

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOLLOWING PRE-CONSULTATION

### 190 \_ Car Park Proposal at Ullock Moss, Portinscale

12 August 2020



**What are you asking me to comment on and why?** Thank you for taking the time to engage in our preliminary consultation regarding the future of verge-side parking and unmanaged transport around Portinscale and our proposal for a new car park to address some of these issues.

We are currently in the pre-planning application consultation phase. In this first stage of consultation, we are seeking feedback on our early plans at Ullock Moss and the long-term strategic vision for accessing Cat Bells and the local amenities of Portinscale. We are pleased to be proposing a scheme which is focused on resolving a long recognised and worsening issue, and we want our proposals to be informed by the community and reflect their views of this beautiful part of the Lake District. We welcome all relevant comments on any aspects of the scheme, hence the open-ended questions on the online questionnaire. These comments will be taken into consideration ahead of our formal planning permission application.

**Why now?** Following the ever increasing issues with verge-side parking and congestion in the area, the landowner [and proposer] was approached by the Lake District National Park Authority [LDNPA] in 2019 and asked to consider applying for formal permission to use this land for a car park. This proposal is a managed solution to some of the problems being faced by the local area.

**Who is the owner / client?** The owner and proposer of this scheme is a long-term local resident and business owner, Mike Anderton. Mike and his family have lived in the area for many years and has seen first-hand the impact verge-side parking has caused in the local area. Mike is keen to utilise his available land to help reduce the impact of illegal parking, and to ensure local emergency services can reach those in need.

**Why this location?** Given the area's natural beauty, and its proximity to Cat Bells and Derwentwater amenities, many visitors try to park as close to the start of the local footpaths as possible. This has resulted in parking in and around Cat Bells becoming a worsening issue, causing increased safety risk to pedestrians and cyclists, local residents, emergency services, and local farmers/businesses. In addition to the safety concerns, the ongoing environmental damage to local vegetation, habitats, and grass verges is ultimately degrading the beauty and tranquillity of this special area. This proposal is an opportunity to help reduce the damage being caused, and to provide a safe place for families, residents and visitors to park and access this beautiful landscape.

As a result, the Lake District National Park Authority [LDNPA] has approached our client to consider providing urgently needed car park facilities on this piece of land. The location is suitable for this need due to its proximity to Cat Bells, the Lakeshore, local footpaths, and cycleways, as well as being immediately adjacent to an existing mainline bus route, provided by a local operator. The proposed site is well contained in the landscape, with a mature woodland backdrop. This presents significant opportunities to mitigate for any adverse landscape and visual impact which may arise from a permanent car park.

**What have we done to get to this point?** We have just closed our pre-application consultation, which included engaging statutory bodies and local organisations, committees, the community, and businesses to gather feedback on our early proposals for the Ullock Moss site.

We are now in the process of collating and analysing the feedback collected via our discussions, email responses, online questionnaire results, and also, comments on social media in relation to the proposal. This analysis will inform and improve our proposal ahead of a public exhibition of the proposals subject to Covid-19 regulations; trusting it then reflects the needs of the local environment, the residents, businesses, and visitors.

**Where did the 165 cars number come from?** Following our site investigations over a number of weekends in January 2020 we found that the average extent of road-side parking in the area between Portinscale and Cat Bells is 160 to 170 vehicles. We feel the proposed site, in its current form, is suitable for the safe use of 165 vehicles, without further excessive impact on the surrounding landscape. The final decision on the size of the car park will be determined by the Transport Assessment we are conducting.

**How will this reduce traffic, mitigate the impact on the A66 junction and stop verge-side parking?** The aim of the proposal is to provide a managed off-road area for locals, visitors, and businesses to park and safely access the beautiful area, including Derwentwater lakeshore and Cat Bells. We also hope that this scheme will go some way to reduce / prevent the ongoing damage to the surrounding environment by providing a space for cars to park legally and safely off the road. A reduction in road / verge-side parking would go some way to reducing congestion, road hazards, 'cruising' for spaces on the highway and blocking of the emergency services. We have seen the high accident potential of cyclists, pedestrians and cars trying to navigate the same piece of road, while a continuous row of vehicles creates an impregnable barrier along the length of the roadside verge.

The proposal also aims to reinforce local footpaths, cycle routes and other transport links and provide a continuous unbroken space for the non-car user. Such schemes being investigated and supported are the proposed 'Round the Lake' cycleway and Miles Without Stiles 34: Derwentwater Lakeshore walk. The proposed site is serviced by an existing mainline bus service, and we are working closely with local organisations to create a joined-up approach for the area's transport management.

We are working with a local transport consultant, the County Council highways department, and local Parish Councils' to monitor the site and the existing flow of traffic. Our client, at the request of the local Parish Council, temporarily opened the proposed site for free parking on Sunday 02 August 2020, to help ease the immediate issues and need for parking. We will be reviewing the outcomes of this and incorporating lessons learnt within our planning application.

The initial analysis of feedback has routinely raised the issue of enforcement. We will reflect this in our ongoing conversations with the respective County, District and Parish council representatives, as well as the LDNPA, local police constabulary and businesses. We are promoting the consideration of a range of Traffic Regulation Orders [TRO's], in conjunction with the proposal.

However, our client is a private individual, therefore the potential for influencing large organisations and Councils is relative. We have and will continue to engage with stakeholders to create a joined-up approach to the transport management of the area.

