

REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE PROPERTY & PROJECTS GROUP

**SUBJECT: UPDATE REPORT ON THE PROPOSED VARIATION OF THE
PREEXISTING CAR PARK ORDER IN READINESS FOR THE START OF THE
2019 CAR PARK CHARGING SEASON**

Purpose of Report

To Update Members on the procedural progress to vary the preexisting Car Park Order in readiness for the start of the 2019 Car Park charging season.

Background

Members considered a report at their meeting on the 29th November 2017 which summarized the Authority's pre-existing car park operation and resolved to introduce the following new provisions:

1. Introduce parking charges at 4 additional sites (West Angle, Penally, Amroth and Nolton Haven) which currently operate as free use sites.
2. Extend the charging day across all charging sites by an additional 2 hours from 5pm to 7pm.
3. Increase the daily rate for coach parking across all sites from £3 up to £8

Members considered a subsequent report at their meeting on the 16th May 2018 which outlined the required statutory process to be followed to give effect to the above proposed provisions. Members resolved to instruct Pembrokeshire County Council (in the latter's capacity as the relevant Highway Authority) to commence that statutory process. The document which relevant statutory consultees and the general public were asked to comment on is:

The Pembrokeshire County Council Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2015 Variation Order No.1 (2019)

The required 21 day Statutory Public Consultation period ran from the 5th September 2018 to the 26th September 2018 inclusive and comprised:

- Direct notification to relevant statutory consultees
- Public notice in the Western Telegraph
- The deposit of information packs at various public buildings for inspection by the public
- The placing of public notices at all of the parking places listed in the Order

The resulting representations made in response to the above process were received, logged and acknowledged by Pembrokeshire County Council and then passed to your Officers for consideration.

In total, the statutory public consultation process outlined above generated 38 (thirty eight) separate representations which have now been considered by your Officers.

Review of consultee reps

Responses typically related to specific car parks, and responses were received concerning all car parks affected by the proposed introduction of parking charges. In summary, the 38 individual responses received can be geographically grouped as follows:

- 26 responses were received relating to Amroth car park including representations from Amroth Community Council
- 4 responses were received relating to Angle car park, including representations from Angle Community Council and Tenant and Operator of Wavecrest Café abutting the beach
- 1 response was received relating to Nolton Haven Car Park
- 1 response from Penally Community Council was received in relation to Penally car park.
- 6 responses were received regarding Solva including Solva Community Council and Brains Brewery

There was similarity in some themes across the car parks cited; in particular objections related to the impact on the local economy, impact on certain groups and issues of car parking displacement. The issue of restrictions on PCNPA's land ownership title was also raised in respect of Angle, Amroth and Solva.

Refer to Appendix 1 below for overview of main themes from consultation responses.

Financial, Risk & Compliance Considerations

No issues in addition to those outlined elsewhere within this report

Human Rights/Equality Issues

An equality impact assessment has been carried out to assess the impact of the proposal on protected groups.

Key issues highlighted within the Assessment:

- The young, older people or families with children with limited income may have difficulty paying where car parking charges are introduced or there is an extension to the charging day. Certain protected groups more likely to be in poverty. Areas where charging is due to be introduced have high proportions of older people/ ageing population. This could impact on them accessing the beach or opportunities provided to socialize in these areas. This concern was raised in a number of consultation responses.

- Disabled people and older people with mobility needs and reliant on cars due to lack of alternative accessible transport.
- Introduction of car parking charges could result in displacement of parking to inappropriate off street parking. This could also impact on street road safety issues – with particular implications for children, or obstruction for people with physical and sensory disabilities. It could also impact on access for emergency vehicles
- Ensuring that P&D machines are accessible.
- Introduction of charging could impact on residents in receipt of care and unpaid carers if they rely on car parks.
- It was noted that attendance of community institutions such as Churches and Village Halls could be adversely impacted by the introduction of parking charges.

Mitigating actions identified include:

- The provision of an additional hour for blue badge holders for all tariff options including free 30 mins option.
- Where there are currently no accessible parking bays inclusion of accessible bays are considered under future refurbishment programs as has occurred at Little Haven and Saundersfoot.
- Cost/benefit of Season Ticket purchase by regular users of Car Park
- Monitoring impact of introduction of charging on beach access for “blue light” emergency vehicles with relevant services.

Well-being of Future Generations Consideration

The Equality Impact Assessment also took into account Well-being of Future Generation Considerations in terms of impact on 5 ways of working and Welsh Government Well-being Goals and Authority’s Well-being Objectives.

