

A5012 Via Gellia Safer Roads Fund Project

Review of Proposed Average Speed Camera Locations – Comments from the Peak District National Park Authority

Site 1 (ASC-001) – West of Chapel Hill, Cromford (40mph Section) – Outside of the National Park boundary

This site is located approximately 800 metres from the National Park boundary at its closest point adjacent to Bonsall Wood. Given the nature of the valley at this location it is extremely unlikely that this site would be visible from anywhere within the National Park.

The land adjacent to the carriageway where the site is proposed forms part of the Via Gellia Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation. Natural England will need to provide consent for any works that may impact on the land under these designations or their qualifying characteristics.

The site is in a High Priority Leadworking site (Via Gellia Lead Mines). This is also separately listed on the Historic Environment Record. This extensive feature is therefore considered a non-designated heritage asset and something that would be a material consideration in any planning process. The new pole and cabinet etc would be within this feature. We note that it is very close to historic features of water management relating to historic industries in Cromford. This is outside of the National Park however, so we would expect the DCC Archaeologist to comment on the detail of this although we don't believe a roadside pole will cause significant harm to the monument overall.

Overall, we are not concerned about this location, given its distance beyond the National Park boundary and the likelihood of its not being visually intrusive from within the National Park.

Site 2 (ASC-002) West of Bonsall (40mph Section) – Within the National Park boundary

This site is located within the National Park adjacent to Old Mill Cottage. Generally, the National Park boundary follows the line of the waterway and encompasses Old Mill Cottage. The proposed camera site is on the southern side of the carriageway and is well screened by woodland on both sides which would provide a backdrop to the proposed installation. It is also in the valley floor with banks to either side of the carriageway.

The site is approximately 140 metres south of a footpath WD106/4 (within the National Park) which lies within Bonsall Wood. The site is also approximately 110 metres northeast of a footpath WD117/26 (outside of the National Park) which lies within Middleton Wood. Neither footpath can be clearly seen through the trees on satellite images; therefore, it is unlikely that the site will be visible from either footpath at the current time.

It is understood that some clearance of Ash as a result of Ash dieback is necessary. There are also plans for the removal of trees / vegetation in some locations to improve stopping site distance. This may lead to the site being more visible from the footpaths.

The land adjacent to the carriageway where the site is proposed forms part of the Via Gellia Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation. Natural England will need to provide consent for any works that may impact on the land under these designations or their qualifying characteristics.

As with Site 1, Site 2 is in the same High Priority Leadworking site (Via Gellia Lead Mines). As with Site 1, a roadside pole will not cause any significant harm to the monument overall.

Overall, given careful siting, we are generally supportive of this location as an average speed camera site. However, some thought may need to be given to future screening, if the surrounding woodland is affected by the need to clear Ash or other trees.

Site 3 (ASC-003) Between Old Mill Cottage and the Colour Works Cottage (50mph Section) – Within the National Park boundary

This site is located within the National Park boundary to the east of the Old Colourworks. The site is screened on both sides by woodland and sits in the valley floor, with steep-sided banks on either side of the carriageway. Both should help to provide screening from the surrounding countryside.

However, the site is located adjacent to the crossing point between two footpaths (WD117/26 and WD107/2). This does mean that users of this crossing point will be affected by views of the site in the immediate vicinity of the site. In addition, Footpath WD06/4 lies less than 50 metres north of the site. Away from the site, none of the footpaths can be seen through the woodland on the satellite images. Therefore, it is unlikely that the site will be visible from any of these footpaths once the users pass beyond the highway.

It is understood that some clearance of Ash as a result of Ash dieback is necessary. There are also plans for the removal of trees / vegetation in some locations to improve stopping site distance. This may lead to the site being more visible from the footpaths.

The land adjacent to the carriageway where the site is proposed forms part of the Via Gellia Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation. Natural England will need to provide consent for any works that may impact on the land under these designations or their qualifying characteristics.

As with Sites 1 and 2, Site 3 is in the same High Priority Leadworking site (Via Gellia Lead Mines). This site includes an area of hardstanding so there is greater physical impact on the ground. From the mapping provided, it seems that this will not extend as far as the watercourse but this needs to be clarified. The watercourse may have historically modified as part of the industrial water management.

