



Ymddiriedolaeth
Genedlaethol
National Trust



Planning Solutions Consulting
Experts in visitor experiences

Sustainable Freshwater West

Final Report



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Planning Solutions Consulting Limited

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Executive Summary

Over the past eight months Planning Solutions Consulting Limited has been working with the National Trust and other partners to consider the sustainable future for Freshwater West. Following extensive research, the proposal to emerge has a primary focus on the car parking arrangements at the main car park, proposals for overflow provision at a site adjacent to Gupton Farm, alongside enhanced traffic / highways regulations, upgraded toilets and a coordinated scheme for signage (interpretation, messaging and visitor information). There are further supporting interventions and supplementary actions including those relating to car parking charges, onsite mobile catering concession, the management of 'Dobby's Grave' and the use of technology.

Freshwater West is a popular destination along the Pembrokeshire coast which is much loved by local people and visitors. The 'assets' and a range of factors (including post COVID trends) have led to a significant increase in visitors coming to Freshwater West, which has meant that visitor pressure exceeds capacity at peak times, resulting in major traffic congestion. It is clear that the sheer numbers of visitors is also impacting on the environmental qualities and sensitive nature of Freshwater West.

There is a need to balance the natural environment and wildlife interest with human enjoyment of the beach and coastline. The aim is to improve and manage the visitor experience whilst responding to community concerns, visitor trends and safeguarding the quality of the experience. At the same time, the proposal responds to the commitment to move to a net zero position and address the biodiversity emergency.

An important component of the research programme has been community and stakeholder engagement. The work has involved:

- Two online surveys, which have generated close to **5,000** responses in total (1,758 and 3,020 respectively)
- A range of pop-up consultation events at the beachside and in Pembroke
- Two workshops with stakeholders
- Extensive discussions with a broad range of stakeholders and interested parties

The research programme has been framed by key principles as agreed by the stakeholders which include the key priorities to:

- Retain the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the site and its undeveloped state.
- Embed environmental sustainability into future management plans.
- Add positively to the visitor experience.

The research programme determined the level of support (or opposition) to a wide range of initiatives relating to car parking, road and traffic management and user services. In line

with the main areas that have strong support, the core interventions to emerge from the research programme and analysis relate to:

- Reconfiguring the main car park and access with a new seasonal overflow at Gupton Farm (and deliver a safer and improved provision of spaces in the overall locality)
- Extend and upgrade the toilet block
- Create a coordinated and coherent strategy for onsite interpretation and messaging

The biggest management challenge is ensuring car parking provision is provided in a way that is safe and can effectively absorb and manage the traffic flows without significant congestion issues. The recommended approach to the car parking improves the flow and capacity without an overall increase in parking spaces. The introduction of car parking charges would support improvement and future management of the car park. A key driver for this intervention is to ensure visitor and vehicular safety and efficiency of flows, alongside lower visual intrusion (of vehicles).

The existing toilet block has reached the end of its design life and the core visitor management interventions include extending and upgrading the facility. There are also proposals for a coordinated interpretation and messaging plan for the wider site including signage and visitor information.

The proposal also includes a range of supplementary projects to address the core challenges and opportunities facing the destination. The management of 'Dobby's Grave' requires further liaison between relevant stakeholders to reach a 'middle-ground' which allows access but provides a more sensitive solution for the local environment. The involvement of one or more local charities or groups is suggested in terms of adopting a role in overseeing the site in future.

A coordinated approach is required for the proposal, which aligns different stakeholders alongside powerful and coherent short to long term strategic objectives with a range of targeted initiatives / actions which are ambitious but realistic and achievable.

Clearly, there will be a need for capital expenditure to realise the range of proposed projects and as such funding and partnership arrangements will need to be sought in the short term. There will also be a requirement for detailed designs to be worked up and to seek planning consent for the proposals. These will need to be presented in a coordinated way to demonstrate that the approach represents a holistic programme for Freshwater West.

The proposal provides a package of interventions and initiatives which will significantly help to improve the visitor management of Freshwater West, to strike the right balance with a comprehensive and interlinked programme of actions which will enhance and manage the visitor experience whilst responding to community concerns and retaining the exceptional quality of the natural environment.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Project introduction

Over the past eight months, a team led by Planning Solutions Consulting Limited, has been working with the National Trust and other partners to deliver a sustainable future for Freshwater West. The project has two main objectives:

1. To widely engage with all relevant stakeholders including the public, local businesses and the voluntary, public and private sector businesses who have an interest, involvement and/or stake in Freshwater West;
2. To deliver a feasibility study and option appraisal for the car park and related facilities at Freshwater West.

Tourism is considered a foundation sector in the Wales Economy with a clear national ambition ‘to grow tourism for the good of Wales.’ It is recognised that tourism and related activities have a number of economic and wider societal benefits for Pembrokeshire contributing £585m to the visitor economy and 11,634 jobs, and the recent creation of ‘Visit Pembrokeshire’ as a new DMO, firmly establishes the changing shift in partnership between providers, communities, and visitors, that is required.

Freshwater West is a beautiful beach of golden sand backed by dunes on the Castlemartin Peninsula in south west Pembrokeshire. Freshwater West is a popular destination along the Pembrokeshire coast. It is arguably Wales’s premier surfing beach and has a global reputation. It is much loved by local people and visitors and with seasonal dog bans on many other beaches in Pembrokeshire, Freshwater West is a very popular destination for exercising dogs. Its use as the location for filming the Shell House and Dobby’s grave for the Harry Potter stories has led to it being a destination for many of the book’s fans.

All these visitor ‘assets’ have led to a significant increase in visitors coming to Freshwater West, which has meant that visitor pressure exceeds capacity resulting in major traffic congestion at peak times; difficulties in the emergency services and local agencies responding to emergencies and negative impact on the unique fauna and flora within the area. Visitor pressures have increased post COVID as people want to enjoy the outdoors and its many benefits.

It is clear that the sheer numbers of visitors, particularly over the summer, is impacting on the environmental qualities and sensitive nature of the Freshwater West. In their guidance on sustainable tourism, UNESCO stresses that managing visitor movements and influencing

visitor behaviour are critical aspects of developing sustainable tourism. The focus is not so much on growing tourism at Freshwater West but on the better management of visitor flows in response to a number of factors:

- A surge in visitors in 2020 and again in 2021, overwhelming site facilities
- Limited visitor infrastructure to cater growing visitor numbers, particularly those visiting the site by car
- The sheer volume of people coming to the beach causing erosion in places in the dunes and impacting on biodiversity

An emerging issue in the increase in motorhomes / campervans, often accompanied by disturbance to the amenity and natural environment of Freshwater West and, from time-to-time, associated litter and waste issues. When parked in the Main Car Park, they also take up two plus carparking spaces. However, the popularity of motorhomes (and campervans) remains at an all-time high and motorhome users can contribute to local economies.

At outdoor sites, visitors feel they can breathe 'clean air' and 'feel safe' in the natural environment. Additionally, higher levels of awareness of one's own health and linked behaviour changes with a real need to 'switch off' from the stresses of everyday life has resulted in a growth in people reconnecting with outdoor spaces and nature.

However, the increasing popularity of outdoor recreation has created further issues for onsite visitor infrastructure, e.g., car parks and toilets reaching capacity leading to, for example, incidences of inconsiderate roadside parking and congestion as well as negative impact on the biodiversity of sites (habitats and species). As a result, there is often a need for increased onsite human resource (rangers) to help 'manage' visitors.

The emphasis in developing the plan has been to generate consensus among a range of stakeholders and the local community on a vision and fully joined-up visitor management plan for Freshwater West. The aim is to balance actions to enhance and manage the visitor experience whilst responding to market trends, community concerns, ensuring sustainable economic growth and safeguarding the quality of the experience. A coordinated approach is required, which aligns different stakeholders alongside powerful and coherent short to long term strategic objectives with a range of targeted initiatives / actions which are ambitious but realistic and achievable.

At the same time, the strategy responds to the commitment to move to a net zero position and address the biodiversity emergency.

1.2 Methodology

The approach to developing the Sustainable Management Strategy has involved a number of key component elements including:

- Basing the strategy upon robust research and evidence
- Understanding the unique strengths and sensitivities of Freshwater West
- Building on best practice from other projects
- Taking a pragmatic and realistic approach to assessing options
- Ensuring solutions contribute to addressing the biodiversity emergency and reaching Net Zero

The central focus of developing the strategy has been community and stakeholder engagement. The strategy has involved:

- Two online surveys, which have generated close to 5,000 responses in total (1,758 and 3,020 respectively)
- A range of pop-up consultation events at the beachside and in Pembroke
- Two workshops with stakeholders
- Extensive discussions with broad stakeholders and interested parties

This report should be read in conjunction with the Interim Technical Report which provides a baseline in respect of the factors relating to visitor and environmental management at Freshwater West and sets out the research findings (primary research and stakeholder engagement) which helped to shape the emerging options (please see 1.3 below).

1.3 Interim Technical Report

In addition to the strategy and action plan, an Interim Technical Report has been prepared, which provides a foundation and evidence and baseline position. The report was presented to the client team (Interim Report, May 2022). The Technical Report sets out:

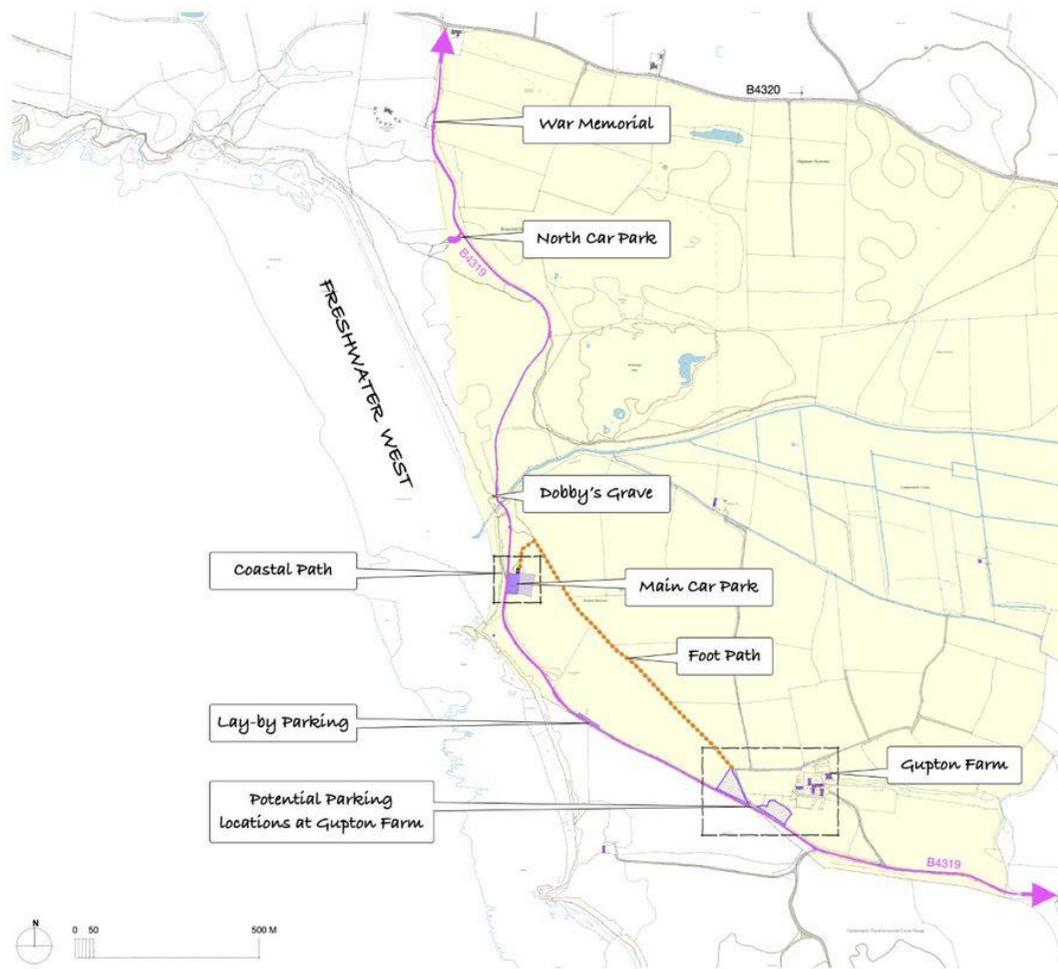
- A detailed site assessment and audit
- The strategic policy and planning context
- A market assessment
- The initial responses to the stage 1 primary research and stakeholder engagement
- Examples of good practice
- A review of emerging options.

What is clearly apparent is that people are passionate about Freshwater West and there are mixed views on a number of issues. The first stage of research uncovered a high degree of resistance to the potential introduction of car parking charges and the possible removal or relocation of Dobby's Grave has become a high-profile matter in local press with some coverage nationally. There is a need to balance the natural environment, and wildlife interest with human enjoyment of the beach and coastline. Overall, there is support (and merit) in taking a new direction in the approach to Freshwater West particularly in the main season, which is set out within this report.

2.0 The Site

The Technical Report provides a detailed assessment of Freshwater West in terms of its location, access, facilities and issues. The National Trust has a significant landholding at Freshwater West including the Main Car Park, much of the dunes and nearby farmland including Gupton Farm. Development and implementation of the strategy recognises the importance of partnership working with other organisations with an interest in the wider site including Pembrokeshire Coast National Park (PCNPA) and Pembrokeshire County Council, who have both played an active role in preparing the sustainable management strategy and action plan.

The plan below gives an overview of the key points of reference and their respective locations:



EX 001.1 LOCATION PLAN
SCALE 1:5000 @ A1, 1:10000 @ A3

Hiraeth. 2211 EX 001 Rev.
NATIONAL TRUST
 FRESHWATER WEST
 Existing
 Location Plan
 Scale: 1:5000 @ A1 1:10,000 @ A3 Date: 01/21
 02920351645 | office@hiraetharchitecture.co.uk
 The Maltings | East, Tynorall St | Cardiff | CF24 3BA
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As indicated, visitor numbers have experienced significant growth over the last 10 years or so. Visitor pressures have increased post pandemic as people seek to enjoy the outdoors.

The increase in visitor numbers has also been driven by a number of unique factors:

- With consistent swell and strong waves, Freshwater West is regarded as one of Wales's top surfing beaches. It's popularity as a surf location continues to grow: Outer Reef Surf School are based in the Main Car Park.
- The catering offer at Café Mor was a big draw for both local people and visitors. The operation has now moved to a new location at the Old Point House in Angle and the National Trust is considering offering a new short-term concession.
- The use of the beach as a film location for specific scenes in the Harry Potter movie franchise has led to the presence of Dobby's Grave, which is extremely popular for some Potter fans.

All these factors have been important in shaping the strategy and are discussed later in the report.

3.0 Vision and core principles

Following detailed consultation and a stakeholder workshop, a clear strong consensus was reached on the lead three guiding principles to underpin the future vision and strategy for Freshwater West which are shown in the top rows of the table below:

Outcome	Primary principle (%)	Secondary principle (%)	N/A
Retains the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the site and its relatively undeveloped state	100.0		
Embeds environmental sustainability and Net Zero Agenda (facilitates or contributes to continued environmental protection and management)	100.0		
Adds positively to the visitor experience	100.0		
Does not attract additional visitors in the peak periods	75.0	12.5	12.5
Fits with wider and county wide visitor management strategy and plans	75.0	16.0	16.0
Supports partnership and collaboration (incl PCNPA and PCC)	62.5	37.5	
Increases diversity, inclusion and community wellbeing	62.5	25.0	12.5
Ensures the quality of the site infrastructure is in line with NT standards for countryside sites	50.0	16.0	16.0

These principles helped to select the priority initiatives for evaluation and are critical in underpinning any future initiatives for Freshwater West. They relate to recognising the site’s special qualities and the strong attachment many people have with its sense of place, to understanding the environmental importance and main sensitivities and to making sure there is a positive visitor experience. Further principles of key significance relate to the need to manage the peak periods more effectively, to continue to work towards a strong fit with the strategic priorities among partner organisations with a strong collaborative ethos and to ensure any proposed initiatives embrace diversity, inclusion and community wellbeing.

In addition to the core principles, there are certain key core questions as follows:

- Is there a case for introducing car parking charges (seasonal) at Freshwater West Main Car Park?
- Should Dobby’s Grave be removed?
- Should a mobile catering unit be introduced serving hot and cold food and drink?

These critical issues were addressed at the Stakeholder Workshop in June 2022 with broad consensus and are further reviewed in Section 4.