Key issues highlighted within the Assessment:

- A need to ensure consistent and sustainable approach to management of Car Parks for the long term to ensure access to Pembrokeshire’s world class beaches, countryside and heritage.
- Concern highlighted within consultation responses on the impact on the local economy, businesses, communities and residents where charging could be introduced or the extension of the charging period .
- As an Authority we are committed to maintaining our portfolio of car parks to a high standard and by doing so, the Authority safeguards their functional fitness for purpose throughout the year. The generation of income through charging assists with this.
- Impact on staff and community relations. This could impact on staff involved with managing car parking facilities and wider staff who work within these communities not involved with the management of car parks.

Biodiversity Implications/Sustainability Appraisal

No issues

Welsh Language Statement

It is a legal requirement of the management powers afforded by the Parking Order that correctly worded bilingual signage must be on display at every car park where we may want to enforce those powers (whether parking is free or chargeable). All signage and instructions on Pay & Display machines will be bilingual

RECOMMENDATION

Members to consider the outcome of the statutory consultation.

Members have previously resolved to instruct Pembrokeshire County Council (in the latter's capacity as the relevant Highway Authority) to undertake the statutory process required to vary the terms of the Car Park order currently in force. The document which relevant statutory consultees and the general public were asked to comment on is:

The Pembrokeshire County Council Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2015 Variation Order No.1 (2019)

Appendix 1 – Consultation

Pre Consultation Awareness Raising

Prior to the formal consultation process, a PCNPA Officer carried out awareness raising activities with the following community council's on the proposed introduction of charging in PCNPA car parks within their community council area:

Amroth Community Council
Angle Community Council
Penally Community Council
Nolton and Roch Community Council

The Officer gave presentations on the proposed changes and the context for those proposed changes. The Officer answered questions from those attending the meetings and used these meetings to advise and raise awareness that a process of formal public consultation would follow later in the year. Amroth & Penally Community Councils invited members of the public to their respective meetings to provide them with an opportunity to ask questions.

Statutory Public Consultation

A statutory public consultation exercise was conducted and ran from the 5th -26th September 2018.

Full details of the proposals and a statement of the National Park Authority's reasons for proposing to make the order could be inspected at the following locations during normal opening hours at

- County Hall, Haverfordwest;
- Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Offices in Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock;
- Pembrokeshire County Council Customer Service Centres located in Town Hall, Fishguard; Argyle Street, Pembroke Dock and Town Hall, Milford Haven;
- Tourist Information Centres in St Davids (Oriel y Parc), Tenby and Saundersfoot Library;
- St Dogmaels Post Office.

PCNPA promoted the consultation on its website and across its social media channels.

Representations to the statutory Consultation are being considered by PCNPA Members.

Consultation responses have been considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment on the proposed variation of Off Street Car Parking orders.

Number of Responses Received

Car Park	Number of Respondents
Amroth	26 , including Amroth Community Council. (V01 – 2, 6, 9, 12, 11, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38). All objecting to the introduction of Charging.
Solva	6 , including Solva Community Council and Brains Brewery. (V01 – 1, 3, 4, 5, 8,18). All objecting to the extension of charging period and one objecting to principle of charging.
Nolton Haven	1 (V01 – 10). Objecting to the introduction of charging
Penally	1 from Penally Community Council (V01 – 35). Objecting to the introduction of charging.
West Angle	4 , including Angle Community Council, A Burns AM and Tenant and operator of Wavecrest Café abutting the beach who ran a petition of objection resulting in 722 paper signatories and 3,127 online . (V01 – 7, 13,15, 22). All objecting to the introduction of Charging.

Main Themes from Consultation Response

The main themes relating to responses for each car park are noted below. There was similarity in some themes across the car parks in particular the impact on the local economy, impact on certain groups and issues of displacement.

- **Theme 1: Negative Impact on the Local Economy**
- **Theme 2 – Impact on the Community**
- **Theme 3 – Displacement Parking**
- **Theme 4 – Impact on Residents and businesses with no Parking**
- **Theme 5 – Impact on specific groups**
- **Theme 6 – Lack of Public Consultation**
- **Theme 7 – Financial viability and cost of enforcement**
- **Theme 8 – Ownership and PCNPA not legally entitled to charge**
- **Theme 9 – Park Purposes**
- **Theme 10 – Length of Period for free Parking**
- **Theme 11 – Signage at Amroth**
- **Theme 12 – Issue of Standardization and Variation of Tariffs**

Theme 1: Negative Impact on the Local Economy

A recurring theme to the introduction of charges at Amroth was concern about the impact on the local economy. There was concern that removal of free parking would impact on visitor numbers and regular beach users/visitors such as dog walkers, with a 'knock on' impact on footfall for businesses in Amroth. There was also concern that if people have to pay they would choose to go to Wiseman's Bridge, Saundersfoot or Tenby instead.