Overall, given careful siting, we are generally supportive of this location as an average speed camera site. However, some thought may need to be given to future screening, if the surrounding woodland is affected by the need to clear Ash or other trees. Further assessment of the possible impact on the watercourse and its structure may be required.

Site 4 (ASC-004) New Road, Ryder Point (50mph Section) – Adjacent to the National Park boundary

The National Park boundary roughly follows the water course, which is north of the site at this location, the land to the south lies outside of the National Park. The site is located approximately 35 metres south of the National Park boundary at the junction between New Road and the Via Gellia.

The proposed site is on a raised area of ground between the two New Road and the Via Gellia, where they run roughly parallel to each other. In addition to the camera, it is proposed to install

an off-grid power supply station. Given the height of the land above the highway at this point, it is likely that this off-grid power supply station will be visually intrusive. Informally, it has been suggested that the off-grid power supply may be located in such a way as to screen it from within the National Park; this approach would be welcomed.

The National Park is relatively well screened from the site at this location with a mix of tree and scrub cover beyond the boundary wall. There is a footpath (WD59/7) which meets the carriageway and the National Park boundary approximately 75m northwest of the site. The site would be visible from the point at which the footpath meets the road. However, at the current time, it is unlikely that users of the footpath would see the site until they joined the road.

It is understood that some clearance of Ash as a result of Ash dieback is necessary. There are also plans for the removal of trees / vegetation in some locations to improve stopping site distance. This may lead to the site being more visible from the footpath.

The land adjacent to the proposed site forms part of the Via Gellia Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Peak District Dales Special Area of Conservation. Natural England will need to provide consent for any works that may impact on the land under these designations or their qualifying characteristics.

This site falls within another High Priority Leadworking site (Black Rakes, Welshmans Venture Mine, Bondog Hole Mine, with Merry Tom and Thumper Sitch Levels). There is a ruined structure here, it appears to be some sort of pump or drain. The structure doesn't look very old, but it would be useful to know if it has a relationship with the historic workings.

Overall, given careful siting, we are generally supportive of this location as an average speed camera site. However, we are concerned about the urbanising effect of the off-grid power supply and its impact on the setting of the National Park. We would wish to see efforts made to screen it. We would also wish to see any drawings or plans as to how this can be achieved.

In addition, some thought may need to be given to future screening, if the surrounding woodland is affected by the need to clear Ash or other trees.

Site 5 (R01-001) Grange Mill Signal Junction (Proposed 40mph Section) – Within / adjacent to the National Park boundary

The National Park boundary at this location runs along the eastern edge of the A5012 to its junction with the B5056 towards Winster. The boundary then follows the northern edge of the B5056 (Old Toll Bar) westwards. The A5012 towards Newhaven is wholly within the National Park. In the context of its setting, the whole of the junction should be treated as if it is contained within the National Park.

The Grangemill junction consists of a four-lane crossing, with users of the Via Gellia having priority. There are a small number of buildings in the immediate proximity of the junction, including a public house. The Limestone Way bridleway crosses the A5012 Via Gellia at this junction. Given the small number of buildings and the setting of the junction in a hollow, there is little artificial lighting in the area at the current time, being restricted to the existing buildings.

There are three Grade II Listed buildings immediately adjacent to the junction (The Furniture Workshop, the Hollybush Public House and the Old Tollbar).

The proposals for this location are extensive and include a 4-way traffic light-controlled junction (including a Toucan crossing), two average speed camera columns and a total of 14 street light columns. This would represent a considerable urbanisation of a fairly quiet and unspoilt hamlet within the National Park. The lighting associated with the proposal would also significantly affect the dark night skies at the location.

The levels of proposed infrastructure will act as a visual intrusion to users of the Limestone Way; although the provision of a bespoke crossing would be beneficial.