4.0 Summary of research and engagement

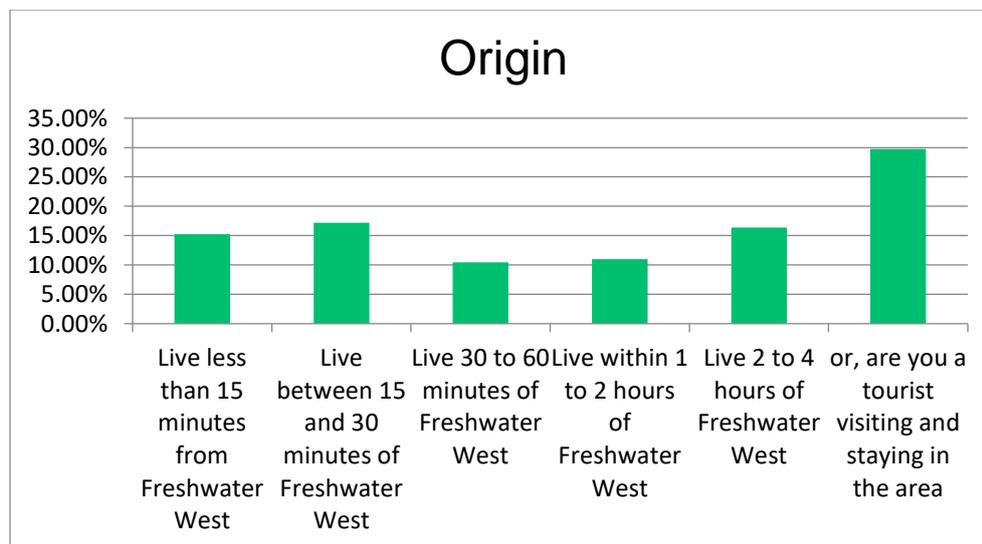
4.1. Second Phase research - findings and feedback

Further to the initial primary research exercise which helped to determine the potential options for review, a second online feedback exercise was carried out to understand the degree of support for certain initiatives and for people to express their views on opportunities to improve the visitor management and visitor experience at Freshwater West

This provides a good evidence base and has helped to shape the proposed initiatives. The online research survey generated a very strong response with total of more than 3,000 responses (3,020). This really demonstrates the level of engagement people have with Freshwater West and how much they wish to contribute to its sustainable future. It also provides a strong 'mandate' for taking forward those initiatives with strong support.

The survey was promoted using local social media channels, onsite posters and liaison with partner organisations including the National Park Authority, Visit Pembrokeshire and NRW.

The timing and distribution of the second research exercise meant that the profile of respondents showed a higher predominance of tourists (30%) and people living further away from the area (more than 15%). In the first survey, more than 70% (71.3%) were living within 30 minutes of the beach at Freshwater West.



The Feedback Form sought to ascertain the degree of support for a range of initiatives, grouped under three main categories:

- Car parking improvements

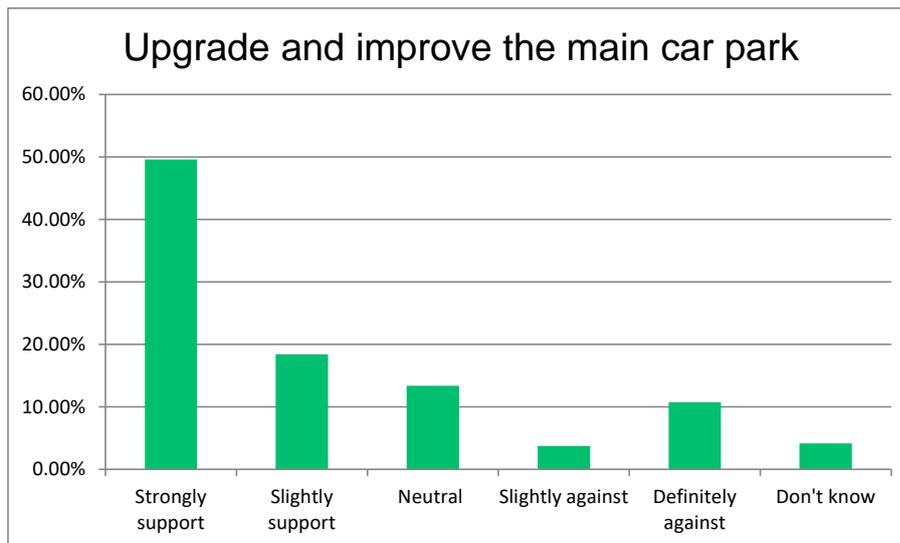
- Road and traffic management
- User services

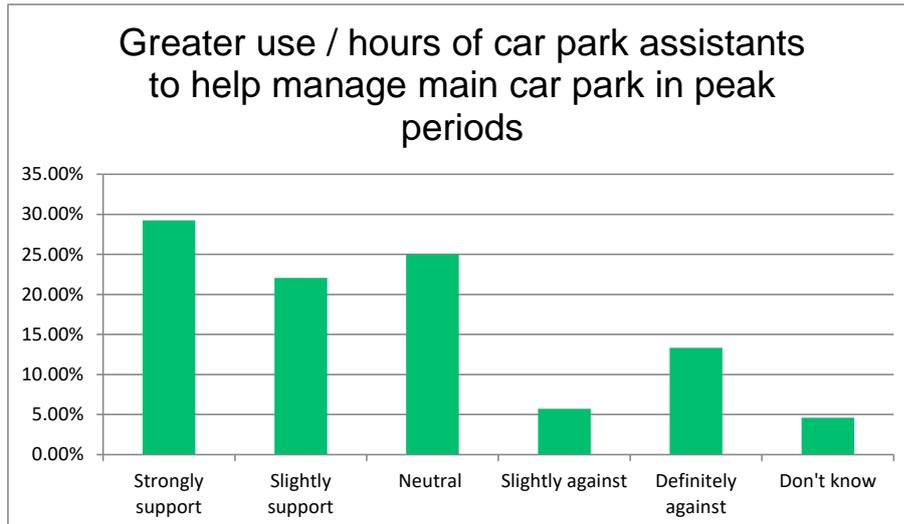
We summarise the responses and feedback under the three themed categories below

4.1.1 Car parking initiatives

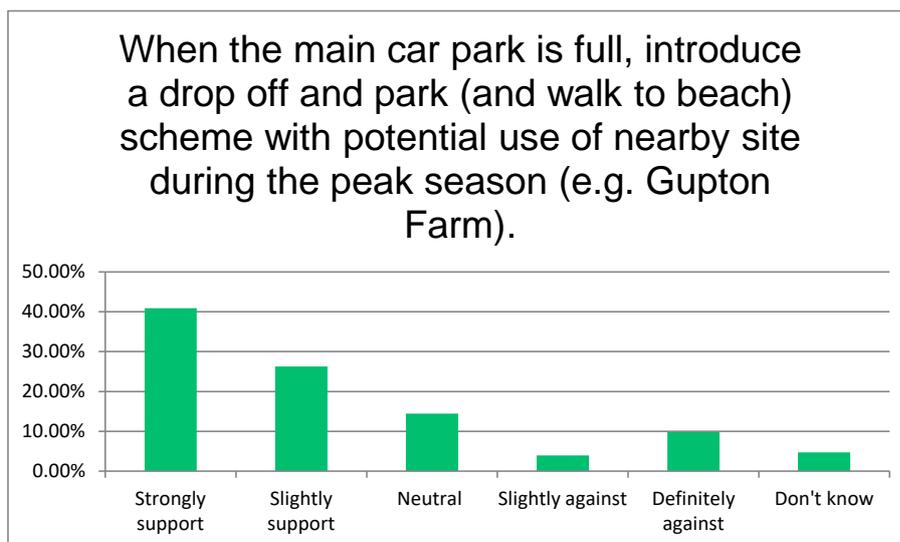
It is widely acknowledged that the car park layout and presentation is neither well configured nor attractively presented and certainly not to the usual high standards of most National Trust outdoor sites.

There is a desire to upgrade and improve the Main Car Park with close to 50% strongly in support. Among locals (those living within 30 minutes) the degree of strong support is lower at close to 40% as there is a notion among some (estimated at around 10%) to leave the area unchanged. Nevertheless, more than half of locals (54%) support or strongly support making improvements.

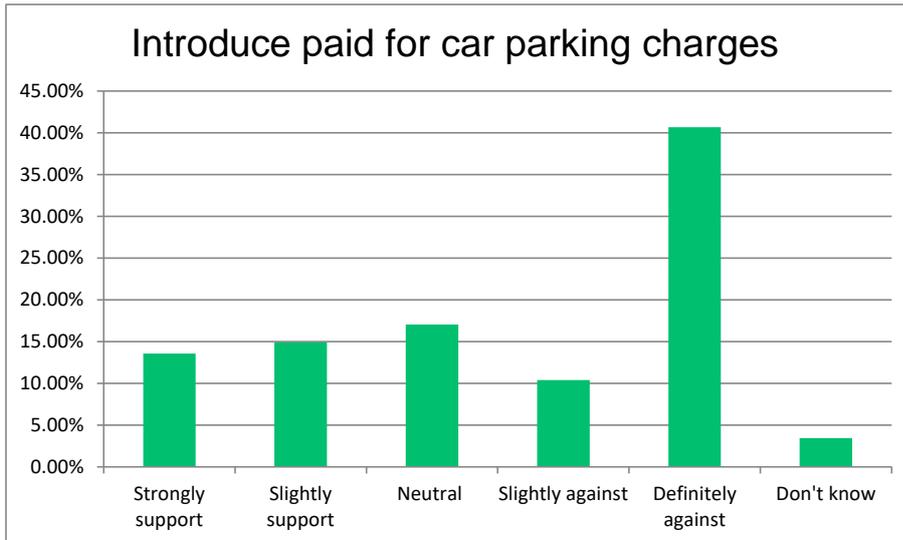




There is positive support too for those wanting a greater physical presence on site at peak times to help direct and manage the vehicles and visitors with more than 50% backing (51% either strongly support or support). This falls to 38% support among locals.



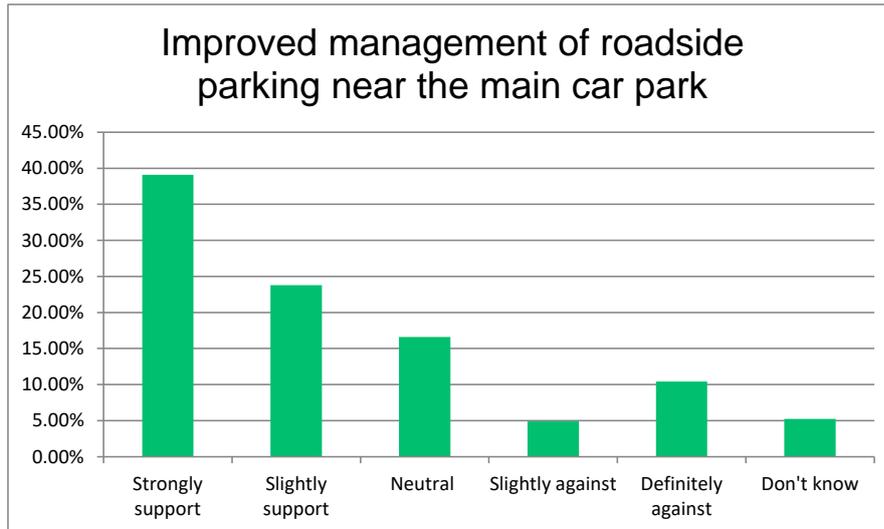
This initiative does attract a high level of backing with more than 60% in favour and a range of supporting comments to show many believe this represents a sound innovative solution for the car park congestion in peak season.



Parking charges represent an emotive issue. Clearly there is a reluctance to support the introduction (more than 40% are definitely against and this rises to 60% among locals), however it can be seen as a way to raise income to allow a higher standard of site management and maintenance. Many car parks in Pembrokeshire and also across at destination sites the UK have brought in car parking charges over the past 20 years or so and today it is seen as more of a 'norm' than free parking.

There is clearly a need to provide effective messaging in terms of the reason for the charges and how the funds raised are being directed to support the site's management and the wider environment.

It is worth noting however that car parking charges do not represent a direct way to manage throughput and certainly the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park endorse this point that the introduction of charges does not reduce traffic and parking volumes.



There is strong support for improved management of the roadside near the Main Car Park. If charges are introduced it is important that this does not merely displace higher volumes of cars to park indiscriminately on or adjacent to the public highway. In this respect, any changes to the parking needs to be managed in a coordinated way with the adjacent areas, working closely with PCC highways in particular.

In terms of other initiatives, discount passes for locals gained positive support. The possible introduction of a voluntary charge and the potential to consolidate the three Main Car Parking areas did not yield much support (please see additional tables in Appendix One).

Summary (car parking initiatives)

The table below provides a summary of the initiatives considered and the level of support for the respective possible options:



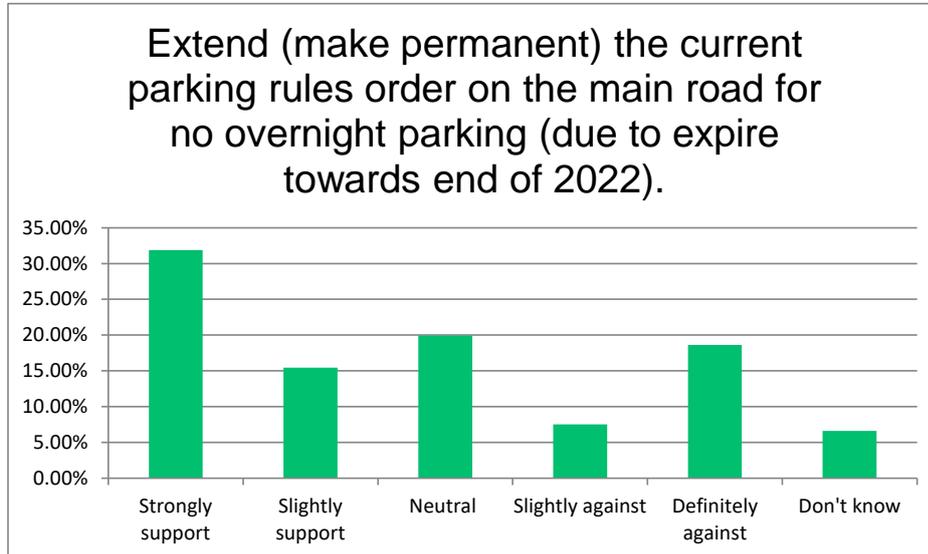
Summary levels of support - car parking			
Initiative	Support strongly	Support slightly	Total (in support)
Upgrade and improve the main car park at Freshwater West	50%	18%	68%
Greater use / hours of car park assistants to help manage main car park in peak periods	29%	22%	51%
When the main car park is full, introduce a drop off and park (and walk to beach) scheme with potential use of nearby site during the peak season (e.g. Gupton Farm).	41%	26%	67%
Introduce paid for car parking charges	14%	15%	28%
Introduce parking discount for local residents ('local' to be defined)	40%	16%	57%
Introduce voluntary parking charges, for example using mobile phone or App payment system	15%	17%	32%
Improved management of roadside parking near the main car park	39%	24%	63%
Consolidate the three car parks (Main, North and Quarry) into one larger one at the site of the main car park, with the same overall space capacity	10%	12%	22%

The leading initiatives in terms of support in the feedback are highlighted in yellow in the table. The initiatives which garner the highest level of support are further explored in the core management interventions in Section 5.0.

4.1.2 Road and traffic initiatives

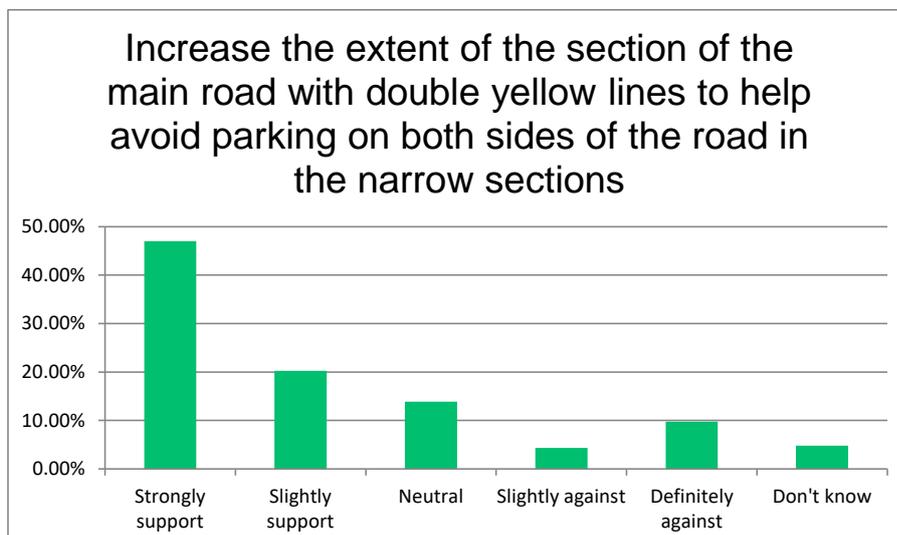
We have already highlighted the clear need to consider the management of the public road in a coordinated and balanced way alongside the approach to be taken for the car park.

The potential to make the order permanent for no overnight parking does receive good support and among locals the level of strong support is slightly above the overall response levels.



