

15. FULL APPLICATION - FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A SOLAR POWERED CAR PARK MACHINE AND ASSOCIATED BASE, PEDESTRIAN AREA AND SIGNAGE AT THORPE STATION CAR PARK, THORPE (NP/DDD/1122/1474, DH)

APPLICANT: PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Summary

1. The application is for the installation of a solar powered car park machine and associated base, pedestrian area and signage at the existing car park alongside the Tissington Trail at Thorpe Station.
2. The site is an existing operational car park within the Peak District National Park owned and operated by the National Park Authority, which currently is free to use by members of the public.
3. The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (Section 12) gives the Authority powers to provide and operate parking places, and may for the purposes of such arrangements erect such buildings and carry out such work as may appear to them to be necessary or expedient.
4. The existing use and character of the site is not altered, and the harm to the wider landscape setting of the car park is minimal.
5. The application is recommended for approval.

Site and Surroundings

6. The application site is located to the west side of the Tissington Trail equidistant from Thorpe to the west and Fenny Bentley to the east, both of which are named settlements in policy DS1.
7. Aside from the Tissington Trail, a further public right of way crosses the northern end of the car park running west to east across the Trail.
8. The site is 670m east of the nearest point of the Thorpe Conservation Area and 674m west of the nearest point of the Fenny Bentley Conservation Area. The nearest listed buildings are within those designated conservation areas.
9. The site comprises a hard-surfaced car park surrounded by trees, therefore the site is well screened. A small open-fronted hipped roof shelter stands in the north-west corner of the car park. Picnic benches are sited to the west edge of the Trail and the west side of the car park.
10. The nearest residential neighbouring property is Station House, to the west side of the tree belt which surrounds the car park.

Proposal

11. The proposal is for the erection of a solar powered car park machine along with associated signage and two posts in front of the machine to create a safe area for people using it.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. **Statutory time limit**
2. **The development to be in accordance with the submitted specifications received 22/11/2022, and the amended site plan received 14/12/2022**

Key Issues

13. The key issues are:

- Whether the proposals would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the site and its setting, or the wider landscape setting within which it sits; and
- Public safety; and
- Whether the proposals would harm the amenities of nearby neighbouring properties.

History

14. None.

Consultations

15. Derbyshire County Council (Highway Authority) – No highways comments.

16. Derbyshire Dales District Council – No response to date.

17. Thorpe Parish Council – Objects to the proposals, saying that, “*the charge for car parks leading to people avoiding the charge by parking within the village.*” The PC also provided copies of emails which they have received from residents regarding the proposal, which raise the following matters:

- *Increased levels of roadside parking*
- *Damage to verges through irresponsible parking*
- *Congestion in the village*
- *Impediment to emergency vehicles, commercial and domestic and farm vehicles*
- *Reduction of access to the countryside for some people*
- *Cost of implementation and monitoring*
- *Impact on the local public house*
- *No residents parking permits*

18. PDNPA Archaeologist: No archaeological concerns.

Representations

19. During the publicity period the Authority has received two representations regarding the proposal.

20. One representation cites no objection provided that:

The public rights of way are not encroached upon and the safety of the public using the rights of way is safeguarded during the proposed works

21. The other representation is an objection for the following reason:

It will lead to more dangerous and unsupervised parking on the verges locally between Tissington and Thorpe.

Main Policies

22. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, CC1, CC2, DS1, L1, T1, T3, T6 & T7

23. Relevant Local Plan policies: DM1 & DMC3

24. National Planning Policy Framework

Wider Policy Context

25. 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:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- 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.

National Planning Policy Framework

26. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. A revised NPPF was published in July 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 the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and policies in the Peak District National Park 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.

27. Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that '*great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing 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 these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.*'

Peak District National Park Core Strategy

28. GSP1 & GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park.* These policies set out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park's objectives, and jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage

29. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles*. GSP3 states that all development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings, paying particular attention to, amongst other elements, impact on the character and setting of buildings, scale of the development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.
30. CC1 – *Climate change mitigation and adaptation*. CC1 requires all development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources to achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions.
31. CC2 - *Low carbon and renewable energy development*. CC2 states that proposals for low carbon and renewable energy development will be encouraged provided they can be accommodated without adversely affecting the landscape character, cultural heritage assets, other valued characteristics, or other established uses of the area.
32. DS1 - *Development Strategy*. This sets out what forms of development are acceptable in principle within the National Park.
33. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. L1 states that all 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.
34. T1 – *Reducing the general need to travel and encouraging sustainable transport*. T1 (E) says that sustainable access for the quiet enjoyment of the National Park, that does not cause harm to the valued characteristics, will be promoted.
35. T3 – *Design of transport infrastructure*. T3 (B) requires particular attention to be given to using the minimum infrastructure necessary.
36. T6 – *Routes for walking, cycling and horse riding, and waterways*. T6 (B) says that the Manifold, Tissington and High Peak Trails will be protected from development that conflicts with their purpose.
37. T7 – *Minimising the adverse impact of vehicles and managing the demand for car and coach parks*. T7 (C) refers to the management of non-residential parking.

Local Plan Development Management Policies

38. DM1 – *The presumption of sustainable development in the context of National Park purposes*. These being (i) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and (ii) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the valued characteristics of the National Park.
39. DMC3 - *Siting, Design, layout and landscaping*. DMC3 states that where development is acceptable in principle, it 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.

Assessment

Principle of the development

40. The proposal contributes to the Authority's statutory purposes and is acceptable in

principle.

41. The provision of car parking ticket machines could help to encourage car sharing, thereby reducing travel, which policy T1 seeks to promote.
42. Policy DS1 states that renewable energy infrastructure is acceptable in principle provided that they can be accommodated without adverse visual impact and do not raise any amenity issues.

Visual Impacts

43. The siting for the proposed car park ticketing machine and the associated tariff signage is to the north-west corner of the car park, and would be seen against the backdrop of the existing shelter which is on the site.
44. In terms of the wider visual impact the development would not be readily visible from outside the car park itself, due to its positioning and the existing screening to the car park provided by the surrounding trees.
45. The proposed machine is a functional structure comprising a solar panel measuring 475mm by 378mm, on top of a pedestal whose dimensions are 290mm by 274mm. The overall height of the machine is 1.714m. The machine has a black finish, which is a recessive colour.
46. The machine is on a concrete pad with a small tarmac standing area and two posts are provided to ensure the safety of the area when members of the public are using the machine.
47. The tariff sign measures 850mm across, by 1.2m in depth. It is mounted on poles with its highest edge at 1.5m. The sign has a dark green background with lettering and symbols in Peak District National Park colours. The smaller advisory signs, measuring 290mm by 425mm (approximately A4 size), are also green.
48. Although the design of the proposed infrastructure does not reflect or harmonise with the natural environment or local building traditions, the development is a modest scale, recessive colour. The siting, which utilises existing features and screening makes the impact negligible. Within the existing car park, it is screened from wider viewpoints, and in the context of the car park, is not incongruous and does not have a detrimental impact on the site.
49. The proposals are considered to have a minimal impact on the character and appearance of the existing site and a negligible impact on the wider setting of the car park.
50. Therefore, it is concluded that the proposal is compliant with policies GSP3, L1, and DMC3 and also in line with policies CC1, CC2, T3 and T7.

Amenity Impacts

51. Due to the location of the site in relation to neighbouring properties, it will not have an adverse effect upon any neighbouring properties.
52. As noted above, the proposed installations will not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the site, or the wider landscape setting.
53. The Highway Authority have no safety concerns, and the proposed posts to keep the immediate area to the front of the machine protected means there are no public safety

issues.

54. In terms of amenity issues the proposal is in line with the Authority's policies and national planning policy.

Sustainability

55. Policy CC1 requires all development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources to achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions. The solar powered infrastructure is inherently sustainable and therefore complies with the requirements of CC1.

Conclusion

56. The proposed development does not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the existing site.

57. As such, it is concluded that the proposal is compliant with policies GSP3, L1, CC1, CC2, T3, T7, DMC3, and national planning policy.

Human Rights

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 and Job Title

Denise Hunt – Planner – South Area