parking, siting of services, refuse bins and cycle storage.

45. Assessment

46. Principle of development in the Natural Zone.

47. The site lies within designated Natural Zone where there is a strong presumption against development, other than in exceptional circumstances if a suitable more acceptable location cannot be found elsewhere. The exceptional circumstances are for development that is either essential for the management of the Natural Zone or for the conservation and/or enhancement of the National Park's valued characteristics.

48. In this case although technically within these designated areas the application site is now a formal car park which was extended significantly in the late 1990's. It has therefore not exhibited the features justifying the formal designation of the adjacent land as SSSI moorland, SPA and SAC for some considerable time. Consequently, in these circumstances it is considered that little weight attached to policy DMC2 and does not prevent the principle of development of the ticket machine. The main issue is therefore whether it can be accommodated without harm to the valued character and appearance of the local landscape.

49. Design and Appearance

50. The design and appearance of the machine and signage is compliant to Core Strategy Policy T3 concerning the design of transport infrastructure. The machine is small scale and in a recessive colour, with the associated hard surfacing and timber posts being equally minor and acceptable in appearance terms.

51. The payment machine incorporates the use of solar power, putting its impact low on the energy hierarchy with minimal maintenance and energy required for its operation.

52. The machine and associated signage as submitted would be located centrally within the car park close to the rear wall which being low will mean the machine at 1.7m tall would be an isolated and more obvious feature which would intrude upon the open landscape views up the iconic Stanage Edge especially at quiet times when the car park is not full.
53. Relocating the meter to the south eastern end adjacent other car park infrastructure of cycle parking hoops, other signage and adjacent road traffic signage close to the junction with The Dale road would minimise this landscape impact. Given this setting and location within the Natural Zone this is considered to be both reasonable and necessary in planning terms to make the development acceptable. The applicant has agreed to provide amended plans in time for the meeting which can be conditioned.
54. Subject to the above amendment location the proposed machine and its siting is considered acceptable in landscape impact terms.

**55. Highway Impact**

56. The Highways Authority has no objections to the proposal.
57. The machine would be away from the highway and not impact upon or cause any obstruction to users in the car park or the main road.
58. There are other car parks within the area, but are a significant distance from Hooks Carr car park.
59. Charging inevitably results in displacement parking to avoid charges. The applicant acknowledges this problem and to help mitigate this have set out the following measures;
60. "To mitigate for any additional on road parking it is proposed to undertake additional communication at the sites to highlight how parking fees are spent and the negative impact of verge parking. Previously targeted engagement and PR led to an increase of 29% in parking fees at the Hollin Bank Car Park. In addition on road parking will be surveyed prior to charges being implemented and afterwards to assess the impact, if significant change is identified then further targeted PR will be undertaken, with other actions reviewed.
61. Charging for currently free car parks has a risk as visitors may choose not to use the car parks and use road side spaces instead. This is not a safe possibility at some locations. This is also a risk with increasing the tariff. This was highlighted as a risk during the 2016 car park review but those concerns were not borne out. As part of the implementation of these changes a communications plan will be devised to encourage responsible behaviour and highlight the important role that car park income has in enabling the Authority to carry out its work and provide essential facilities for visitors."
62. The above measures are considered to be a reasonable and proportionate response by the applicant to manage any displaced parking concerns.

**63. Conclusion**

64. The car parking machine and associated signage, with pedestrian base, is not considered to have adverse impacts on the landscape provided it is relocated as set out above to minimise landscape impact.
65. The proposal is therefore recommended for approval, subject to completion in accordance with amended plans

**66. Human Rights**

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

68. List of Background Papers (not previously published)

69. Nil

70. Report author: Ellie Johnson, Assistant Planner