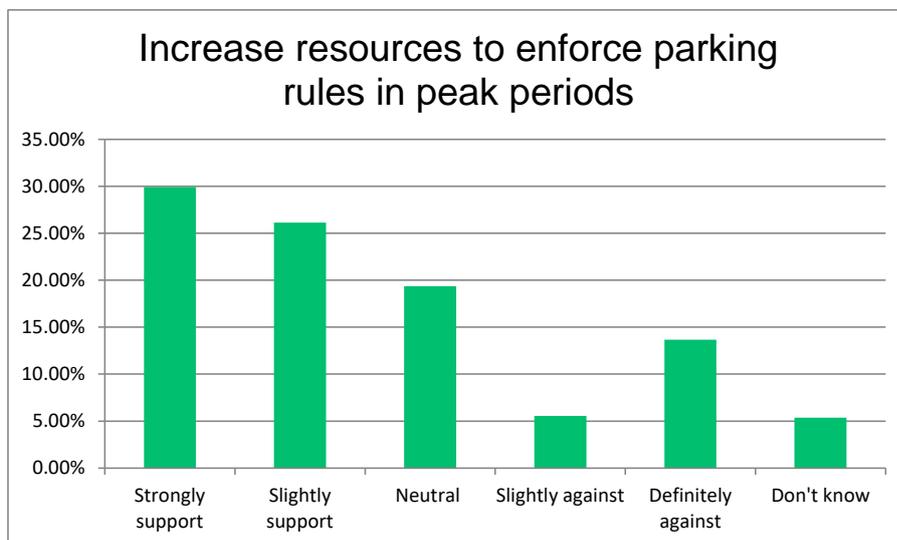
The temporary parking rules order has reportedly helped to relieve some of the congestion issues previously faced at the site. There is a reasonable profile of support for making this rule order permanent with only limited opposition. This is clearly outside of the National Trust's control but working with its strategic partner authority at PCC this could be secured within a relatively short timeframe and continue to deliver a benefit for site management as a whole.

Similarly with the use of parking restrictions with double yellow lines is well supported by most respondents (approximately two thirds of responses).

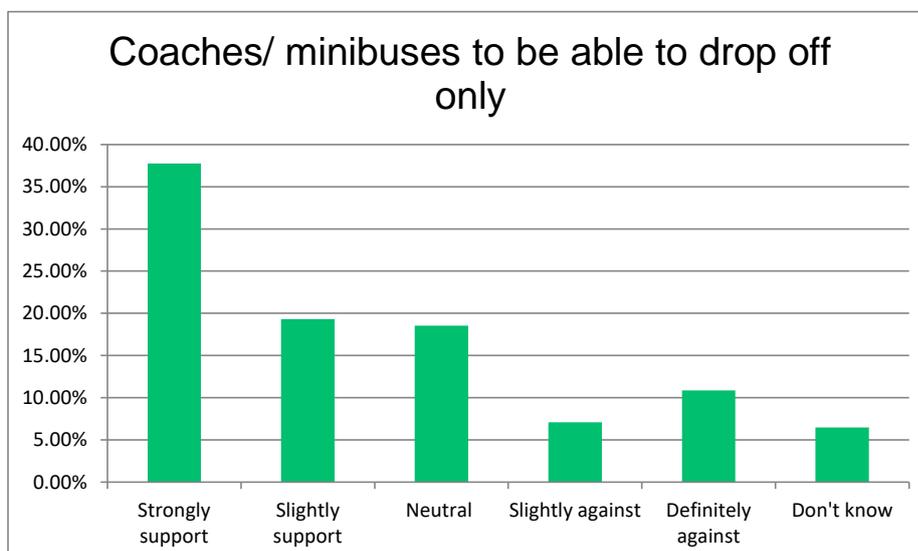


Again, this needs to be carried out with strategic partners at PCC who are responsible for the highway regulations. This needs to be considered carefully alongside the plans for the Main Car Park and the possible designation of short term or disabled bays on the coast road overlooking the beach.

Clearly a number of initiatives have direct resourcing implications and some may indeed only be implemented subject to sourcing external funding. There is support for greater enforcement, particularly in peak periods but the Local Authority budgets are already stretched.

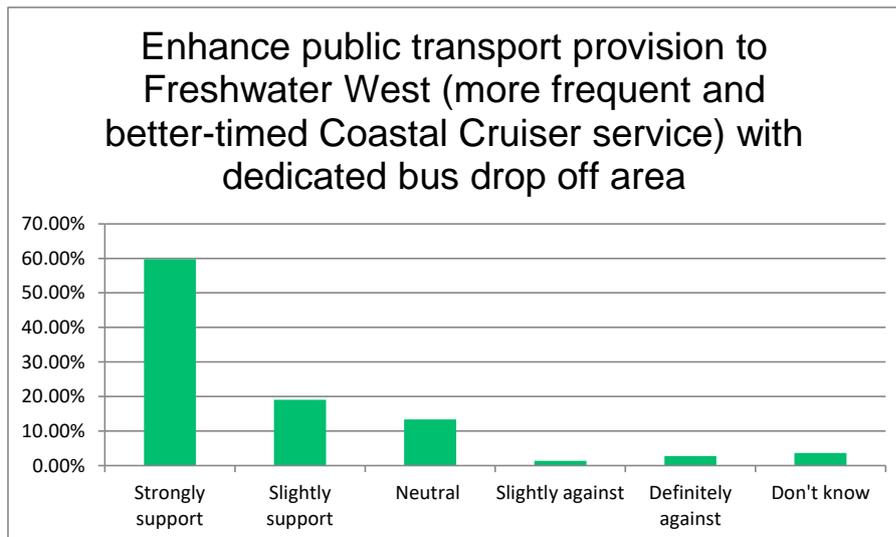


It is felt that if minibuses and coaches could be accommodated away from the beachside parking areas then this will improve access and parking capacity on peak days.



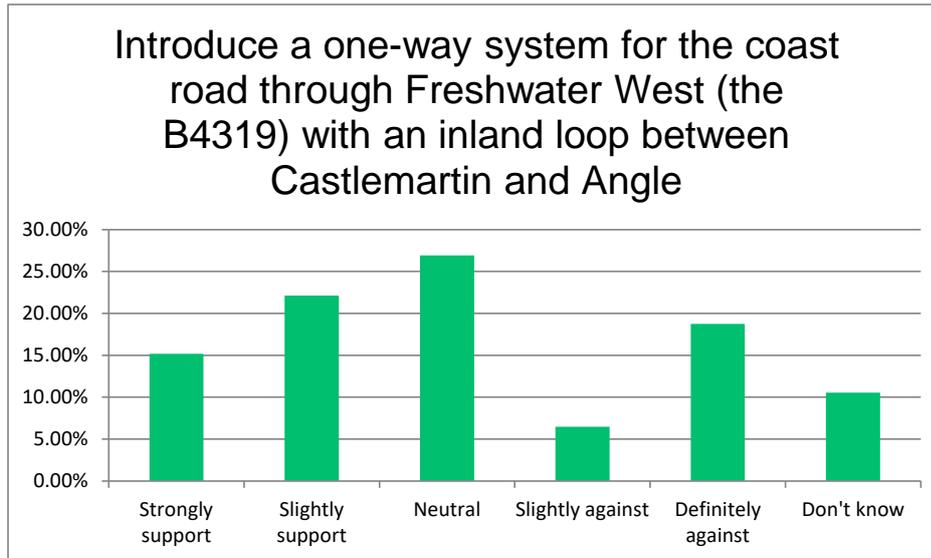
This receives a good level of support and would need there to be a safe drop off and pick up point at or near the Main Car Park and clear information / direction to drivers of these vehicles to park in suggested locations.

In terms of public transport, the existing service is well received but it is acknowledged that it has a limited timetable and frequency of operating times.



Nearly 80% support the enhancement of the service although clearly this has direct and significant resource implications for the operating and funding partners.

The idea to consider a one-way system for the coast road in peak periods a has generated a mixed response and varying opinions (although the local opinion is closely in line with the overall sentiment). This could create confusion among motorists and would be opposed by some tourist businesses who trade off the ease of access to the beach.



Overall, however, this represents a longer-term option to be reviewed at a later date, The consideration of a complete road closure generates a high degree of opposition and it will impact on the connectivity of the two villages at Castlemartin and Angle (please see table within Appendix One).

Summary (road and traffic management initiatives)

The table below provides a summary of the initiatives considered and the level of support for the respective possible options:



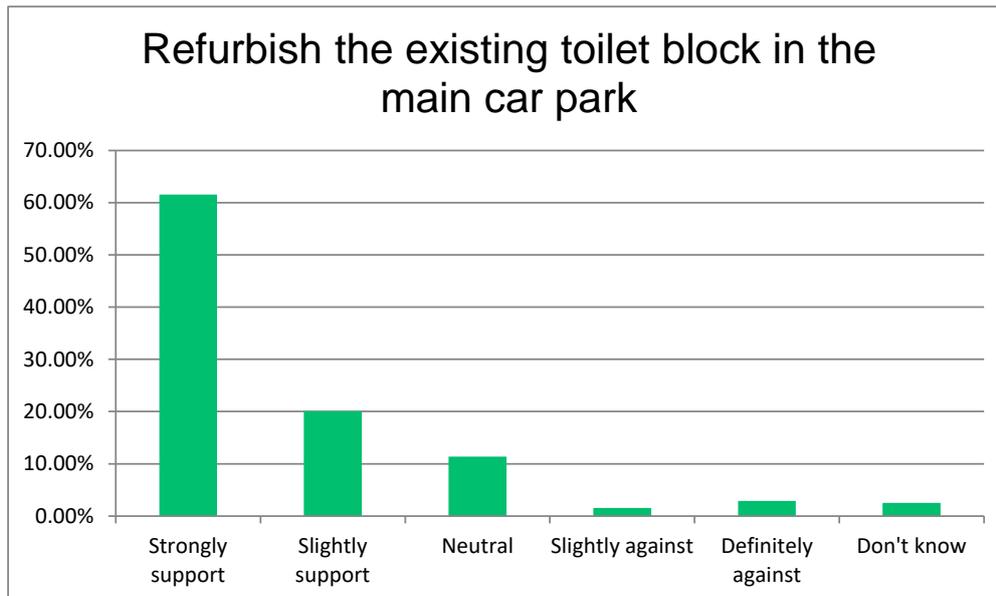
Summary levels of support - traffic management			
Initiative	Support strongly	Support slightly	Total (in support)
Introduce a one-way system for the coast road through Freshwater West (the B4319) with an inland loop between Castlemartin and Angle	15%	22%	37%
Extend (make permanent) the current parking rules order on the main road for no overnight parking (due to expire towards end of 2022).	32%	15%	47%
Increase resources to enforce parking rules in peak periods	30%	26%	56%
Increase the extent of the section of the main road with double yellow lines to help avoid parking on both sides of the road in the narrow sections	47%	20%	67%
Enhance public transport provision to Freshwater West (more frequent and better-timed Coastal Cruiser service) with dedicated bus drop off area	60%	19%	79%
Close the road (B4319) for through traffic enabling car park access only (i.e. you can only go back the way you drive in)	7%	10%	16%
Coaches/ minibuses to be able to drop off only	38%	19%	57%

The lead initiatives in terms of support in the feedback are highlighted in yellow in the table. The initiatives which receive the highest level of support are further explored in the core management interventions in Section 5.0.

4.1.3 User services

The key point regarding a range of visitor services is that there is a need to strike a balance between high quality facilities which are fit for purpose to service beachgoers and to consider the possible point that new improved facilities might generate additional visitors which will put further pressure on capacity, safety and existing services such as the RNLI ‘station.’

In recognising this need for balance, there is a broad sense that the existing toilet is dated, somewhat ‘dingy’ and lacking in appropriate hygiene facilities (such as hot water).

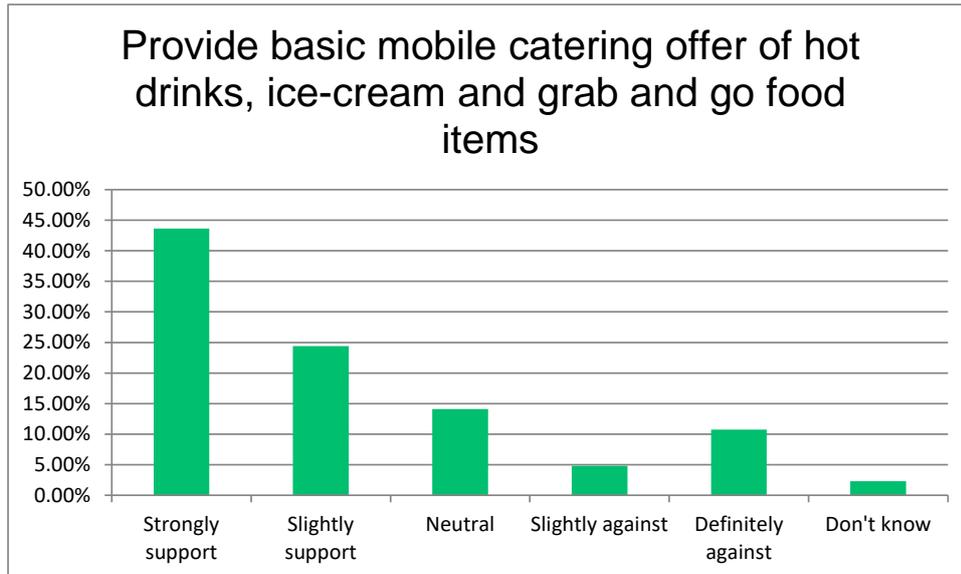


The initiative to upgrade or replace the facility receives strong support with a greater level of backing for refurbishment (more than 80% support in total, (72% among locals)).

In terms of catering, the departure of Café Mor in early 2022 presented an opportunity to pause and think through the various options for Freshwater West. The success and social media presence of Café Mor helped to generate additional visits and (at least anecdotally) to extend the average dwell-time and reduce the ‘churn’ on available car parking spaces. To date National Trust has not replaced the caterer on site but there have been issues around unlicensed ice cream units seeking to trade at the site. A new short term catering concession has now been tendered.

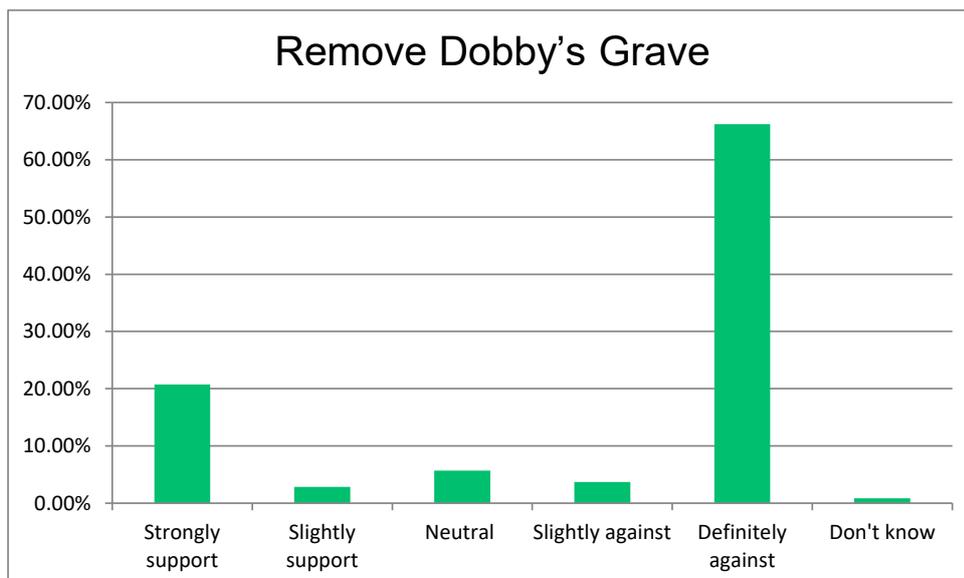
It is interesting to note that only 17% have any support for removing the catering altogether although this rises to 25% among locals.

As can be seen in the table below nearly 70% support the provision of a basic level of mobile food and beverage service and a hot food offer receives slightly less support at 60%. These proportions are lower among locals at 58% and 51% respectively but clearly local people tend to have lower dwell-times and less need for a food service.)



Dobby's Grave has become a very high-profile issue with numerous press stories at local regional and UK wide levels helping to drive people's interest and awareness of the role and significance of the film location of Freshwater West for well-known dramatic scenes for the movie franchise of Harry Potter. This research survey was also referenced in some of the press stories.

Whilst the Dobby connection has served to bring in new audiences and no doubt has brought economic benefits for tourism to the region, the additional footfall has caused concern in terms of capacity and environmental disturbance.

