**Kilve Parish Council**

**Subject**

Kilve Beach Car Park Redevelopment

**Background**

During July 2020 the car park at Kilve Beach underwent a radical redesign. This included the expansion of the number of parking spaces by converting previously unused ‘wild’ areas by removing wooden barrier posts. Additionally, the erection of two payment machines with associated cameras, plus the positioning of a significant number of signs indicating that the area was private land, with signage also explaining the rules and regulations of the parking facilities.

**Local Community Concerns**

A significant number of Kilve village residents approached the Parish Council (PC) and requested that the PC act on behalf of the local community with regard to discussing various concerns in respect to the revised car parking setup with the owners of the land, the East Quantockshead Estate (EQE). As a consequence an open air Public Meeting was held at Kilve Cricket Ground on the 17th August 2020, attended by 24 members of the public and 6 representatives of the PC. At this meeting the PC advised those present that a meeting had been scheduled with the EQE in order to raise and discuss any issues.

**Issues**

The main issues fell into 3 major areas as follows:

Environmental Impact

* Areas cleared for extra parking
* Planning Consent request and approval
* Loss of wildlife habitat
* Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Authority (AONB) guardianship

**Impact on Sea Lane**

* Significantly increased traffic
* Congestion/safety/speed concerns
* Visitors parking on the Highway

**Parking Regulations**

* Parking concessions for Blue Badge holders not evident
* Concessions for local residents

**PC and EQE Meeting and Outcomes**

PC Councilor Steve Collins (SC) and the PC Clerk met with Hugh Luttrell (HL) of EQE on 20th August at the Estate office at Court House. The outcomes of the discussions are as follows:

1. Villagers parking concession agreed at £50 per annum for each vehicle. The PC will need to provide the fees and licence plate numbers to HL and he will handle the rest. He can also provide free parking for disabled drivers in the village only, if required, although this is probably best covered by the concession. There are no plans for marked disabled parking bays as the car park is managed using a number plate recognition system rather than person based checking.
2. HL agreed that he should have had a consultation with the Parish Council and apologised for this oversight. He is also willing to have meetings with a limited number of villagers on a 1 to 1 basis and SC agreed to also attend if this was felt to be appropriate.
3. HL is open to replacing the signage in the car park for something more in keeping with a rural setting and suggests that some examples are sent to him. Subject to his agreeing to the signage he will take this up with the parking company. He is concerned regarding the costs and SC explained that the PC might be able to assist if required. HL did explain that the parking operator is subject to regulations and that he had insisted on the minimum number of signs being erected.
4. HL was happy that some villagers had articulated positive messages with regard to the new arrangements; no overnight parking, toilet improvements, and litter collecting on a more regular basis. HL also confirmed that further litter improvements will be introduced around Easter time when a new contract starts.
5. HL also has the removal of the old meter in hand although he had not yet been advised by the contractor regarding exactly when this will be achieved.
6. Whatever planning regulations are required have been undertaken, not by EQE but by the parking company. HL is not aware of exactly what they would be or have any documentation to support this but believes it’s contractual. SC outlined that this is being checked out and HL agreed that if it was found that the relevant consents had not been received then he would follow up accordingly.
7. HL is not prepared to reinstate the areas that have been cleared around the new meters and cameras as it’s private land and therefore permitted. He confirmed that he would be meeting with AONB and was happy for SC to attend to ensure that the Estate is not contravening any regulations with regard to the cleared areas and/or the suitability and positioning of meters and cameras. SC shared with HL a suggested Car Park layout that had been provided by a villager that indicated how cameras could be re-sited. HL stated that the parking company had undertaken a site survey and that the cameras had to be placed where they currently are for compliance purposes.

To conclude, HL stated that he is determined as best he can to maintain an open and harmonious relationship with the village but also has responsibilities regarding the financial viability of the Estate, which of course requires some challenging decisions.

Steve Collins, 9th September 2020