

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL
PORTFOLIO HOLDER DELEGATED DECISION
by
COUNTY COUNCILLOR HEULWEN HULME
PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HIGHWAYS

Date March 2022

REPORT AUTHOR: Jo Lancey – Area Traffic Engineer (South)

**REPORT TITLE: Parking Restrictions C0180 Cwmporth, C0180
Ystradfellte and C0193/C0194 Coelbren – Objection to
Restrictions**

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the objections received to the consultation for the additional parking restrictions in Cwmporth and Ystradfellte.

2. Background

- 2.1 In a delegated decision dated 24/06/2021, the Portfolio holder approved the initiation of the Traffic Regulation Order consultation procedure in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 in respect of the parking restrictions on the roads set out as, indicated on the plans attached to this report as Appendix A.
- 2.2 The proposed parking restrictions were a response to the high volume of visitors to the area following the lifting of Covid restrictions. The visitors park inconsiderately in places narrowing the already constrained lanes further, preventing the passage other vehicles, especially the emergency services and agricultural vehicles. These additional areas have been highlighted following the implementation of parking restrictions in 2021.
- 2.3 Consultation took place between 21/07/2021 and 13/08/2021 and there have been 5 objections, 3 letters of support and 6 letters with comments on the proposals received. The points raised in the objections together with the officer responses are set out in Appendix B

3. Advice

- 3.1 The proposed restrictions were based on inconsiderate parking taking place on a regular basis causing issues. BBNP rangers have witnessed this and also have photographic evidence of the problems caused by the parking. For public safety reasons of ensuring access to emergency vehicles and to prevent unnecessary obstructions being caused, it is considered that the objections should be overruled and the measures implemented as proposed. Whilst there was a level of objection received, the objections are considered not to be significant when compared to the issues caused and the potential impacts of introducing more parking restrictions within this area. We are working in partnership with the BBNP and NRW and other interested partners to resolve the issues that the influx of visitors is causing within this area of natural beauty and the restrictions are part of the package of measures deemed necessary.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 The TRO is being funded by BBNP and has been approved in the previous report.
- 4.2 The Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) notes the content of the report.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 Legal: There are no further legal implications
- 5.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: " I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

6. Data Protection

- 6.1 All personal data collected as part of the consultation will be processed in accordance with the Council's privacy notice published on our website <https://en.powys.gov.uk/trafficconsult>
- 6.2 The Data Protection Officer notes the Data Protection comment and has nothing to add.

7. Comment from local member(s)

- 7.1 Cllr David Arnold Thomas - 'As Local Member I am aware of inconsiderate parking by visitors along the narrow lanes of the CO180 as you approach Ystradfellte. This has resulted in complications and delays for Emergency Services when attempting to travel this road. I have also received complaints from residents and farmers. It is accepted that traffic restrictions of this type have to form part of an

overall strategy for the area which is experiencing year on year increases in visitor numbers.

- 7.2 To that end it is encouraging to see that an inter-agency group are working on ways to alleviate any negative impact this is having on the area. Good progress has already been made but more needs to be done. However, we need to be conscious of any adverse effect these restrictions may have on the area, and residents, before new or extended sites provide additional parking spaces to compensate for those lost through on road parking. Failure to provide this additional capacity will simply result in the problem moving to other locations or drivers ignoring the lines and parking on the grass verges'