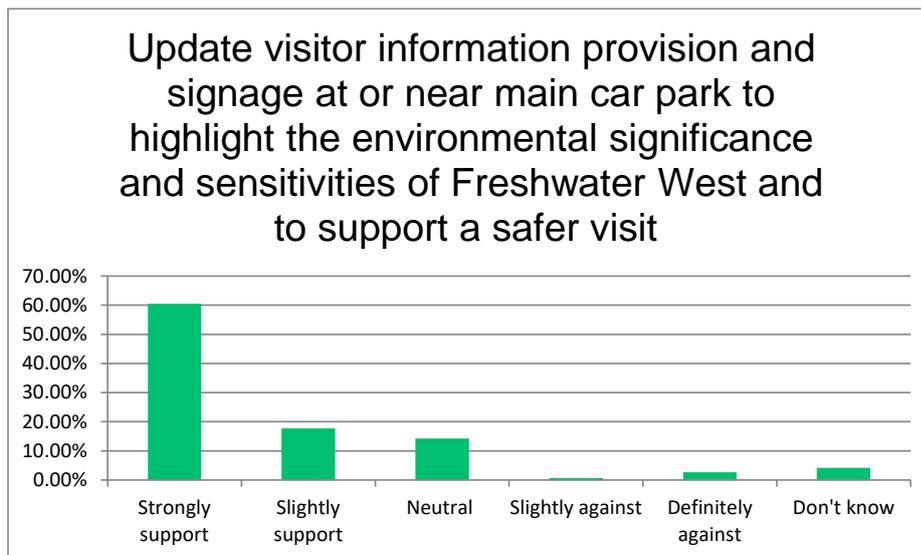


Overall, there is a high level of opposition to removing Dobby’s Grave with some two-thirds of respondents definitely against such a move.

This is discussed further in Section 5 but it does feel important to establish some form of middle ground to satisfy enthusiasts with minimal or no negative environmental implications. Removing Dobby’s Grave to a remote site is not considered a favourable option, with more than 60% of respondents expressing their opposition to this notion.

In terms of signage, the current range of boards and signs on site is fairly unobtrusive but it lacks a standard brand presentation and would benefit from a comprehensive overhaul to provide an appropriate balance between site orientation and safety messages, local wildlife interest and expected visitor behaviour in terms of reducing impact on sensitive landscape areas (including the dunes) and areas of ecological interest in the hinterland.

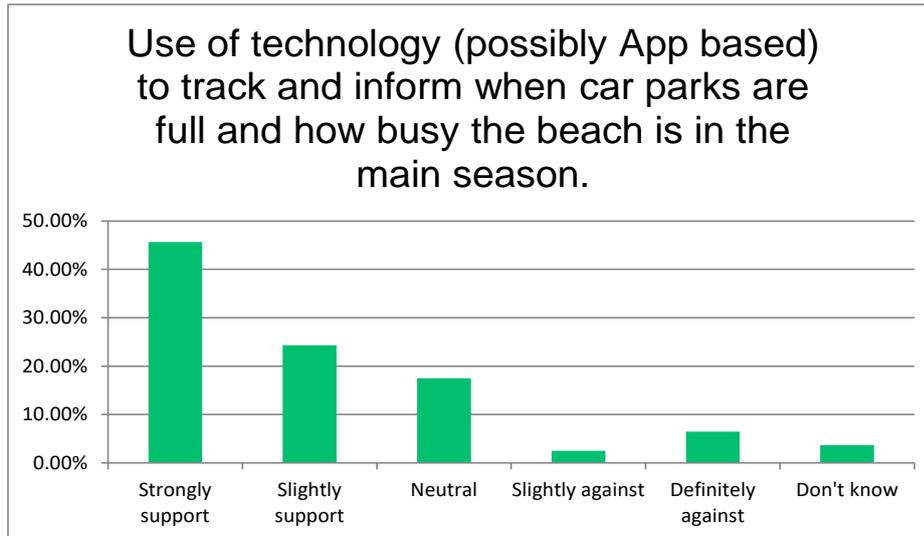
This gains strong support in the survey as shown in the table below:



The approach to signage and interpretation is further referenced in Section 5.

The use of technology to provide advanced information on capacity to motorists and others is now being used in several beach and countryside destinations across the UK.

There are further areas piloting different systems and the concept of the use of such technology does receive support among respondents (some 70%) as shown in the table below:



In the short term it is known that it could make sense to introduce a common approach in the Pembrokeshire National Park area and / or Pembrokeshire County and for this reason there is merit in carrying out a holding brie until there is further progress / development in this matter.

Summary (user services)

The table below provides a summary of the initiatives considered and the level of support for the respective possible options:



Summary levels of support - user services			
Initiative	Support strongly	Support slightly	Total (in support)
Refurbish the existing toilet block in the main car park	62%	20%	82%
Replace the existing toilet block with new facility in the main car park	37%	19%	56%
Replace the toilet block in the main car park with a new toilet block with additional facilities	38%	18%	56%
Provide basic mobile catering offer of hot drinks, ice-cream and grab and go food items	44%	24%	68%
Provide basic mobile catering plus hot food offer	37%	23%	60%
Remove concession for any form of catering unit from Freshwater West	10%	7%	17%
Remove Dobby's Grave	21%	3%	24%
Transfer Dobby's Grave to a suitable publicly accessible location off-site	8%	7%	15%
Update visitor information provision and signage at or near main car park	61%	18%	78%
Improve beach access path opposite the main car park to better serve all visitors	50%	23%	73%
Use of technology (possibly App based) to track and inform when car parks are full and how busy the beach is in the main season.	46%	24%	70%
Look to provide increased provision for overnight stays for motorhomes and campervans in the local area	33%	23%	56%

The leading initiatives in terms of support in the feedback are highlighted in yellow in the table. The initiatives which receive the highest level of support are further explored in the core management interventions in Section 5.0.

4.2 Workshop and pop-up consultation events – key considerations relating to future actions

4.2.1 Stakeholder workshop

The workshop held in June 2022 among the client team and strategic partners was staged to consider the research findings, particularly the primary online feedback and to agree the main parameters for the lead interventions proposed. Guided by architects Hiraeth, initial schemes for new vehicle management arrangements and car parking provision were presented and discussed.

Key points to emerge from the session included the need to simplify arrangements and, rather than introduce a new layer of complexity with a drop off system, to merely create an alternative overflow car parking area away from the shore frontage and in an inland setting alongside Gupton Farm. It is understood that the car parking area and ancillary overflow areas will need to be considered directly alongside management the public highway. Also, there is an identified need to gather further count information on vehicle movements to determine car parking need more accurately.

In addition, the drop off initiative was revised to represent an overflow provision in the satellite location at Gupton Farm to help reduce the level of additional journeys between the beach and the farm.

4.2.2 Public consultation

In terms of the Second Tranche of pop-up events, four main questions were asked and explored as follows:

- What do you feel car parking arrangements at Freshwater West should aspire to be like?
- What is your priority for a better experience for visitors?
- To ensure a healthy natural environment at Freshwater West, what would be acceptable to stop or start doing?
- What would you do to encourage responsible and respectful visits to Freshwater West?

In terms of the main comments received in response to the questions, many were about parking:

- ‘More parking needed’ or ‘Extend car parking’ (or similar - 5 comments)
- ‘No overnight parking’ or ‘Overnight parking stopped’ (or similar - 4 comments)
- ‘No charge for parking’ or ‘Free to all please’ (or similar – 9 comments)

- 'Charging not so much an issue' (4)
- 'Disabled Parking Facilities' (1)
- 'The car park would be more efficient if it was manned' (1)
- 'More passing places' (1)
- 'Double Yellow lines' (1)

There were a range of comments about Dobby's Grave:

- 'Remove Dobby's Grave' (4)
- 'Keep Dobby's Grave' (1)
- Use Dobby's Grave as an opportunity for charitable purposes (2)

Views on the catering or other food offer were mixed:

- 'Remove café' (5)
- Keep café (4)

A handful of comments relating to the fact that the beach is not a safe swimming beach

- 'The public have to realise that Freshwater West is not a safe swimming beach' (6)

A number of comments about sanitation, cleanliness and the environment:

- 'More toilets' or 'like the toilets' (5)
- 'Like the recycling' or 'more dog waste bins' (14)
- 'Education on environmental issues' or 'Signs about the SSSI' (12)
- 'Not too much signage' (1)

Full details of the responses and pop-up sessions are set out in Appendix Two.

5.0 Visitor management interventions / actions

Core visitor management interventions

Our research programme and consultation has identified a number of core interventions to balance the impact on the natural environment in tandem with improved management of visitor flows and behaviour.

The research programme has highlighted that many people have a strong attachment to the unspoilt nature of the beach and surrounds and consequently the planned intervention are intended to retain this sense of place but also to enhance the visitor experience and reduce where possible the negative impacts on the wider site.

The initiatives aim to adopt a coherent and comprehensive approach and the interventions proposed are inter-linked (and are not intended to be introduced in isolation). For example, the revised layout of the car park is directly related to the proposed approach for overflow provision at Gupton and overall improved interpretation and messaging.

The core interventions are as follows:

- **Car parking and access (Main Car Park and new overflow at Gupton Farm)**
- **Toilets**
- **Interpretation and messaging**

In addition to the Core Interventions, a range of proposed supporting and ‘supplementary’ actions are set out in the next sections (5.4 and 5.5).

5.1 Car parking and access

Introduction

As outlined in the survey, the vast majority of visitors to Freshwater West travel by car and it is important that the level of parking provision is appropriate to its location and environment. A solution has been developed at managing visitors better by offering improved services in order to reduce the negative effects of too many vehicles on the environment, the visitor experience, safety and on the local community. The outline carparking proposals aim to provide a coordinated strategy which reduces parking on the main road, improves the circulation and capacity of the Main Car Parking area and provides a designated overflow (in peak periods) at the remote location of Gupton Farm.

The Main Car Park is inevitably the focal point for most visitors to Freshwater West and as such is also the main ‘pinch-point’ in terms of congestion at peak times.

There are three designated areas and the current space provision is as follows:

- Main Car Park able to accommodate some 35 vehicles plus an extra 60 when the overflow is operational;
- North car park (14 spaces)
- Quarry car park (8 spaces)

In the order of 60 vehicles can park on the road (between the Quarry and Main Car Parks). In addition, some 14 cars can be accommodated within the layby. The overall total is less than 200 spaces (191).

The biggest management challenge is ensuring car parking provision is provided in a way that is safe and can effectively absorb and manage the traffic flows without significant congestion issues. A key driver for this intervention is to ensure visitor and vehicular safety and efficiency of flows.

Issues

The poor layout and configuration of the Main Car Park signify that the car park not only is unable to absorb high numbers of vehicles to park but also fails to allow circulation and movement for vehicles to drop off, turn round and exit the site and beachside area.

The key issues for the car park can be summarised as follows:

- Parking area is currently very informal and 'ad hoc' which provides a significant health and safety risk currently
- Poor quality of surfacing and infrastructure
- Reaches capacity on peak days
- No entry and exit points (lack of directional instructions to motorists threatens road and pedestrian safety)
- No spaces for disabled users or service vehicles
- Limited direct revenue generation to support maintenance
- Unregulated use by campervans and motorhomes (need for agreed approach) which heighten congestion on peak days

As noted, there is major congestion at peak times in and around the main carpark which lends weight to the need for a remote overflow to absorb some of the peak demand. The current off-road capacity for vehicles is relatively low for peak day levels of arrivals and once the Main Car Park is full, there is no obvious alternative place to try to park at or near the

site and there is no dedicated turning area to allow vehicles to easily leave. There are no specific arrangements for minibuses and other group transport.

What the research and consultation is telling us about the main carpark:

- Support from just under 70% (50% strongly support) – ‘well overdue a ‘refresh’
- Currently a ‘random free for all’
- Marked bays would help drivers - designated parking bays may help to park more vehicles, more safely
- Lack of parking encourages people to park on the roadside, damaging the verges and creating bottlenecks
- Entry and exit points could benefit users and road safety
- Leave the area as natural as possible and retain beauty of the landscape
- Some believe money better spent on other things!
- More clarity needed in terms of decisions on use of overflow area (many do not understand why not open more often “the back field needs to remain open”)
- Significant comments on desire to make only minimal changes (maintain as a ‘wild place’)
- Café Mor’s departure may reduce pressure
- Concern that any improvements will ‘pave the way’ for charges to be introduced
- Better parking may encourage more people to visit

In terms of a remote overflow arrangement:

- Also support from just under 70% (41% strongly support)
- Absolutely brilliant idea (brilliant idea for when its busy)
- Not suitable for surfers – how will surfers manage with this scheme
- Parking has to be away from periphery of beach
- Takes pressure off Freshwater West while still allowing access
- This would help prevent the road becoming blocked.
- Any drop off area needs space for kit and equipment
- Allow the existing car park to act as a natural determinant of visitor numbers
- Needs to work for pick up too
- This could deter dangerous parking
- Don't use the campsite for a car park.
- Reduces risk of inappropriate parking while allowing people to access the beach
- Formal organisation of what actually happens in a very messy way.
- Not sure this would work without lots of staffing

- This would allow for the ‘expansion’ of parking facilities whilst maintaining the natural surroundings of the beach.
- Hope that providing a car park facility would not spoil the lovely camping experience
- Why not add more parking?

Rationale for suggested intervention

The increasing popularity of outdoor recreation has created a major pinch point on peak days at Freshwater West with the car park reaching capacity leading to a traffic congestion, and incidences of inconsiderate roadside parking. The use of onsite wardens has helped to manage visitors but there is a need to consider options to help relieve the pressure further on these days.

The main rationale for the proposed approach is as follows:

- The ad hoc arrangements are not fit for purpose, create a poor sense of arrival and indeed present a health and safety risk.
- There is strong stakeholder and user support for addressing the current inadequate arrangements.
- There is a further imperative to reduce the number of vehicles on the roadside and to reduce the visual impact of parked cars along the coast.
- Whilst the planning authority does not wish to permit increased parking capacity at beachside locations there is a strong case for presenting an overall plan which consolidates some of the existing provision in an off-road site with improved circulation and layout.

In addition, it is acknowledged that improvements to the car park are necessary for equality of access. There is also a need to look to accommodate the mobile catering unit and surf school in a more appropriate, safer position

Proposal (Revision of layout)

It is recognised that the National Park planning authority is opposed to creating larger overall parking areas and consequently we believe it is important to devise an approach which improves the flow and capacity without a significant overall increase in parking spaces.

It is proposed to:

- Reconfigure the existing car park over a larger surface area
- Retain the North Car Park more or less as is but retaining the option to introduce charging (subject to improvements to the layout and surfacing)
- Close the Quarry Car Park
- Absorb some of the on-road parking capacity within the designated parking area
- Extend the double yellow lines north of the car park
- Prevent car parking in front of the car park but some road layby parking to be retained
- Develop an overflow area at Gupton Farm (two options considered) during the peak season
- Provide improved locations for catering and surf school
- Introduce designated disabled bays, preferably with beach views
- Relocation of surf school (one option to locate alongside RNLI at beach during peak season)
- Allocate the large layby for coach / bus drop offs and minibuses



Lead: National Trust in collaboration with PCC

Timeframe: 12-24 months

Indicative resources: to be fully costed

Please see drawings below:

- Freshwater West Main Car Park
- Gupton Farm Overflow (2 options)
- Approach Road Plan



Visual impression of proposed new scheme



Visual showing aerial view of proposals



SK 301.1 MAIN CAR PARK PLAN
SCALE 1:250 @ A1, 1:500 @ A3

Hiraeth. 2211 SK 301 Rev.