A recurring theme to the introduction of charges at West Angle was the impact on the local economy due to the nature of West Angle Car Park, in particular its remote

geographical location. One response noted that the National Park Authority was showing disregard to the duty to 'foster economic/social wellbeing of communities' due to the adverse impact that car park charges would have on the local community and its businesses. Concern was also raised about the direct impact on the café adjacent to the car park. It was noted that Angle beach is mainly used by local people. Anecdotally local people have said they can't afford to travel to Angle, pay parking charges and have refreshments.

A recurring theme on the extension of the charging day to 7pm at Solva was concern about the adverse impact it would have on the local economy. The Harbour Inn and other business would be under greater financial pressure as motorists would be deterred from stopping in Solva during the period 5pm – 7pm. One response highlighted that having free car parking between 5pm-7pm allows local people earning a fairly low wage to use local businesses without being saddled with extra costs

Theme 1 – PCNPA Response:

- There is no evidence to suggest that the demand for use of the PCNPA's charging car parks in coastal village locations such as Little Haven and Solva is adversely impacted by the current duration of the charging day and/or the existing suite of parking price points/season tickets offers.
- There is no evidence to suggest that the demand for use of the PCNPA's charging car parks at beach head locations such as Poppit Sands, Newport Sands, Newgale, Freshwater East & Manorbier is adversely impacted by the current duration of the charging day and/or the existing suite of parking price points/season tickets offers.
- Privately run beach cafes operate immediately adjacent to the authority's charging car parks at Poppit Sands, Newport Sands and Newgale and have done for many years.
- Introduction of 'up to 30 minute free parking' across all spaces in all car parks enables short term free parking , with 1 hour extensions for blue badge holders.
- The '30 minute free parking' will apply to the 5pm – 7pm period.
- The Authority currently offers pre-purchased season tickets which provide a cost effective alternative to the P&D rates: Full Season Ticket (for use in one of PCNPA charging car parks only): £25. Full Season Ticket (for use in any of PCNPA charging car parks): £70.
- Charges are seasonal and not in operation from 8th November – 14th March.

Theme 2 – Impact on the Community

There were concerns about the impact of the extension of the charging day on the community in Solva. One response noted that it would deliver no benefit to the community of Solva and therefore directly conflicts with the 'Well Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. One response noted the adverse impact of extending charges on local rowing and sailing clubs who hold early evening activities during the summer and whose members use the car park.

One response to West Angle car park highlighted concern that the introduction of charges may stop use of the car park by local community groups (Scouts) who meet at the location for boating and canoeing activities.

Penally Community Council commented that Penally Car park provides free parking for those attending church services and events at the thriving village Hall. Concern was raised about the impact that charging would have on Penally as a small village.

Theme 2 – PCNPA Response:

- The Authority currently offers pre-purchased season tickets (see details above) which provide options for residents who regularly use car parks. PCNPA season tickets are transferable between users and not tied to a specific vehicle.
- Introduction of 'up to 30 minute free parking' enables short term free parking, with an hour extension for blue badge holders. Blue badge holders will also receive an extra hour on all other tariffs.
- NPA have a statutory right to charge for services provided and a duty to raise reasonable revenue from assets which it controls.
- Revenue raised by the Authority is allocated by the NPA to fulfil park purposes across the Park area.
- Continued maintenance and provision of car parking facilities helps provide easy access to the Parks coastline countryside and settlements. The resulting footfall is an asset for local economies to capitalize on.
- The Authority can suspend charges to support community events in each of its charging car parks for up to three days in any calendar year. Recent events that have been supported via this mechanism include the Pembrokeshire Coast Triathlon at Broad Haven, Little Haven Regatta and the Edge Festival at Solva.

Theme 3 – Displacement Parking

Concerns included the prospect of illegal on street parking (double yellow lines etc) and management problems for owners of other privately owned/operated car parks/parking spaces. Associated access problems for 'blue light' emergency vehicles were also cited.

A theme within some West Angle responses was that displaced parking caused by charging would push traffic away from the car park back along the public highway and into village. This would have negative impact on local residents with limited off road parking including RNLI crew members. One response to West Angle noted that there was no mention of introducing Car Parking Bays to assist with managing the car park.

The response from Penally Community council raised the issue of displacement and the extremely limited capacity of the village to accommodate public parking need.