We believe that there is a requirement for a further professional heritage assessment to assess the impact on the settings of the listed buildings all of which sit immediately adjacent to the junction. This assessment would also need to consider the impact on the setting of nearby scheduled monuments, for example Green Low bowl barrow (scheduled monument 1010103) and Green Low chambered tomb (scheduled monument 1009444). These are both just over 1km away, but they are situated on hill tops (typically of prehistoric monuments) and thus may have wide ranging views, and their settings may be quite large; although they also have tree belts around them. A field assessment is required to make a judgement on this. The night-time impact of new lights on these scheduled monuments also needs to be considered, including in wintertime when the aforementioned tree belts will not be in leaf.

The combination of average speed cameras, traffic lights / crossing and streetlights means that this site will change drastically in appearance from a rural hamlet with little infrastructure or artificial light into an urbanised location with large amounts of transport infrastructure and intrusive artificial lighting.

The scheme has the potential for negative impact on the setting of the three Listed Buildings and of local Scheduled Monuments. Possible impacts include views from these monuments.

The Authority is unable to support the plans for this site as it stands.

There may be options for the delivery of some of the elements that would lessen the visual impact and be acceptable, whilst meeting some of the aims of the scheme overall.

Site 6 (ASC-006/006A) – Aston Hill (Proposed 50mph Section) – Within the National Park boundary

The initial report indicated that the initial Site 6 location (ASC-006 Aston Hill) was a layby east of the Keepers Cottage junction. The location is wholly within the National Park, but is well-screened with a backdrop of woodland on the southern edge of the site. A hedgerow offers some screening to the north, but not directly opposite the site.

Subsequent feedback from the County Council has indicated that one of two alternative sites is preferred.

We understand that Site ASC-006B, which is located adjacent to Hollybush Farm at Pikehall has now been ruled out, however, if this location were to be reconsidered, we have concerns. There would need to be a setting assessment for the listed buildings in the hamlet. The possible line of a Roman road crosses the A5012 at this location, so there could be potential below-ground impacts on heritage, depending upon where power lines and poles were sited. This could be managed through mitigation (archaeological monitoring).

The stated preferred site (ASC-006A) is adjacent to the Keepers Cottage junction, allowing better enforcement of vehicles entering and leaving the A5012 at the junction. The proposed location is adjacent to the junction, on the north side of the carriageway and immediately west of the junction at a field gateway. The location is wholly within the National Park and has no screening from either side of the carriageway. We believe that this will make the site visually intrusive in what is effectively (at this location) an open landscape on the White Peak plateau.

Footpath WD33/1 meets the junction adjacent to the proposed site, given the nature of the landscape at this location, the camera will be visually intrusive for users of this footpath from some distance away. In addition, Bridleway WD33/4 joins the A5012 less than 200m from the proposed site. Again, given the nature of the landscape it is likely that the site will be visually intrusive to users of the route.

The site is located close to a scheduled monument (1020947) so a setting assessment would be needed, however, we believe that the impact on setting would be minimal.

Location ASC-006A is more visually intrusive than ASC-006, and we are concerned about the landscape impact of this site; whilst recognising the reasons why it is the preferred site from the County Council's perspective. There may be opportunities for planting to offer some measure of screening, although this would need to be in keeping with the setting; and an agreement in place prior to delivery. As things stand the Authority is opposed to Location ASC-006A on the grounds of its visual impact on the open landscape.

Site 7 (ASC-007) – Newhaven (Proposed 50mph Section) – within the National Park boundary

This site is located on the southern side of the carriageway, east of the junction between the A5012 and the road to Friden. The site is wholly within the National Park and is well screened to the south by the woodland surrounding Newhaven Caravan and Camping Park. To the north, the site is less well screened with a low drystone wall and fields. Avondale Bungalow and Old House farm buildings are clearly visible from the site. However, given the distance and the tree cover behind, it is unlikely that the site be clearly visible from these properties.

The High Peak Trail lies approximately 600 metres north of the site. However, given the geometry of the Trail at this point, with shallow embankments and plentiful vegetation, it is unlikely that the site would be visible from the Trail.

Overall, given careful siting, we are generally supportive of this location as an average speed camera site. However, some thought may need to be given to future screening, if the surrounding woodland is affected by the need to clear Ash or other trees.