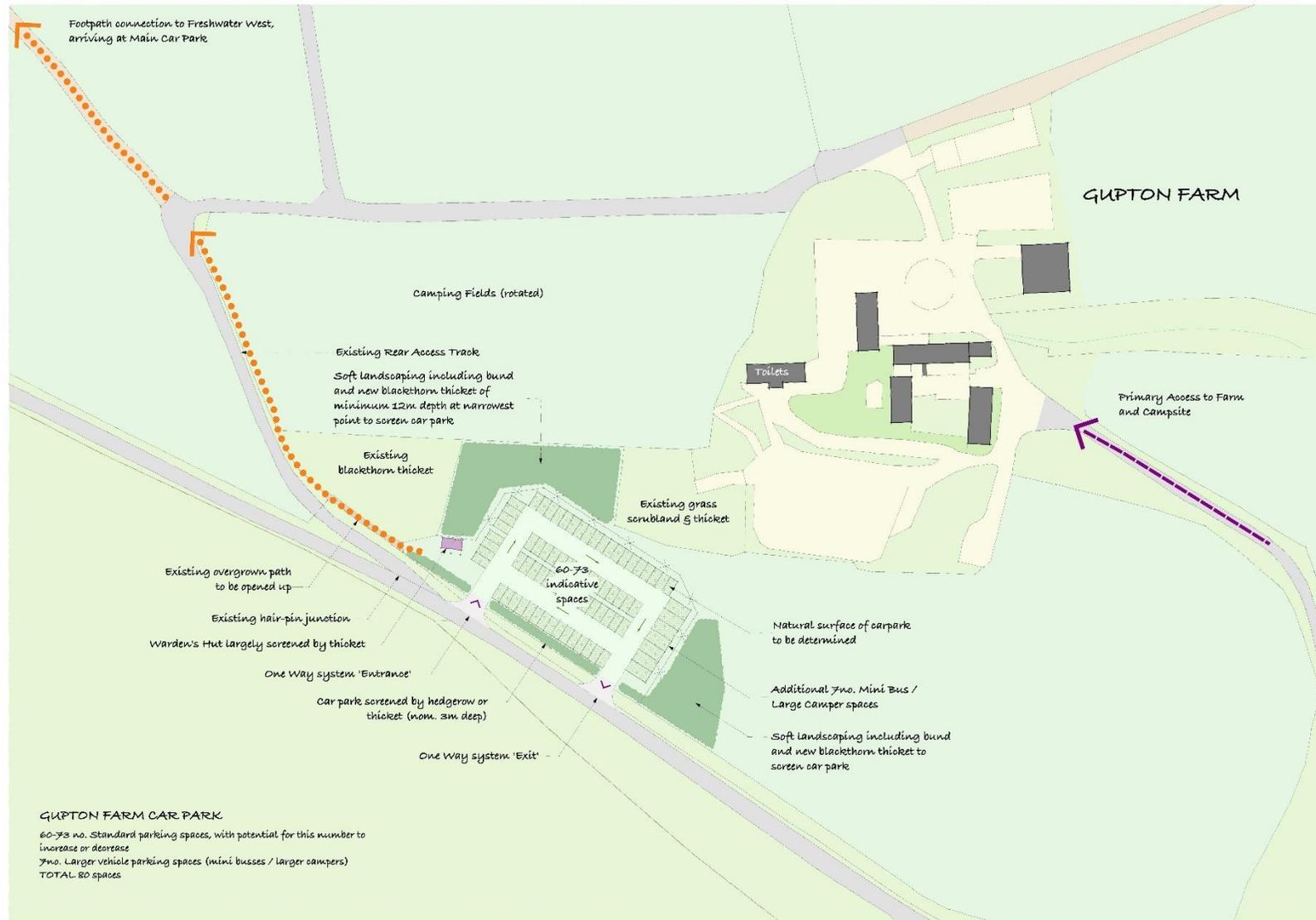
NATIONAL TRUST
FRESHWATER WEST

Proposed:
Main Car Park Plan

Subj: 1:250R A1 1:500R A3 Date: 01/21

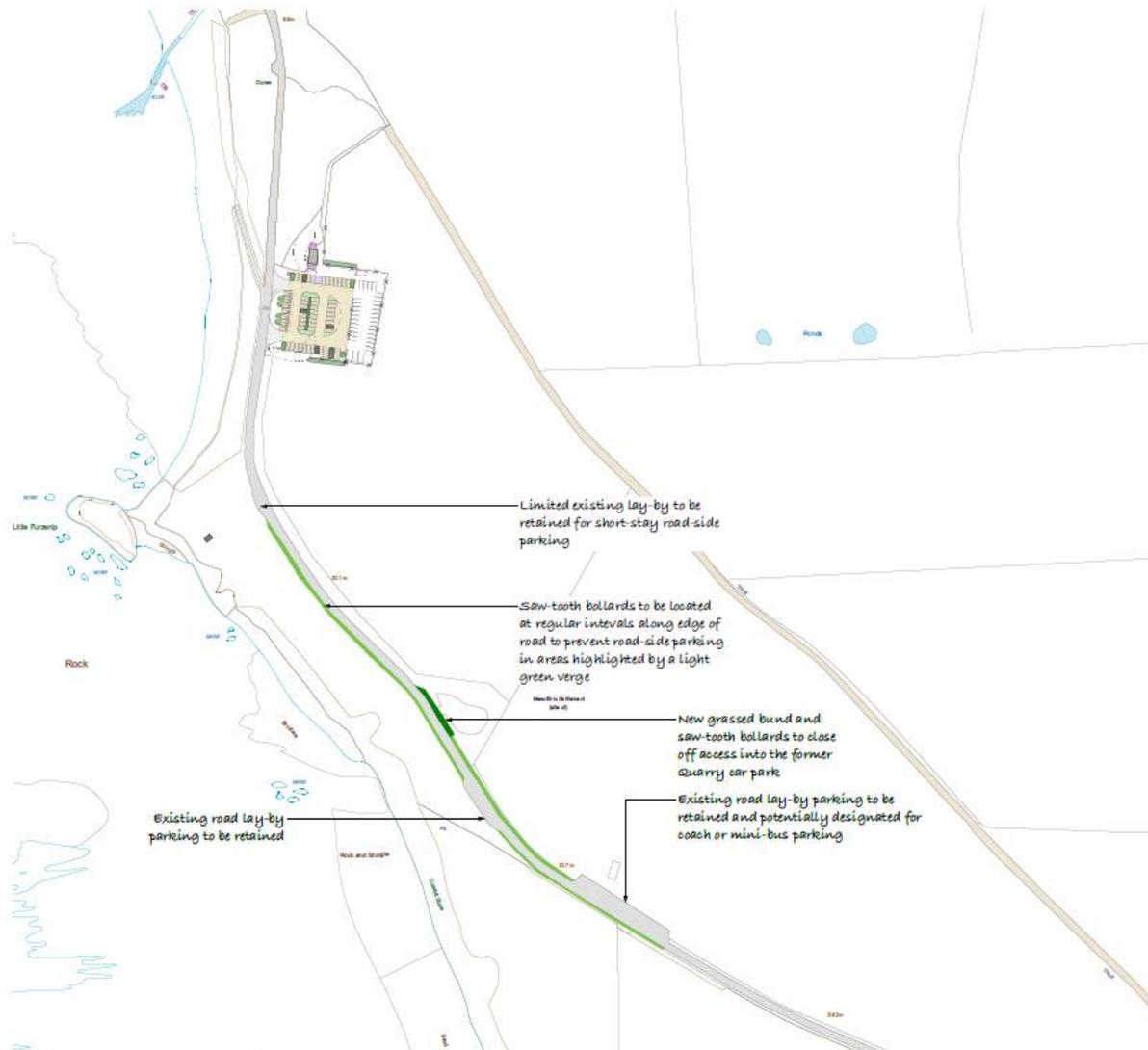
02920351645 | office@hiraetharchitecture.co.uk
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Hiraeth. 2211 SK 305 Rev.
 NATIONAL TRUST
 FRESHWATER WEST
 Proposed
**Gupton Farm Parking
 Plan**
 Scale 1:5000@ A1 1:10,000@ A3 Date 01/21
 02920351645 | office@hiraetharchitecture.co.uk
 The Mallings | East Tyndal St | Cardiff | CF24 5EA
© not scale from this drawing | all dimensions to be verified on site | fully endorsed if all discrepancies | copyright © hiraeth architecture



SK 201.1 APPROACH ROAD PLAN
 SCALE 1:2000 @A1



Saw-tooth bollarding to be used along edge of road to prevent road-side parking



New grassed bund and saw-tooth bollarding to close off access into the former quarry car park

Hiraeth. 2211 SK 201 Rev.
NATIONAL TRUST
 FRESHWATER WEST
 Proposed:
Approach Road Plan
 Scale: 1:20000 A1 Date: 01/21
 0292 0351 645 | office@hiraetharchitecture.co.uk
 The Millings | East Tyndal St | Cardiff | CF24 5EA

Design considerations

The layout for the main car park and surrounds aims to achieve a careful balance between providing car parking spaces to address the demand, safeguarding the protected landscape, enhancing health and safety and management of the space. A key driver and target outcome has been to formalise and increase the number of spaces within the main beach car park in order to reduce and relocate parking that currently dominates the road edges and impacts the landscape setting. Further 'overflow' parking is then provided on a seasonal basis (most likely through permitted development (28-day rule) initially at Gupton Farm to replace the over-flow parking previously provided at the main carpark.

Having established the maximum potential parking capacity within the main beach carpark, the numbers have been reigned back slightly to afford the opportunity for areas of 'soft' landscaping to be integrated into the layout. This will give it some breathing space and avoid an urban solution to what is a rural landscape. In this regard, the aim is to reduce the physical and visual impact of the harder traffic surfaces, and bed the carpark within the landscape more successfully. The soft landscaping areas will also be critical to the implementation of a sustainable drainage scheme on the site. It is proposed that the planting should largely be indigenous grasses of various heights, together with bunds and avoiding trees which would be incongruous in the context.

Use of the carpark by coaches to drop off larger groups is something that cannot obviously be avoided but needs to be managed for safety and to avoid congestion. The carpark arrangement therefore provides an allowance for the necessary turning radii required by coaches using the car park. This does not hinder the layout, but provides a reasonably efficient 'In' and 'Out' arrangement grid into which rows of car parking can be arranged. It was agreed that provision is not required for coaches to park and remain in the carpark. However, a way of managing them entering, unloading and leaving in a forward gear to return later has been provided.

The layout for the main carpark provides:

- 7 accessible spaces, orientated to benefit from the views to the sea
- 73 standard parking spaces. To reduce the impact of this number, and to account for seasonal fluctuation, 28 of these spaces are retained as a grassed areas of the carpark
- 6 larger vehicle parking spaces for mini busses or larger campers

The arrangement seeks a defined separation between pedestrian and vehicle areas for safety, concentrating an area for a food van, and a potential location for the surf school

(shown in the plan but currently under review as part of this study) in a margin along the north edge of the site adjacent to the toilet block. A break in the lines of parking provides access for cleaners /food deliveries/ bin collection etc.

The toilet block itself has been extended to the north to provide 2 additional accessible toilets, but it is agreed that a Changing Places WC is not required in this location. The block is further extended to the south to provide a warden's kiosk. Bins, signage and interpretation would also be focussed on the area around this kiosk.

We have worked on the following assumptions:

- The planning argument will be to not increase overall parking numbers but to show them relocated, with the aim of removing all parking from the roadside and improving the setting.
- Part of the roadside (lay-by) parking - being outside of National Trust ownership – would be retained, and the large lay-by could be allocated for larger camper parking or coach parking
- The aim otherwise is to remove most parking from the roadside and quarry areas, with these numbers consolidated within the new main carpark and overflow at Gupton Farm. The North Car Park will remain in situ.
- We have suggested 'Dragons' teeth to physically prevent parking on verges
- The car park layout necessitates the removal of some of the existing grass bank along the south edge of the site. If we have to retain this bank and route the cars/coaches around it, the possible parking numbers will significantly reduce and critically we will manage fewer accessible spaces in a row orientated towards the sea-view. We believe that this is a man-made addition however and therefore of limited value in the context of the proposed improvements.

[At Gupton Farm \(seasonal overflow\)](#)

Approximately 60-73 standard overflow parking spaces have been indicated in one of the **two options** shown for the siting of the Gupton Farm carpark overflow and up to 85 in the other (this number can be adjusted up or down if necessary). There are an additional larger vehicle spaces shown. The aim with the overflow carpark is to ensure that the area is well screened to reduce its visual impact from the road and also from within the farm camping fields. To this end, large thickets are proposed, to surround the car park. Signage will likely be necessary, but we envisage that this would be removable in type and only used when the car park is in use.

The proposals for the main car park recognise that the car will continue to be the core mode of transport to Freshwater West however, further actions are suggested in the Action Plan to encourage visitors to use more sustainable modes of travel to visit and move around the area in a way that supports the transition to a low carbon and net zero economy, with a particular emphasis on promoting active travel.

Car parking charges

There is no doubt that the introduction of car parking charges at countryside sites stir up strong feelings and there is inevitably a resistance as many people do not wish to pay for something that hitherto has been free of charge. Nevertheless, in the last 10 to 15 years it has become commonplace across the UK for forestry visitor sites, country parks and beachside locations to introduce a charge to help generate income to offset site maintenance and operational costs.

From the Feedback on Emerging Options, it is unsurprising that there is a significant number of people who have expressed their preference not to introduce car parking charges at Freshwater West. However, it is known that most beaches in Pembrokeshire and indeed across Wales and the UK do now operate a charging policy. PCC and PCNPA also charge at most of their outdoor recreation and visitor sites. The National Trust has also introduced car parking charges at their key visitor sites. Among visitors from further afield there is a lower level of resistance to parking fees, which seems in part to be the acceptance that charging is more of the 'norm' and often signifies that there is an improved range and standard of visitor infrastructure. It is generally recognised that if the visitor infrastructure is to incorporate better facilities with a higher degree of staff resourcing then this can only be justified and sustained through car parking revenues.

We believe there is a sound rationale for introducing car parking charges alongside the proposed project to invest in improving the onsite car parking and toilet facilities and experience at Freshwater West (including the seasonal presence of a Ranger). The consolidation of a high proportion of available car parking spaces into an extended site at the main car park provides a stronger rationale for a payment system as it is more worthwhile financially for a larger number of spaces (86 as currently proposed in the main car park) to help meet and offset the set up and operational costs. The introduction of charging would need to ensure that there is a robust plan in place for managing the full range of spaces across the site and adjacent areas. There would also need to be a consistent and robust system in place (perhaps pay by phone only at the North car park, the overflow at Gupton and for the roadside laybys). During the initial period, it is anticipated that the Gupton Farm overflow arrangement is likely to be based on a reduced cost or free

of charge to encourage more people to use that location and walk to the beach along the footpath.

From the user research, there is inevitably resistance to charges being introduced at Freshwater West. The user research broadly showed a 50:50 split with those who oppose (51% overall) and those who support charges (or do not know). However, this is notably stronger among locals (73%) and there may be ways of offering local resident discounts which received strong support in the research responses (although it is recognised there would be an associated financial cost associated with introducing and managing a local discount scheme).

In our view, it is imperative alongside the notice of the car parking charging structure to show why raising income is important and what the amount collected is able to deliver on site to maintain and improve the facilities and overall experience.



To satisfy regular dog walkers, it is worth considering an initial free period of 30 minutes or 1 hour or to allow free parking before say 10am (primarily for dogwalkers and locals) and free after 6pm outside of the main season.

In the first year of introducing charges, it is also worth considering a seasonal based structure whereby charges in Winter are either nominal or based on a voluntary contribution (similar to the model used by the National Park owned sites). Clearly as a membership organisation, the National Trust will need to allow Members to park free of charge on displaying their annual membership cards.

The preferred option is to introduce a meter-based system with or without a pay by phone option. Given the relatively remote location there is a need to be conscious of potential issues of vandalism and power supply. Systems involving a pay barrier or Automatic

Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) are less likely to be practicable in this setting and would need a greater degree of maintenance support and vandal-proofing.

In the peak summer holidays, the onsite ranger would direct traffic which presents an opportunity to meet and greet visitors creating a positive sense of welcome. The Ranger could also assist with any payment if visitors are having difficulty using the pay over the phone system. Additionally, a company would be required to enforce the system (we do not feel this burden should fall to a member of staff).

5.2 Upgraded and extended toilet block

Introduction

The toilet block is located within the site for the Main Car Park and is well located to service visitors on arrival and departure as well as those needing to use the toilet during the trip. The toilet block serves its function but is visually unattractive and is not to the standard of modern recreation sites in the UK and does not match the quality of most National Trust facilities.

It operates with a septic tank system (two large 1,000-gallon septic tanks).

It has mains (cold) water supply but no electricity supply. There is no grey waste or ELSAN point on site.

The toilet block lies in a dip in the landscape in an unobtrusive position with a green roof (indeed some visitors have commented on the survey that they didn't realise there are toilets on site). However, this shaping of the landscape in this part of the site means that rainwater does often form a pool at the entrance to the men's and women's toilets. Also, the area outside is often used for changing by watersport users and it can become rather dusty, muddy and unappealing.



The toilet block itself receives very few complaints to the service operator Danfo compared to its other sites (which are often closer to centres of population and receive a degree of anti-social behaviour. Whilst the toilet block remains open on a permanent basis it does not have any lighting which restricts its use.

Whilst not intending to create a facility which will generate additional use by specialist activity participants and possibly motorhome owners there is a need to bring the facility up to date and make it more fit for purpose to deal with the level of throughput at the site and the wider beach.

As with the car parking solution, a balance needs to be struck between better infrastructure for users and managing visitor flows in peak times.

The key drivers for this intervention are to ensure high standards of visitor infrastructure, meeting the core needs of beachgoers and other site users and health and hygiene in a safe well-maintained environment.

Having a high-quality, well-maintained ablution block will also provide part of the rationale for onsite parking charges (discussed elsewhere in this report).



Illustrative exemplar only

Issues

- Dated facility – in need of upgrading
- Poor quality of surfacing and infrastructure
- Issues with rainwater ‘pooling’ around entrance
- No hot water
- Poor quality of finishes and overall provision (e.g., flooring and sanitary units)
- No spaces for service vehicles

- Limited direct revenue generation to support maintenance
- Some use by campervans and motorhome owners in terms of flushing away waste into toilet bowls
- Uninviting presentation of facility and signage / information

What the research and consultation is telling us about the existing main carpark

Pros

- Support from more than 80% (62% strongly support)
- Good toilets are an essential facility
- It's not a bad toilet block but probably needs refreshing.
- A bit dark and dingy and in need of an upgrade
- Some support for outdoor showers
- provide better access for those with limited mobility
- If decide to refurbish, please make it with a turf roof and solar panel and battery for lights.
- Would like it to be made more visible and easier to find
- Replace with a more sustainable and environmentally sensitive build. Use SUDS and reed beds
- The existing toilet block is of low visual impact
- More female toilets please.
- Poor quality facilities encourage disrespect
- Needs better rubbish / bin system

Cons

- Some consider it to be fine as it is and it seems to be maintained very well already
- Improving it would encourage more overnight parking and camping
- Will only serve to increase traffic flows
- It has working toilets and running water and its nearly always clean.