**You have cut down the trees and laid a car park already [obviously to put in a car park]** The proposed site has been used for many years as part of a compound for the client's local woodland management works. The proposed site was felled in 2018 to facilitate logging operations on Swinside; constructed as a loading point for road haulage and ongoing management. Our client was approached by the LDNPA to use this land for a car park in 2019.

**How will this proposal benefit the local community?** The intention of this proposal is to provide a safe place for locals, visitors, and businesses to park and explore this beautiful environment. Ever greater numbers of people are visiting the area and causing significant damage, impacting local residents, farmers, businesses, and emergency services; all subsequently resulting in a negative impact on this tranquil landscape. We hope this scheme will ease the mounting pressure on the road systems of Portinscale, and in doing so provide a connection with local facilities, footpaths, cycleways, and existing transport options.

**How much is it going to cost to park, and will you have local resident permit schemes and/or seasonal rates?** At present, the pricing scheme proposed for the car park has not been determined. We have received many comments regarding the implementation of competitive / reduced pricing, seasonal passes, season tickets for local residents and businesses. Although difficult to administer, we have raised these comments to our client and will be working with them to ensure they understand the local communities feedback and duly consider all the available options ahead of setting a pricing structure.

**Can you book spaces online, and how will we know the car park is full?** In the current environment we are acutely aware of the need for a safe process of managing the parking spaces. We have received many comments regarding a possible online / automated method of pre-booking spaces, and we shall be investigating the options available to us with our client. We will, however, ensure we consider the design, visual impact and sustainability i.e. solar powered parking machines and limited signage etc. We will look to be included within the LDNPA's 'Safer Lakes' website, and we have recently received contact from the LDNPA to begin this process.

**When will the shuttle run, and is it dependant on buying a parking ticket?** It is anticipated [subject to planning] that the shuttle bus shall be on a seasonal timetable [e.g. Good Friday – 31 October, inclusive]. There is no requirement to arrive by car to utilise the shuttle service. However, pending the confirmation of parking fees, a charge may be applicable for the shuttle bus if you are a pedestrian.

**What are we doing about the lack of footpaths to/from Portinscale?** Although this is a matter which sits with the respective local authorities of LDNPA and CCC [Highways], we are engaging with local landowners, Councils', and organisations to provide a joined-up approach to pedestrian footpaths and cycle routes in the area. The proposal shall look to provide a safe route to access the local public and permissive footpaths, leading to Cat Bells and the lakeshore, as well as the Cumbria Way / Allerdale Ramble, and Sea to Sea cycle route. The proposal site also provides a short walk to the Keswick Launch and Nichol End Marine.

**Does the scheme fit into a bigger plan and is there a holistic / grand scheme?** We recognise the importance of both a county-wide and local strategy for safe and sustainable traffic management. We are in discussions with local highways bodies, CCC and the LDNPA, as well as specialist consultants, to do our part in ensuring this proposal is a component of a wider scheme. The reason why this proposal has been created is, in part, due to the openness of the client and the work the local Council's and partnering organisations are undertaking. We also hope to include this car park within the Lake District National Park Authorities' 'Safer Lakes' initiative [[www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/visiting/car-park-status](http://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/visiting/car-park-status)], further improving the connection with the overall Lake District traffic management.

As mentioned previously, our influence is relative, and any larger plan would sit with the relevant organisation i.e. LDNPA, CCC [Highways] or National Trust. We would encourage interested people to lobby those organisations, highlighting the role our proposal can have in a grander scheme.

**What are we doing to protect the ecology / habitats / trees / water?** We have appointed local Ecologists, Arboriculturists and landscape professionals, who will be undertaking the necessary investigations and reports to help ensure the protection of local wildlife. Such investigations include Topographical surveys, a Landscape appraisal, Ecology impact assessments and investigations of watercourses and the surrounding wildlife impact. We understand the importance of our wildlife, particularly in this area of the National Park and we will strive to ensure our proposals are in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging LDNPA's Local Plan policy. These results will be available as part of the planning application process.

**How are we protecting the landscape character?** We want this scheme to fit with the area and help improve the character of the landscape, particularly helping to retain the tranquillity so many find in this part of the Lake District National Park. Our proposal will reflect the woodland environment, with an organic form and sympathetic soft landscaping in the form of 'tree islands', landscaped screening and subservient structures of local materials.

As mentioned previously, the site is considered well contained in the landscape, with a backdrop of mature trees; presenting significant opportunities to mitigate for any adverse landscape and visual impact which may arise from a permanent car park.

**How is our scheme environmentally sustainable?** The proposal is in the early stages of design, with the responses from the pre-application consultation shaping the scheme ahead of the planning application and formal consultation. We are open to all considerations and will be investigating the options available to us. These options include solar powered parking meters, a suite of electric car charging points, sustainably powered shuttle bus and additional tree / vegetation planting. A principal aim of the scheme is to provide a safe space for locals, visitors and businesses to park and utilise the local footpaths and cycle networks. An E-bike hire point will be included within the proposal, as well as a focus on connecting with, supporting, and enhancing existing sustainable transport such as the Keswick Launch.

**Why are we not installing a Park & Ride from Keswick?** We are trying to ensure a linked-up approach to transport in the area, however we are acting on behalf of a private individual who has been asked to consider installing a car park on their land. We are engaging with the LDNPA, local County, District and Parish council's, and transport operators, and we will ensure that the feedback received is passed onto the relevant authority, to help raise awareness of this need. However, our influencing ability is relative, and we are a small part of the community, and we are unable to make these large decisions.

End.

12/08/2020.