Theme 3 – PCNPA Response:

- The Head of Highways & Construction at Pembs CC advised Angle Community Council in a letter dated 21/3/18 on the issue of possible displacement of parking resulting from the introduction of car park charges. The advice was that

individual drivers are responsible for leaving their parked vehicle in accordance with the rules of the Highway code and that parking which causes obstructions or danger is enforceable and can be dealt with by the correct enforcement authority. The advice continued that concerns about the displacing of parking on street which might therefore cause hazards and congestion are not considered substantive complaints. This advice would apply similarly to all car parks where displacement could be an issue.

- PCNPA will look to monitor the impact of the introduction of charging on “blue light” emergency service vehicles.
- Need or otherwise for demarcation of bays is an operational matter and would occur if need identified from period reviews.

Theme 4 – Impact on Residents and businesses with no Parking

It was noted in some response relating to Amroth Car Park that a number of people have nowhere else to park and that people living in the village but working elsewhere will have to pay when they come home at night and at weekends.

Other concerns focused on the impact that introducing charges would have on local holiday home businesses, visitors staying in Amroth and regular visitors to the car park. One respondent felt that it disproportionately impacted on local people and another queried if there would be reserved bays for residents, whilst another highlighted that season ticket holders are not guaranteed a space which would impact on residents and staff working in local businesses.

Theme 4 – PCNPA Response:

- The Authority currently offers pre-purchased season tickets(see pricing details above) which provide cost effective options for residents and employers with no access to private parking.
- Reserved bays are not provided as they are an inequitable use of the sites fixed parking capacity.
- We do not guarantee or reserve the use of any space to any individual as this is an inequitable use of the sites finite parking capacity.
- Our season tickets are transferable between users and vehicles. Some holiday home operators and businesses without off street parking have recognized the value of this flexibility and have purchased season tickets for use within their business .

Theme 5 – Impact on specific groups

It was noted in some Amroth responses that the introduction of charges would have an impact on older people, particularly those with limited income, as well as others who regularly use the beach for walking or to meet to socialize with others for lunch or coffee. One response noted that the 30 minute free parking would not adequately support the needs of short stay frequent users such as the above. It was highlighted in other Amroth responses that the introduction of charges could impact access for disabled people who use their cars to get to the beach.

One response noted the impact on Pembroke Dock families (an area they highlighted of high unemployment and deprivation), who do not have the funds to pay for parking in tourist areas and use Angle beach because of this. They also noted that it was currently used for school trips to keep costs down for parents.

The one response about Nolton Haven car park raised concern about how the introduction of charging would have a disproportionate impact on locals who use the car park regularly, particularly after school hours and can only access the beach by car.

The response from Penally Community Council highlighted the age demographic of Penally and the disproportionate impact the introduction of charges would have on the wellbeing of older people with mobility needs reliant on their car.

Theme 5 – PCNPA Response:

- NPA have a statutory right to charge for services provided and a duty to raise reasonable revenue from assets which it controls.
- The Authority currently offers pre-purchased season tickets (see details above) which provide options for residents and frequent users of car parks. PCNPA season tickets are transferable between users and not tied to a specific vehicle.
- Universal role out of 30 minute free parking offer across all existing NPA charging car park sites has been in place since March 2017 and has been well received.
- There is recognition that it will have an impact on residents who need to use cars due to disability/ health related issues and the Blue badge system is therefore in operation across all spaces in all car parks. This is consistent with Pembrokeshire County Council's approach.
- The need to increase the provision of accessible bays would be considered under any future planned refurbishment programmes as has occurred at Little Haven and Saundersfoot.

Theme 6 – Lack of Public Consultation

A recurring theme within objections to the introduction of charging at Amroth was a view that there was a lack of public consultation. A number of responses requested a public meeting to discuss the matter.

There was concern in response from West Angle about the lack of clarity in statements of reason.

One response regarding Solva Car Park raised the issue of lack of public consultation.

Theme 6 – PCNPA Response:

- A PCNPA Officer proactively attended a meeting of Amroth Community Council (with members of the public present) on 15/2/18. The Officer gave a presentation of the proposed changes, the context for those proposed changes followed by questions & answers. The meeting was also advised that a process of formal

public consultation would follow later in the year. The Officer received a subsequent email confirmation from the Amroth Clerk dated 19/2/18 offering her opinion that she 'thought it was a very useful and informative meeting'.