Rationale for suggested intervention

- There is good support for an enhanced facility and the preference (i.e., receiving a higher level of support) is for a refurbishment and or extension rather than a replacement.
- There is a clear opportunity to dovetail the proposed enhancement works with the proposals for the wider car park and also alongside proposed operational changes such as the introduction of parking charges
- The volume of visitors means there are often queues (particularly for the ladies' toilets) and the facilities are inadequate to cope with high demand.

- The other key aspect for this intervention is aiming to meet the high standards of toilet and other facilities across most National Trust recreation and other sites.
- As with the car park some improvements to the toilet block are needed to ensure better equality of access.

Proposal (Revision of layout)

Whilst the scale of the facility needs to be in keeping with the wider setting there is a benefit in extending the footprint to allow more spaciousness and number of people it can accommodate at any one time

There is an opportunity to make the facility an exemplar in renewable energy to bring light and hot water provision and consequently improved hygiene levels.

Also, with a mixture of landscaping and floor coverings, the sense of welcome and appearance will be greatly improved.

It is proposed to:

- Extend the footprint to extend the provision of ladies' toilets and larger disabled space
- Introduce sustainable energy resources for hot water and lighting
- Integrate better with overall service provision (bins, recycling etc) with the mobile catering facility
- Better management of rainwater collection in this area and improved drainage
- Improved standards of materials including upgraded flooring surfaces.



Indicative image of upgraded toilet block. Source: Hiraeth Architecture

Lead: National Trust working in collaboration with PCC and PCNPA and others

Timeframe: 12-24 months

Indicative resources: Toilet Block - £150,000 for the extensions and refurbishment of the core area, excluding preliminaries, fees and contingency (subject to confirmation by QS, site surveys and detailed design work).

5.3 Interpretation, messaging and visitor information

Introduction

Effective interpretation and provision of visitor information provides an opportunity to connect people and the places they visit increasing their understanding of the place, environment and history. Critically, interpretation provides the means to effectively share messages, motivating and moving visitors to act appropriately to help protect the special value of the destination.

Interpretation and messaging will play a key role in supporting the delivery of the core outcomes for Freshwater West including contributing to continued environmental protection and management through educating visitors and adding positively to the visitor experience.

Issues

Currently, the public facilities are dated and appear to be in need of an upgrade.-There is some visitor information and interpretation at Freshwater West but this is in need of upgrading in terms of means of display, presentation and content (while still remaining unobtrusive and low key).

There is no standardised consistent presentation of interpretative material; the area includes a wide variety of signage styles and types. Provision at Freshwater West is not to the same quality as most other National Trust visitor sites, which detracts from the site.

What the research and consultation is telling us

The ratings for sense of arrival, beach cleanliness and accessibility are strong and positive.

The visitor research confirmed the importance of quality interpretation and information provision. Clearly, National Trust in general has a very positive reputation for the quality and standard of its visitor facilities.:

- Just under 80% of respondents supported the need to update visitor interpretation provision and signage at the Main Car Park to highlight the environmental significance of Freshwater West and to support a safer visit
- Important that interpretation educates people on the importance of this beach
- People need to understand the sensitive habitat and do their part in protecting it
- Environmental and safety signage is very important but it must be in keeping with what is there and not be overly branded
- Very careful to minimise visual impact – not too large and overt - avoid sign ‘clutter / pollution’
- Specific information needed on rips and dangers of Fresh West for any sort of sea activities, e.g., make sure tourist understand it’s not safe for children to swim

Rationale for suggested intervention

The vast majority of beach users behave responsibly but there were behaviours by a minority impacting on the beach and its sensitive environment. Research shows that when visitation occurs in an unmanaged fashion away from appropriately designed facilities, visitors are more likely to engage in risky or unauthorised behaviour.

There is an opportunity to refresh interpretation to include tangible information whilst providing positive messaging about visitor behaviour to keep the area special and unique whilst protecting its sensitive environment. The key driver is to ensure that any interpretation will retain authenticity and be sympathetic to the sense of place at Freshwater West whilst at the same time add to the visitor experience.

It will be important that safety messaging around beach usage is incorporated in any refresh of interpretation at Freshwater West.

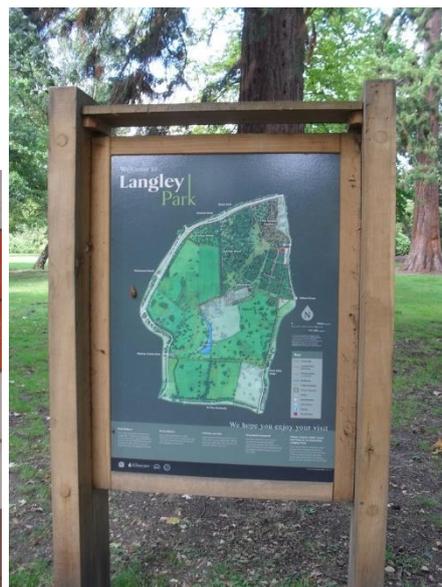
Proposal

A signage plan will need to be developed which is tailored to fit and reflect the overall proposals for Freshwater West (once these are agreed). The action plan presents an opportunity to take a holistic approach to the whole site and surrounds including the top of the footpath and beach arrival points. It is acknowledged that the existing signage has been developed in a piecemeal fashion with a range of signs, interpretation and information (such as bus timetables).

All interpretation and visitor information should be structured to align with the brand guidelines and messaging of the National Trust. The interpretation and visitor information proposition needs to be relevant to the site and be developed to appeal more strongly to

the key target audience (families and children), without losing more in-depth information valued by others. Future interpretive, and other, developments must avoid cluttering the site and diminishing the setting and its tranquil and unspoilt ambience. The proposal has the following components:

- Development of design template for Freshwater West, which aligns with National Trust brand values
- As part of the refreshment of the Main Car Park, inclusion of 3 high-quality interpretation /visitor information boards:
 - Board 1 located on the refurbished toilet block, which will focus on general information about Freshwater West
 - Board 2 located on the coastal path adjacent to the beach, which provides specific information on beach safety and the sensitive environment
 - Board 3 adjacent to the payment point in the car park , which will focus on general information about Freshwater West
- Introduction of (limited) low-impact directional signage including links to Gupton Farm and other footpath routes in the vicinity
- Car parking ‘expenditure’ board, to inform users on how car parking charges are being used to manage and maintain the area.



Information provision at Rainham Marshes and Langley Park

Lead: National Trust in collaboration with PCC

Timeframe: 12-24 months

Indicative resources: £30-50,000 (following National Trust guidelines and suppliers)

5.4 Action Plan – Supporting interventions

In addition to the key actions proposed for the Main Car Park, toilet block and overflow at Gupton Farm there are a range of further interventions which will contribute to a comprehensive and coherent approach to managing visitors and the environment at the site in a holistic way. Perhaps of highest priority among these is the need to have a clear stance and approach for Dobby's Grave and for the catering concession. In addition, the proposed relocation of the surf school (to an area immediately adjacent to the beach) in peak periods is deemed to be of high importance. The interventions are set out below alongside a range of ancillary aspects for the future effective management of Freshwater West.

5.4.1 Dobby's Grave

The creation of a memorial mound in the sand dunes to commemorate a figure from the Harry Potter movie series has become popular among enthusiasts of the 'franchise' (the so-called Potterheads). With growing numbers, it has become an increasingly contentious issue and clearly it does divide opinion.

There is a significant level of depositing materials in a natural setting (mostly socks and plastic pens) and also in colouring messages onto the stones from the beach and laying them onto the mound. There is also a significant degree of trampling of the dunes around the memorial mound which is growing to become quite obtrusive visually. A further concern about the 'Grave' is that it is sited near to two genuine memorials to people who lost their lives, and there is a question of whether this is appropriate and sensitive.

Different phases of the research programme provided different views, the initial user survey in Spring 2022 in which the respondents were predominantly local showed that a relatively small proportion of visits to Freshwater West are specifically for Dobby's Grave and this survey did uncover quite strong opinions relating to the negative impacts; many see it as being something that is unwelcome and the groundswell of opinion was to remove the memorial mound altogether in the majority of comments expressed in the initial research.

The next phase of online research feedback into the emerging options gained a wider reach among tourists and non-residents in the area¹ and it became clear that the grave does retain the support of a significant proportion of respondents. The second stage online research findings show that there is public support for retention of the Grave in some form and there is limited support for moving it to an alternative location in principle (although no precise arrangements were proposed within the Online Feedback response form).

On the positive side, it has become a focal point for like-minded groups and families to visit Pembrokeshire even if the stakeholder partners for Freshwater West would prefer not to have any additional peak time footfall.

On the negative side, it does contribute to littering and pollution, it is unsightly and detracts from the beach environment. However, there are also a significant number of local people who see it as an attraction that brings people to Pembrokeshire, and as such there is a recognition that local businesses (accommodation, shops, cafés etc.) are all benefitting from people who travel specifically for this reason. It is clear from the pop-up events that many visitors are prepared to travel significant distances (two hours or more) on a day trip just to see it.

It is clear that unchecked deposits of socks, pens and painted stones and other trinkets is damaging to the dunes and to local marine life, and so the situation requires careful management of some form.

There are considerations that attempts to manage it in situ may contravene planning laws, in that no planning consent has been given and that any attempt to manage and take responsibility will be an admission of liability for this.

It is wholly possible that the interest in this phenomenon may prove short-lived and whilst nobody knows how long it may continue, the overall consensus to emerge from the stakeholder workshop concludes that there is a need **to explore a middle ground** for a solution to this matter.

¹ The user survey did generate significant interest among Harry Potter followers with a degree of local and national press coverage and the over-riding response is to retain Dobby's Grave in some form. It is clear that this character and the scene in the film at this beach have a great deal of resonance with fans, and the act of paying tribute at the site is not only an act of solidarity with the character and what they represent, but is also clearly an act of solidarity with the other fans who have also visibly paid tribute.

Proposed approach

Given the need for further consideration and a collaborative approach, we propose a small task group is set up to consider how best to address Dobby's Grave.

It is recommended that any attempts to manage (whether by managing it in situ or removing it to an alternative site) should be approached in partnership with other groups as well as possibly different fan forums and social media sites. Any messaging should be echoed by all parties, in order to encourage fans to modify their behaviour appropriately, and to focus visits outside the main season.

This collaborative approach could also be adopted if the 'Grave' is moved to an alternative site (e.g., a local museum). The benefits of this would be the improved infrastructure at the new host site, and benefits of seeing additional visitors. However, there is still a significant risk that many people would still go to the beach, which has a geographic significance, and that large numbers of people may still deposit unwanted tributes there.

One option for the group to consider is for either a single local charity or a number of local charities to be invited to assist in the management of the site, possibly by providing volunteers to assist with messaging on site, and to assist in the collection of donations. Local charities could then benefit from what is donated. The mechanisms for this are unclear, but there would need to be messaging both on site and for people in advance of arriving so they know what to expect and what would be expected of them.

The way the Dobby memorial itself is managed would need to align with existing best practice including the Countryside Code (www.gov.uk/countryside-code) which uses the mantra Respect, Protect, Enjoy and urges visitors to 'leave no trace.'



Dobby's Grave			
Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To find a mutually acceptable solution to the Dobby's Grave phenomenon which allows a retention of some form of memorial in a managed way which does not involve littering or other forms of pollution at the beach	To establish lines of communication with fan groups to present the message about the damaging effects of the memorial and special interest visitors. The intention is to encourage behavioural change and an adapted way of paying tribute. The proposal is to seek a degree of self-policing from Harry Potter enthusiasts and to generate some income for one or more local charities and to encourage	Ongoing	NT with partners and collaboration with other groups. Need to establish communication channels and dialogue with fan groups

5.4.2 Onsite mobile catering

The catering offer at Freshwater West under Café Mor provided a high-end offer and the caterer was very successful through its social media and other channels to promote its site and encourage visits to Freshwater West. Whilst Freshwater West in general is not actively promoted by the National Trust nor the National Park nor Visit Pembrokeshire, the caterer did manage to get a strong following and generate significant volume of visitor traffic. The catering unit with its signature dishes of lobster rolls and other locally caught seafood did become a destination in its own right for many people. From the initial survey and other consultation discussions, it is estimated that at least 15% of throughput to the beach in the Summer primarily visited Freshwater West because of Café Mor.

The Café Mor operation was sited directly in the Main Car Park close to the road frontage. The food unit regularly had lengthy customer queues and did present health and safety concerns for vehicles and pedestrians

The responses to the feedback form research strongly favoured the provision of mobile food and beverage unit, albeit one that has a more basic level of menu and range of products.

A mobile catering unit providing hot drinks ice creams and grab and go items is supported by just under 70% of respondents (from the second round of primary research). The addition of a hot food offer is slightly lower support but nevertheless is around 60%.



Example of mobile catering unit serving range of refreshments and food options

As mentioned in Section 4 on the user research however, the proportions are lower among locals but are still positive at 58% and 51% respectively and clearly local people tend to have lower dwell-times and less need for a food service.

The National Trust is currently going through a tender exercise for a short-term contract which can be monitored as a pilot exercise to determine the longer-term options.

Proposed approach

Our suggested approach is to position the catering unit away from the direct roadside towards the rear of the newly configured car park with good access for deliveries and service vehicles and with safer areas to queue away from traffic flows. In our view, it will be easier to re-locate the catering position within the site under a new tenure.

There is a very low level of support for complete removal of a catering unit and it is clear that if left vacant then there will be attempts but unlicensed and unregulated ice cream providers and others to try to gain a presence at the beachside.

It is anticipated that the tender process will give weight to local produce, sustainable procurement, recyclable food packaging and minimal waste generation which all resonate with modern consumer preferences.

Catering Concession			
Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
<p>To source a high-quality mobile catering unit to service beach users with refreshments and basic food requirements. Also, to avoid unregulated and unlicensed use of site by ice cream providers and others</p>	<p>The proposal is that once the initial short-term tender for a catering operator to replace Café mor reaches its end to provide an annual licence for a competent experienced operator to provide a basic but well-presented and high-quality offer at the site with an appropriate pricing structure to meet the needs of locals and visitors.</p> <p>The intention supported by the research is to provide hot and cold drinks, ice creams and grab and go items. Some hot food items and specials could also be trialled over time.</p> <p>It is essential than packaging is minimised and all materials are recyclable</p>	<p>End of 2022 season</p>	<p>NT</p>

5.4.3 Surf school beach location option

The surf school run by Outer Reef is well established and has operated at the site for many years (more than 20 years). It also has a range of outdoor activity-based courses which it runs using Gupton Farm as a base.

The current position for the surf school is located in the Main Car Park adjacent to the plot used formerly by Café Mor. We are informed there is no formal planning consent relating to the surf school activity at the site but there is a clear distinction made between operating surf school lessons and the sale of any merchandise (the latter would require planning permission).

The current location did have some issues alongside the mobile catering unit in terms of areas of shared space which were used for queueing for food as well as for those getting equipped and briefed for surfing lessons. With the further need to allocate surf boards to users and then to carry them to the sea through the car park, the activity can absorb a significant space (particularly when community surf activities are run) which also presents a traffic and pedestrian safety issue.

It is acknowledged that the surf school tries to avoid use of Freshwater West in the peak summer periods and has alternative beaches in this part of Pembrokeshire where it can elect to operate on different days.

Proposed approach

In our view, there would be a strong benefit in removing the surf school activity from the car park to an area on the beach slipway adjacent or close to the RNLI cabin.

This would also make the operation of the surf school safer in terms of removing its customers away from the busy and potentially dangerous car park. It is important to highlight this proposed solution may not be the preferred route for the surf school operator.

This beachside location may become the preferred location throughout the year but, in our view, it should be introduced as a minimum for the peak summer season and should be trialled for the Easter, May half term and summer holidays, starting in 2023.

Surf school relocation			
Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To consider relocation of surf school	<p>The presence of the surf school activity base within the car park has a number of issues in terms of use of space, customer safety, increased congestion and conflicting needs of different user groups.</p> <p>There is an appropriate space in the area of the RNLI base which also has access via a lockable barrier entry point. This would</p>	Easter 2023	NT / surf school

	allow the mobile surf vehicle to issue equipment and carry our briefings directly on the beach.		
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5.5 Action Plan - Supplementary actions

In addition to the actions outlined in 5.2, the following tables outline a range of supplementary actions for consideration by the National Trust and other partners.

Access

The car will continue to be the core mode of transport to Freshwater West but actions are needed to encourage visitors to use more sustainable modes of travel to visit and move around the area. There is an on-going need to improve access and connectivity in a way that supports the transition to a low carbon and net zero economy, with a particular emphasis on promoting active travel.

Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To encourage greater use of public transport to Freshwater West	Work with public transport providers to enhance usage of the Coastal Cruiser bus service during the year and increase its frequency both during the summer and other times during the year	On-going	PCC / PCNPA

Product development

Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To remove more motorhomes and similar vehicles away from the beachside car park to a dedicated area for overnight stays	Increase number of motorhome pitches at Gupton to relieve pressure from Main Car Park. Seek formal consent.	1 to 2 years	NT



Brilliant Basics

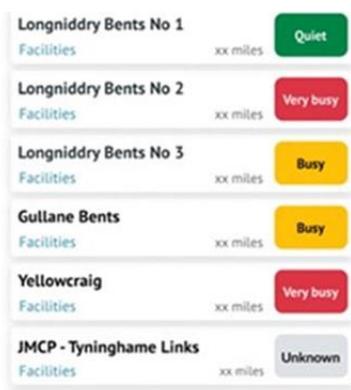
Ensuring that the basic ‘fixtures and fittings’ that hold the visitor experience together and by which visitors often judge destinations and are often unseen and undervalued are acknowledged and funded. Some elements like Rangers, toilets, signage and litter collection, are mainly the responsibility of the National Trust and PCC. Others may be provided and delivered by a mix of providers.

Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
<p>To establish appropriate operational mechanisms to ensure the effective management and maintenance of Freshwater West</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agreeing who does what: formalising Terms of Reference of the Partnership ‘Steering Group.’ ▪ Assessing destination management against agreed targets ▪ Ensure clear operational programmes and protocols are in place with regards to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Beach management ○ Maintenance of the toilet block and car parking ○ Waste management ○ Environmental maintenance ○ Signage and waymarking ▪ Investigate how to incorporate the Addo (Visit Wales): visitor pledges into the management and maintenance of facilities at Freshwater West. 	<p>On-going</p>	<p>NT</p>

Technology

The digital economy has led to new challenges for destination management but also new opportunities through harnessing the power of data to improve management and insight. There is an opportunity for the National Trust to build a knowledge-based strategy for destination management at Freshwater West.

Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To investigate the better harnessing of technology and data in real-time to provide meaningful insight and leadership support for the future management and maintenance of Freshwater West.	Undertake feasibility work (cost/benefit analysis) to consider the use and application of data driven solutions to improve site management, which could include for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sensors to monitor car park usage ○ Freshwater West app: interactive map highlighting how busy the beach is and alternative locations ○ Use of Variable Message signs 	24 months	NT



Example of use of technology to show busy sites



Marketing			
Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To ensure that future messaging does not increase the profile of Freshwater West as a destination among visitors	<p>Continuing the work being carried out by the National Trust and PCNPA to 'de-market' Freshwater West as a 'beach destination' for visitors, particularly for the family market as the water is an inherently dangerous body of water.</p> <p>This includes working with partners such as Visit Pembrokeshire, Pembrokeshire County Council and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority to ensure, for example, consistent marketing messages are agreed and responses to media enquiries are refused.</p> <p>Also consider the wording on the National Trust's website which currently promotes the beach as <i>"Freshwater West is a must-visit beach in Pembrokeshire. It's breathtakingly beautiful, perfect for family adventures and a favourite with watersports enthusiasts."</i> Information is also provided on the dangerous nature of the water.</p>	Immediate / ongoing	NT



Monitoring			
Aim	Project Description	Timeframe	Lead
To create a deliverable framework to assess the effectiveness of visitor and environmental monitoring at Freshwater West	<p>There is a need to monitor the situation which is evolving to fully understand the impact of the proposed interventions and the level of visitor throughput to the site to allow for effective management over time. It is likely that some use will increase and other uses may decrease which already appears to be the case with the relocation of Café Mor.</p> <p>It will be important to put in place ongoing and possibly additional usage counters specifically to the Main Car Park. This will also help to build a profile of trends of users and allow year-on-year comparison.</p> <p>This initiative will need to align with the Brilliant Basics and the terms and reference of the Steering Group.</p>	Annual	NT, PCC, PCNPA

6.0 Summary remarks and next steps

Freshwater West is a special place and, as demonstrated through the consultation and engagement programme, much loved by local people and visitors alike. However, in some ways it has become a victim of its own success. The area's visitor 'assets' have led to a significant increase in visitors coming to Freshwater West, which has meant that visitor pressure exceeds capacity resulting in major traffic congestion at peak times; difficulties in the emergency services and local agencies' ability to respond and negative impact on the unique fauna and flora within the area. Visitor pressures has increased post COVID as people want to enjoy the outdoors and its many benefits.

As part of the National Trust's portfolio, Freshwater West is open for everyone but Freshwater West has become a difficult outdoor location to manage effectively in peak times. The study aim has been to balance actions to enhance and manage the visitor experience whilst responding to market trends, community concerns, ensuring sustainable economic growth and safeguarding the quality of the experience. A coordinated approach is required, which aligns different stakeholders alongside powerful and coherent short to long term strategic objectives with a range of targeted initiatives / actions which are ambitious but realistic and achievable.

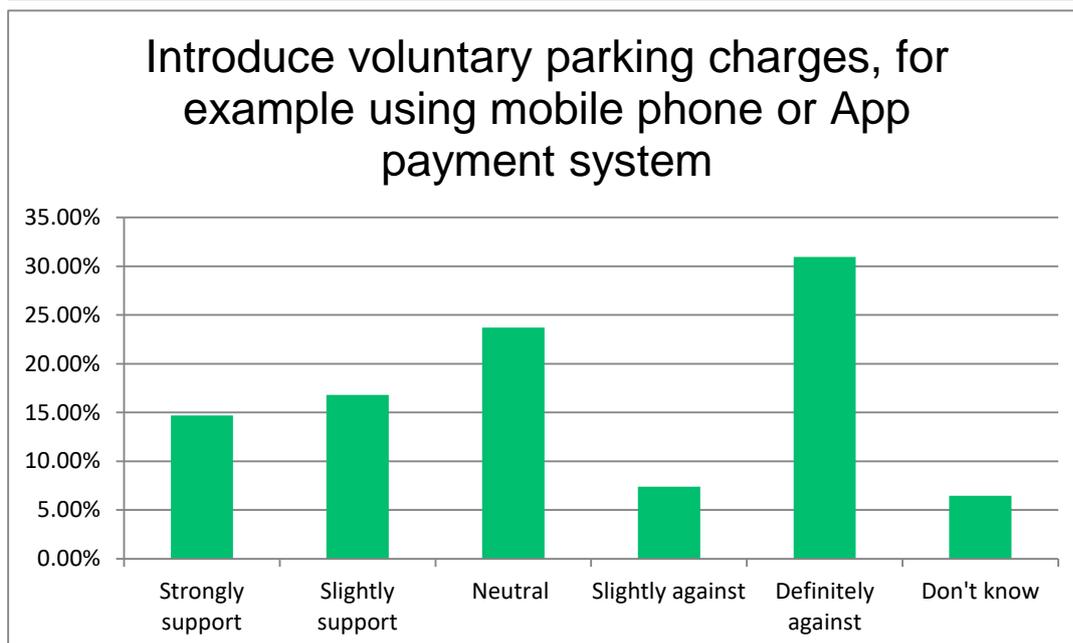
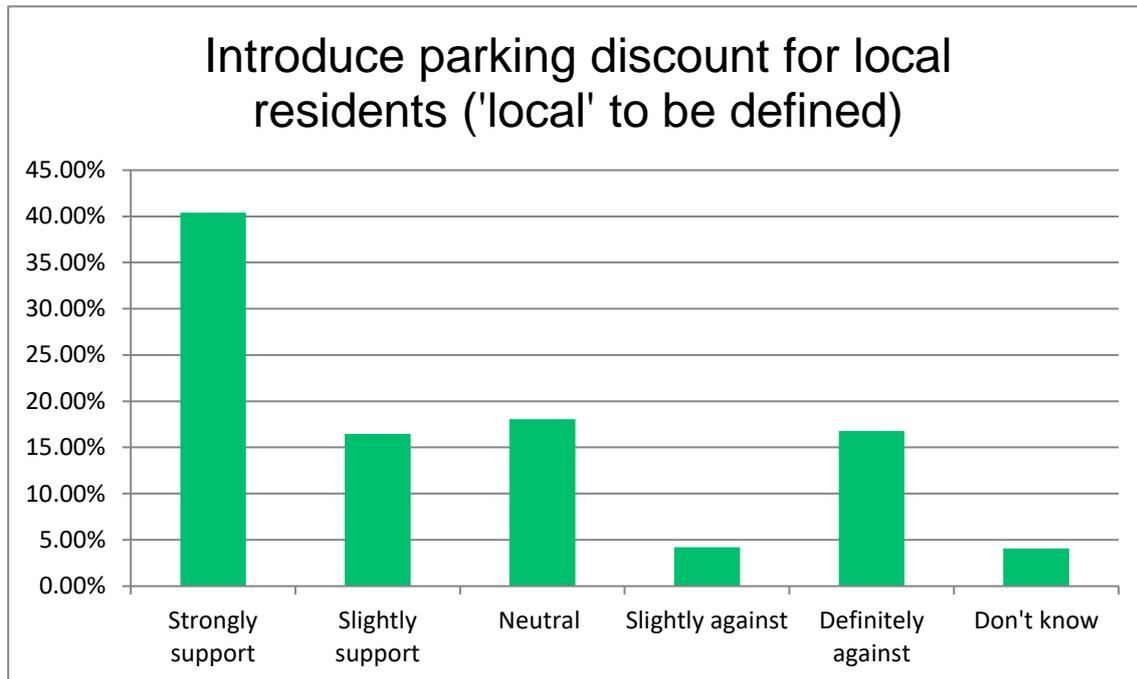
The suggested approach provides a package of interventions and initiatives which will significantly help to improve the visitor management of Freshwater West in balance with the impact on the natural environment. A key focus is on addressing the issues and challenges around the Main Car Park and the report includes a recommended approach which improves the flow and capacity without an overall increase in parking spaces. Other actions focus on refurbishing the toilet and improving interpretation and messaging. The report also includes a range of supplementary projects to address the core challenges and opportunities facing the destination.

Clearly there will be a need for capital expenditure to realise the range of proposed projects and as such funding and partnership arrangements will need to be sought in the short term. Additionally, consensus will need to be reached with key stakeholders on the suggested way forward.

The key next steps will need to include further community liaison to present proposals and explain the overall rationale. Once the plans and interventions are agreed, detailed designs will need to be worked up alongside other studies such as ecological assessments.

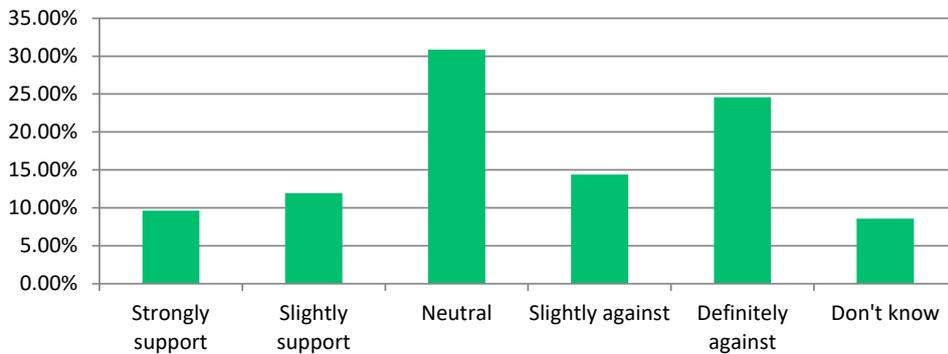
There will be a requirement to seek planning consent for the proposals. These will need to be presented in a coordinated way to demonstrate that the approach represents a holistic programme for Freshwater West which will make a real difference, improve the visitor experience and reduce the impacts of the environment including lower visual intrusion (of vehicles).

Appendix One: Additional research data

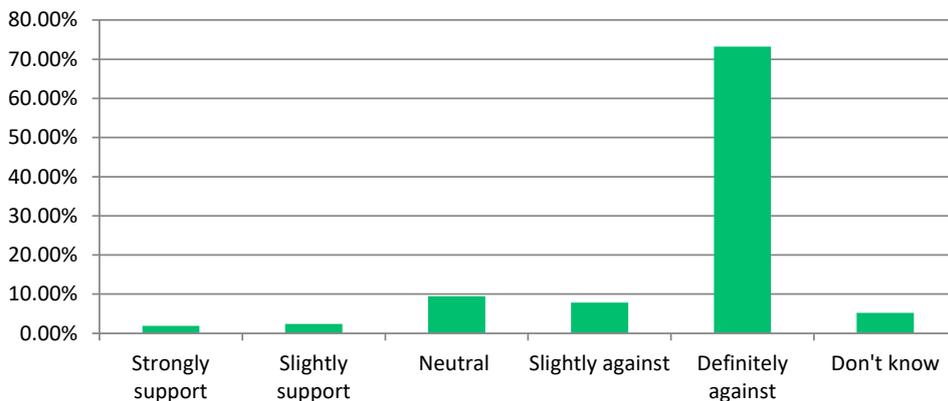




Consolidate the three car parks (Main, North and Quarry) into one larger one at the site of the main car park, with the same overall space capacity

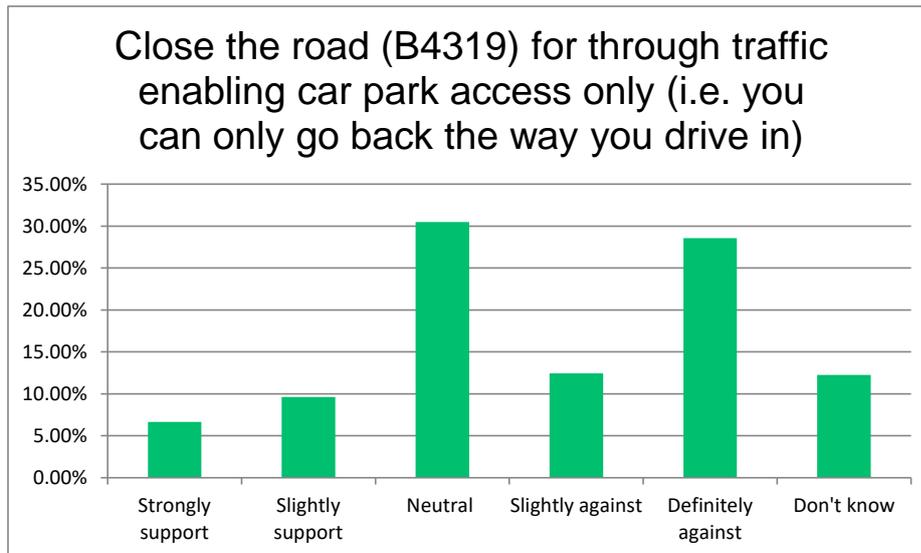


Close car parks altogether in the main season, (leaving parking on roadside and remote parking locations)

