

Tourism, Communities Culture and Leisure Committee **3 March 2021**

Questions received from the public, all for the Chair

Question 1 From Alan Tinker, Bebington

I believe the council are looking at various places on the Wirral to create official Motor Home sites. One area mentioned is the large overflow car park at Station Road, Thurstaston.

I wish to raise the following concerns with any such proposal:

The area around Thurstaston and this part of the Country Park has been overcome with visitors and their vehicles.

The local infrastructure and car park facilities at Thurstaston are already unable to cope with the amount of visitors to this area. More parking spaces are urgently required, so to lose any parking spaces at all will greatly increase the existing problems with traffic flow.

As a member of Thurstaston Caravan Owners Association, whenever I visit the area I regularly witness issues with parking. When people are unable to park in the designated car parks they search for alternatives, such as parking on double yellow lines, on grass verges, along the length of Station Road, or on the private spine road leading to the Dee Sailing Club and often blocking their access requirements.

All of Station Road is very narrow. Any vehicle which parks on the road can create blockages for other traffic. The part of Station Road from the humpback bridge to the Dee Sailing Club has no pavements. All this creates major safety hazards to pedestrians, many with young children. Parking here causes blockages which hamper the movement of the Dee Sailing Club boats, the Caravan Club's visitors and most importantly any urgent or emergency access. This was evident in the recent incident when people needed rescuing after becoming trapped due to Thurstaston cliff erosion.

This is an area of natural beauty and needs environmental protection. There are ongoing problems with nightly antisocial behaviour which Council Officers have been informed about. Additional demands on the Country Park risk adding to these issues, and could lead to environmental damage to the area.

In conclusion Thurstaston already has an established well-run national motor home site, so what are the benefits to the area in creating something similar that will result in the loss of any current parking facilities and that will add to the problems to an area with limited infrastructure?

Question 2 From Roy Sheriff, Dee Sailing Club, Thurstaston

In principle we aren't against more caravan facilities. However if there is to be more traffic down Station Road then this will exacerbate the issues we are already experiencing with illegal parking and general access to the club. Over the past few years at the sailing club we have traditionally held 2 national sailing events, and an international one that can be every 4 years. We have always had difficulties enabling access for visitors with their extra wide craft down such narrow roads, but recently with the irresponsible and careless parking that has taken place since lockdown, this is likely to make the task of hosting future events much more problematic. While initiatives such as the new signs should help, it doesn't address the issue that the parking capacity is not sufficient for the high demand, which we expect will continue even when lock down easing happens, as the public have really enjoyed the fabulous open spaces. We think it would be irresponsible to add to what can already be an extremely congested area by encouraging motorhomes to attempt such an ordeal, creating friction and even violence between those showing a disregard for the rules and those wishing to enjoy their stay. I personally am a frequent user of motorhome sites in difficult to access areas, but every-one I have visited over the past 20 years have no parking at all on the approach roads, and suitable passing places for towing vehicles. Without such measures in place, we at Dee Sailing Club would be against such a site. Will WBC be able to guarantee safe passage and access for our visitors and emergency services, and transport of large craft to the sailing club, by ensuring no parking (except in the Car Parks) from Telegraph Road down to the sailing club and take action to stop further decay to the eroding cliffs to protect and create safe passage along the beach for new visitors, given we have already had two serious incidents over the last 2 months?