- A statutory public consultation exercise was conducted and ran from the 5th - 26th September 2018. Full details of the proposals and a statement of the National Park Authority's reasons for proposing to make the order could be inspected at the following locations during normal opening hours at
 - County Hall, Haverfordwest;
 - Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Offices in Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock;
 - Pembrokeshire County Council Customer Service Centres located in Town Hall, Fishguard; Argyle Street, Pembroke Dock and Town Hall, Milford Haven;
 - Tourist Information Centres in St Davids (Oriol y Parc), Tenby and Saundersfoot Library;
 - St Dogmaels Post Office.
- PCNPA promoted the consultation on its website and across its social media channels.
- This paper sets out the representations to the statutory Consultation for consideration by Members of the PCNPA.
- '30 minute free parking' offer will be available across all NPA charging car park sites.

Theme 7 – Financial viability and cost of enforcement

The question of whether it was financially viable for PCNPA to run the Amroth site as a charging car park was raised in some responses.

A query was raised about the cost of enforcing breaches of the Car Park Order at West Angle Car Park.

Theme 7 – PCNPA Response:

- The major capital cost to introduce additional sites into a pre existing P&D parking portfolio is the initial cost of machine purchase and installation (circa £5K) which will be recovered in full during first season of operation.
- Enforcement patrols already undertake periodic patrols of West Angle car park.

Theme 8 – Ownership and PCNPA not legally entitled to charge

Some Amroth responses questioned whether there was a restriction on the PCNPA's title that would prohibit its operation as a charging car park.

Some West Angle responses queried the historic understanding of the basis upon which the land was transferred to the PCNPA by its predecessor in title. In its response Angle Community Council noted that should the introduction of charging go

ahead it may consider investigating Community Asset Transfer of the land as a means to prevent charging.

One response objecting to principle of charging at Solva Car Park raised the issue of ownership of the car park.

Theme 8 – PCNPA Response:

- NPA title registered at the Land Registry for Amroth car park. NPA title documents impose no restriction on charging and copies of those docs have been provided to interested parties.
- NPA title documents impose no restriction on charging at West Angle Car Park and copies of those documents have been provided to interested parties. In relation to West Angle the Authority is not proposing to withdraw a service. Instead, it is seeking to amend the terms and conditions of use. Community Asset Transfer is not therefore a relevant consideration.
- NPA title for Solva Car Park registered at the Land Registry.

Theme 9 – Park Purposes

In some Amroth and West Angle responses concern was raised that the introduction of car parking charges was contrary to Park purposes.

One response regarding Solva car park objected to the principle of money raised from car park charging going to central pot.

Theme 9 – PCNPA Response:

- The NPA have a statutory right to charge for services provided and a duty to raise reasonable revenue from assets which it controls. Revenue raised by the Authority is allocated by the NPA to fulfil park purposes across the Park area.
- Continued maintenance and provision of car parking facilities help provide easy access to the Parks coastline, countryside and settlements for both residents and visitors

Theme 10 – Length of Period for free Parking

One Amroth responder felt the Authority could offer at least 2hrs free parking.

In the single response regarding Nolton Haven it was noted that the proposed charging rates are unnecessarily high and that the proposed free charging period should be at least 1 hour.

Theme 10 – PCNPA Response:

- Universal roll out of 30 minute free parking offer across all existing NPA charging car park sites has been in place since March 2017 and has been well received.
- Blue badge holders benefit from an additional 1 hour extension.

- Frequent users of car park may also consider cost benefit of season ticket purchase

Theme 11 – Signage at Amroth

One Amroth response cited the absence of signage directing people to the geographic start/finish of the coastal path.

Theme 11 – PCNPA Response:

- Whilst this does not relate to the Variation of the Car Park Order, the issue raised i.e signage directing people to the geographic start/finish of the coastal path will be passed on to PCNPA's Access Officer. The Authority is currently carrying out site audits of car parks to identify areas for improvement.

Theme 12 – Issue of Standardization and Variation of Tariffs

Some Solva responses noted that Pembs CC car parks have a variety of charging schemes reflecting a variety of needs and circumstances and that the PCNPA charges take no account of local circumstances or needs, and are far in excess of those charged by PCC.

It was highlighted in some West Angle responses that there is an inconsistency in PCNPA's approach across its Car Parking portfolio in relation to charging.

Theme 12 – PCNPA Response:

- Pembs CC charging periods and price points reflect the diverse nature of its car park portfolio. PCNPA charging car parks are typically coastal village core and or beach head in nature. Variation in tariffs would impact on transferability of tickets across sites and introduce subjectively based pricing.
- The PCNPA universal pricing structure is underpinned by the principle that a single vehicle occupies a single space for a specified period of time and the transferability of ticket use across all sites.
- The Authority established a Car Park Management Working Group that explored the management and charging at PCNPA car parks. The Groups recommendations were reported to the NPA on the 18th November 2015 when Members resolved the principle to introduce charging at Amroth, Penally, West Angle and Nolton Haven.