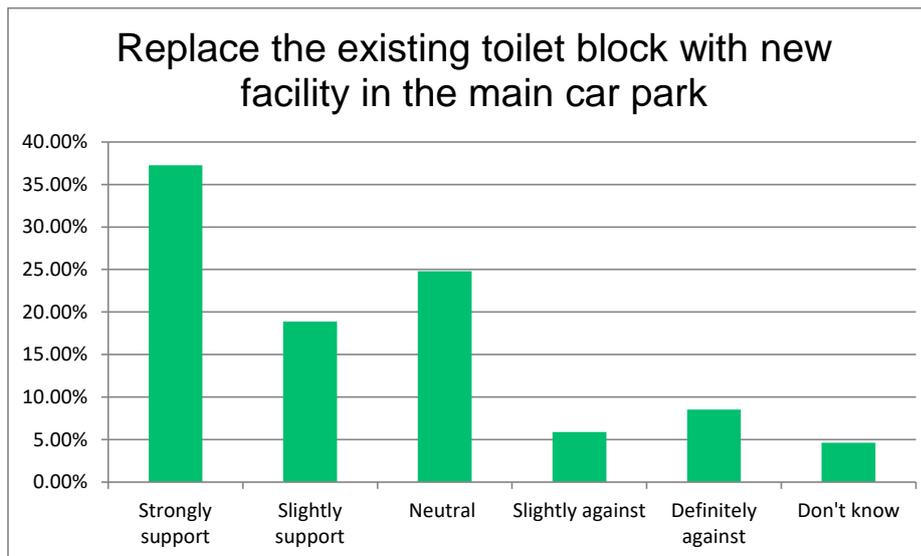


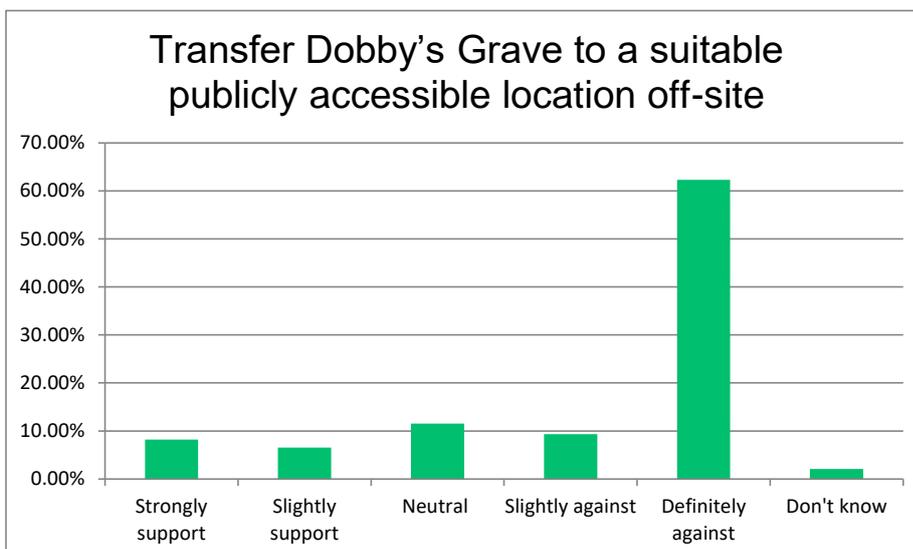
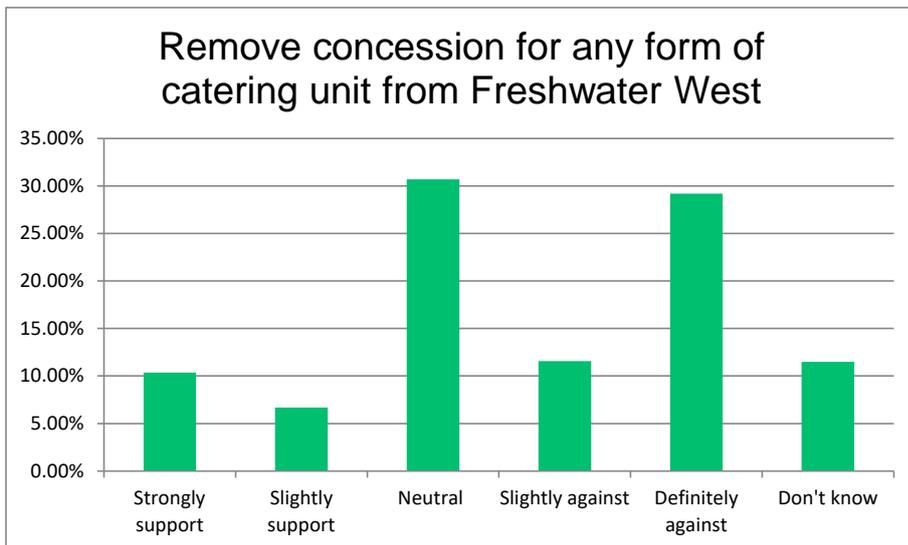
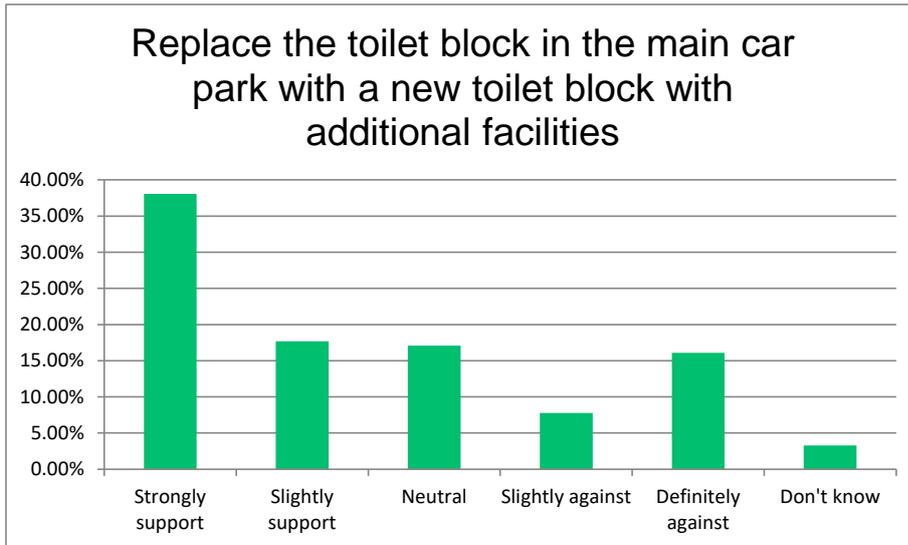


Road and traffic management



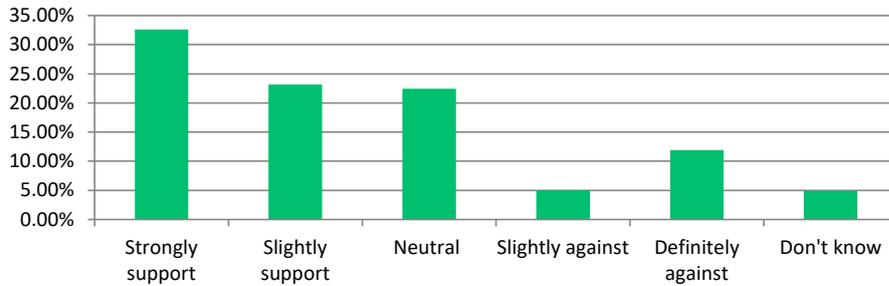
User services



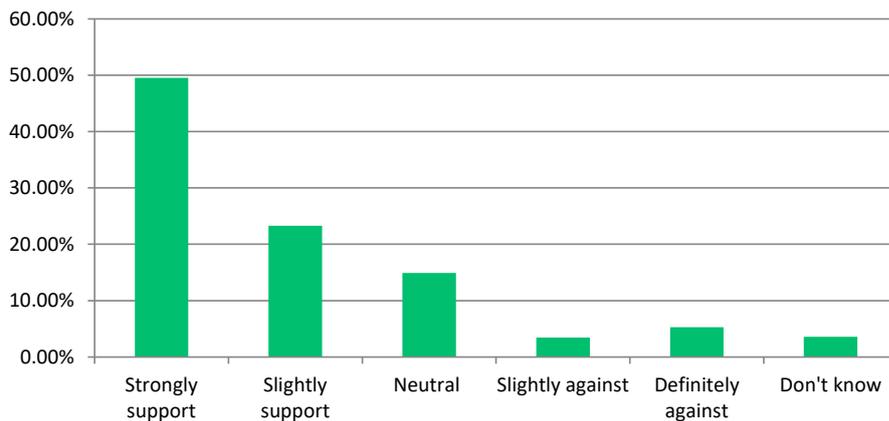




Look to provide increased provision for overnight stays for motorhomes and campervans in the local area (e.g. seek permission to increase the available spaces at Gupton Farm)



Improve beach access path opposite the main car park to better serve all visitors



Appendix Two: Consultation Responses

Second Tranche

The second tranche of pop-ups coincided with the second online questionnaire. This time a meeting was held between consultants (including PLANED) and National Trust staff to ensure that the delivery of these events would achieve the objectives required.

National Trust staff were keen to at least three further pop-up events, and for one of those to be away from the beach, but for the other two to be at Freshwater West. The objective in this case was to again be a visible point of contact and to drive people to the survey, but also to allow those who wanted to have in-person conversations. It was decided that we would ask four questions at these pop-ups and encourage participants to write brief responses (or for staff to scribe on their behalf).

The four questions asked, were:

- **What do you feel car parking arrangements at Freshwater West should aspire to be like?**
- **What is your priority for a better experience for visitors?**
- **To ensure a healthy natural environment at Freshwater West, what would be acceptable to stop or start doing?**
- **What would you do to encourage responsible and respectful visits to Freshwater West?**

It was also discussed that National Trust staff would take a more active role during this tranche and would engage directly with the public to discuss the issues and to deal with any specific concerns that were levelled directly at the Trust.

Pop Up 3 - Wednesday 1 June, 10.00am to 3.00pm (Freshwater West Beach)

A mid-week day during the school's half-term holiday, just ahead of a double Bank Holiday (on 2 and 3 June) due to the Jubilee Celebration. This had been publicised on social media in advance of the event, and there were two or three people who came specifically for the pop-up.

The weather was warm and sunny, with a steady breeze keeping the air cool. No presence from Outer Reef on this occasion and much fewer surfers overall – this is possibly due to large numbers of families or general visitors.

Dwell time was more typically about 2/3+ hours. The car-park got very busy quite quickly with large numbers of visitors on the beach during the busiest part of the day. As with the previous pop-up, there were also large numbers of motorhomes/campervans on the roadside leading to the car-park at the start (possibly more than previously).

- People were pleased to engage with the questions asked, many responses verbally were along similar lines to those already received during the course of earlier pop-ups.
- Because it was half-term, many of the beach users were visiting the area (either day trips from further afield, or staying locally for one or more night).
- Due to the busyness of the car park, it was not possible to engage with all beach users passing through.
- A number of people who were visiting specifically to see Dobby's Grave were spoken to – in most cases, these groups were happy to change their planned behaviour (leaving some form of tribute such as a sock or painted pebble) once they understood the environmental impact – several of whom made suggestions regarding alternative forms of tribute (discussed below).

Pop Up 4 - Wednesday 8 June, 10.00am to 3.00pm (Pembroke Town Hall)

A mid-week day following the double Bank Holiday (on 2 and 3 June) due to the Jubilee Celebration. The pop-up had originally been planned to coincide with the Craft Fair that takes place in the Town Hall every Wednesday, but due to other Jubilee related events, the Fair had been moved. However, the Town Hall was open to provide other services to local residents (e.g., supplying with Council-issued refuse bags), and the small museum was also open and available (in the building. Like the other pop-ups, this had been publicised on social media in advance of the event.

The weather was warm and sunny, with staff placed in the foyer of the Town Hall, and occasionally standing at the front, talking to passers-by. A smaller number of people engaged with the pop-up than on previous occasions, although it was clear that one or two had come specially to speak to staff. It seems conversations here were much longer and more in depth than on the beach (perhaps because it was a more comfortable, indoor environment, with chairs etc.).

The number of passers-by and drop-ins fell in the afternoon, with most interactions taking place in the first two or three hours of the pop-up.

- Most people who engaged were local to Pembroke or the surrounding area, but a small number of others were also involved.

- Feelings were still strong among those who had come specifically to engage, although views were similar to those expressed in previous pop-ups.
- As with previous events there was still concern that there were already plans in place to develop the site.

Pop Up 5 - Saturday 11 June, 10.00am to 3.00pm (Freshwater West Beach)

A weekend day after the school's half-term holiday. This had been planned to coincide with a surfing competition taking place on the beach, but the location for that had been moved due to poor surf forecasts, subsequent to the date being advertised for the pop-up.

The weather was warm and sunny again, with a steady breeze keeping the air cool. No presence from Outer Reef on this occasion and very fewer surfers overall – this is possibly due to the surf competition being elsewhere and the surf conditions being poor.

Dwell time was more typically about 2 hours. The car-park was less busy than pop-up 3, but still got fairly busy, although turnover seemed quicker, meaning people were not staying as long. As with the previous pop-up, there were also large numbers of motorhomes/campervans on the roadside leading to the car-park at the start of the day.

Tranche 2 - All written comments

The following is a list of all comments received over the course of the Second Tranche of pop-up events, ordered by question asked, and sorted according to the date they were received.

What do you feel car parking arrangements at Freshwater West should aspire to be like?

Wed 1 June (Half Term – beach pop-up)

- The car park would be more efficient if it was manned
- Hour option to pay and all-day charge
- No to one-way system
- Equivalent to Café Môr – hot drinks
- No charge for parking
- Erosion of sand dunes – manage better
- Happy with current arrangement
- No change – perfect! Any bigger would spoil the area.

Wed 8 June (Pembroke Town Hall)

- Lobby National Park to make overflow permanent car park, then will have space to get people off road; double yellows on road
- No charging to Pembrokeshire residents – tourists expect to pay and can pay

- Core tax (?) tax added to tourist payments i.e., hotel bill. This tax goes to tourist facilities.
- Charging not so much an issue – how much the charge is, is the issue; demonstrate where money goes and why charge is in place.
- Section of parking just for surfers. Keep them and their kit off the road.
- Car park to be paid for & not be free
- Keep it natural and unspoiled but better managed
- Larger but always free
- Parking charges may just push people onto the sand dunes – lots of 4x4s
- More car parking spaces. People would be prepared to pay during summer season only – nominal charge
- Double yellow lines across all the roads to stop all
- How to mark at the car park!! Can't tarmac. Post & Rope will be vandalised – stolen & used for beach fires. Chain & Metal Post will be stolen

Sat 11 June (beach)

- Love that its Free Parking
- Provide more 'Natural' Car Parking
- I think they are good, maybe less to clay [?] so my nan could come
- Free to all please
- Car parking has always been great
- Stay as they are – Free
- More sectioned car parking – free
- Free to locals & dog walkers

What is your priority for a better experience for visitors?

Wed 1 June (Half Term – beach pop-up)

- This year without the food van we have noticed a different type of holiday maker. They no longer come just for food but for a holiday in a more natural way.
- Somehow the public have to realise that Freshwater West is not a safe swimming beach.
- Continue with no overnight stays.
- Like the recycling and toilets.
- No overnight parking
- Beautiful space
- No overnight parking – gov change law to charge
- Safety: Signage for Water Users; Lifeguards for longer season
- Refreshments

Wed 8 June (Pembroke Town Hall)

- Gupton Farm campsite is terribly designed
- More dog waste bins – people will use them
- Angle Bay Café – get something like that there
- National Trust Membership is too expensive – introduce concession price
- The beach IS the visitor experience, no need for extras.
- Remove café
- Remove Dobby's Grave
- Extend Car Parking
- Preserve F.W. as a natural site
- National Trust need to work on local relationships – stop getting peoples' backs up
- Needs more toilets
- Doesn't need to be commercial
- More Parking needed
- Natural Beauty of the Coastline

Sat 11 June (beach)

- Dog friendly – all sizes
- Good Parking
- More bins/signs asking visitors to take rubbish home
- Natural uncommercial site
- Free parking to continue
- Car parking, toilets, café, education centre
- Café with rent that covers the cost of toilets
- Fine as it is, it can't be better
- No food outlet
- Open spaces with good walking paths for more elderly relatives
- More car parking
- More passing places on road
- Leave it as it is, just a place to park and visit the beach
- Think twice about having a lifeguard as it is not safe to swim
- Keep the small car park

To ensure a healthy natural environment at Freshwater West, what would be acceptable to stop or start doing?

Wed 1 June (Half Term – beach pop-up)

- Please get rid of 'Dobby's Grave' – it is ruining the eco structure of the area and is an eyesore

- On behalf of Dobby, donate socks to a children's charity, instead of leaving them by Dobby's grave where sea creatures could eat them and could kill them
- Keep recycling bins
- Keep Dobby's Grave. Very special place.
- More bins – try adding recycling bins
- Overnight parking stopped. Injunction. Dobby's grave stopped.
- Refreshment Facilities

Wed 8 June (Pembroke Town Hall)

- Increased Signage for info re: SSSI
- No Dobby's Grave
- No Café
- No Developments
- Dog Poo Bins
- Bird watching is good and fun
- Encouraging a healthy respect for the environment
- Have more volunteers picking up litter, keeping an eye on people, messaging etc.
- Don't let it get like Broadhaven [south?] – no right to fence off the natural environment
- Allow filming! Good for local economy Pem needs it
- Quicksand & the sea is dangerous – there needs to be more signage & warnings

Sat 11 June (beach)

- Stop trying to change things, leave as it is – apart from Dobby's grave!
- A bus service from town to reduce car pollution?
- Continue little picking; more recycling to aid collecting litter
- I think we could stop people from putting socks everywhere
- Educate visitors on local issue, ask for help to address these problems
- Get rid of Dobby's grave and discourage visitors from littering the dunes
- Keep managing the meadows for birds
- [Stop?] Developing the car park & Facilities; Leave Alone

What would you do to encourage responsible and respectful visits to Freshwater West?

Wed 1 June (Half Term – beach pop-up)

- Subtle visual cues for people to read themselves this shared & precise space: communicate an implicit shared sense of responsibility regarding use of space; wild space - understanding of various users' needs
- Not too much signage

- Shared ownership communicated, shared sense of responsibilities
- Water safety – signage & lifeguards for longer season
- Donation box or QR code by Dobby's grave – or buy a sock for someone in need
- Maybe some signs to help educate people on the beach

Wed 8 June (Pembroke Town Hall)

- Beach wardens
- More Toilets
- Disabled Parking Facilities
- Shock people with lasers if they litter
- Messaging & Transparency; if people understood who does what, where money goes, etc. understanding & relationships improve
- No lifeguards – they encourage people to believe the beach is safe – it is not; more signage to emphasise the dangers of the sea
- No café, so reduced litter
- Signs about the importance of the SSSI sites to encourage people to be aware of the impact of their actions

Sat 11 June (beach)

- More posters highlighting benefits of picking up litter. May encourage children of the future.
- In Amroth there is a sculpture of a fish made up of bottles and litter
- Education
- Education on environmental issues; arrange beach cleans etc.; empower people to help
- Educate from a young age but also provide enjoyable experience
- Take rubbish home