8. Impact Assessment

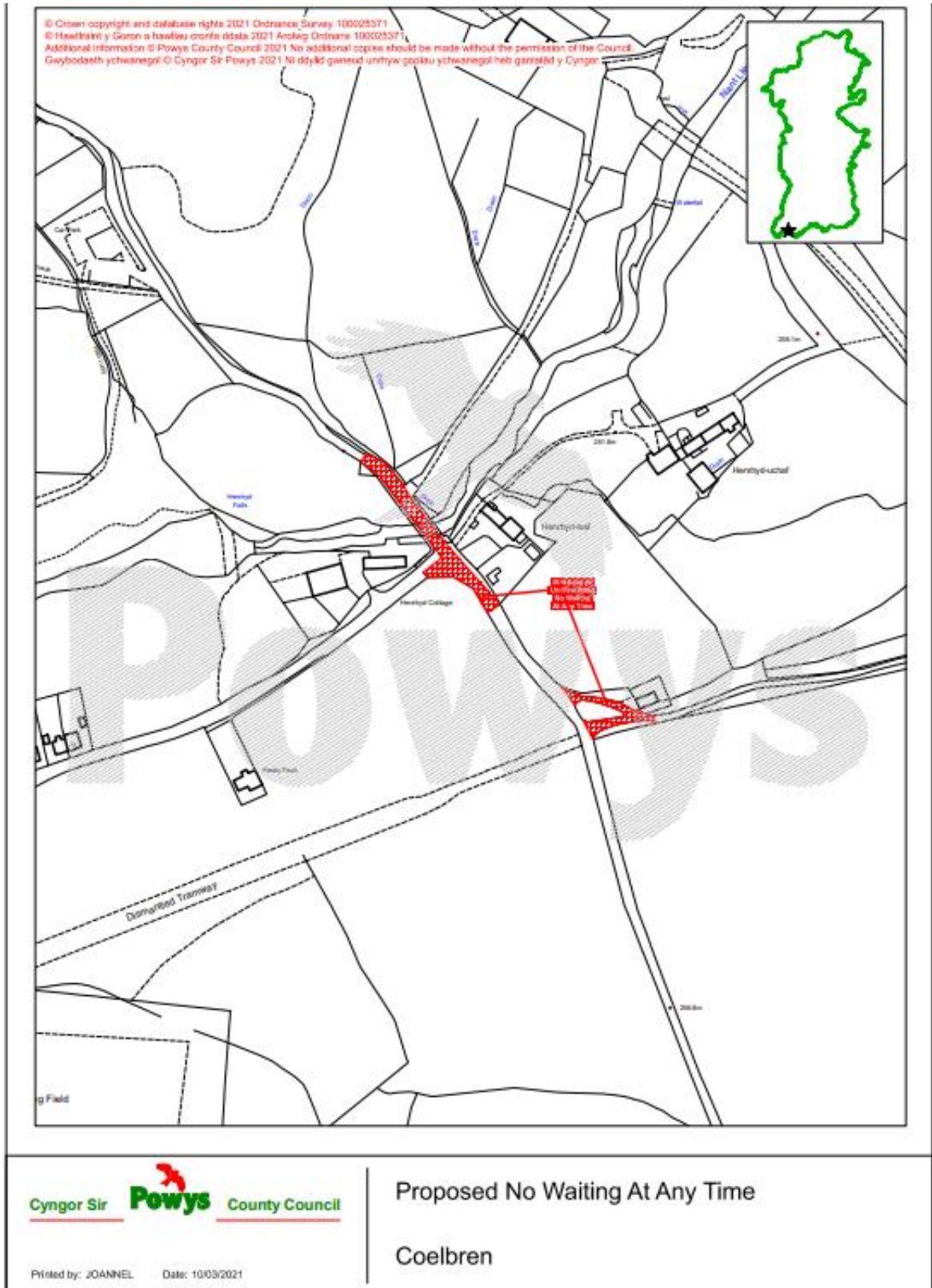
- 8.1 N/A

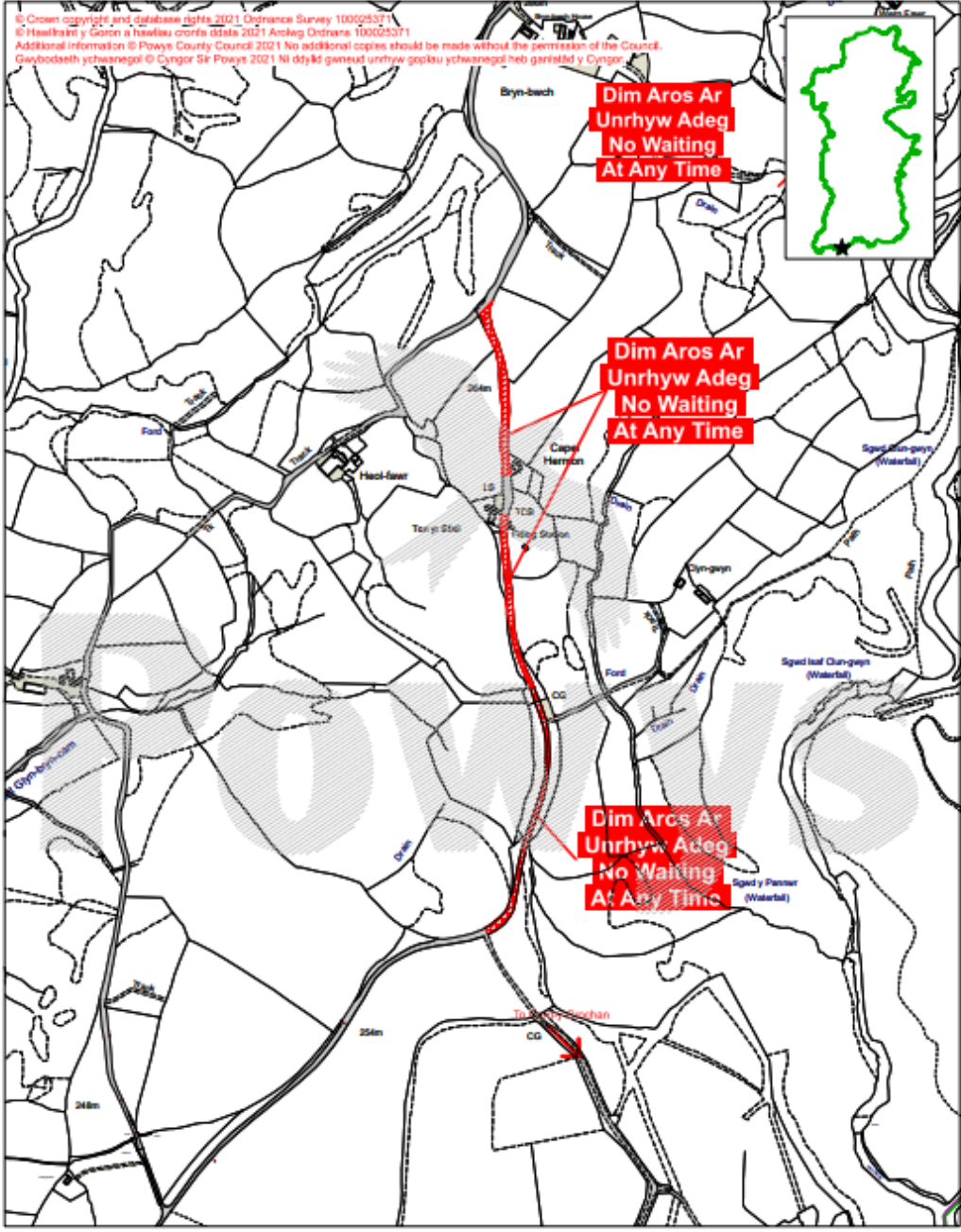
9. Recommendation

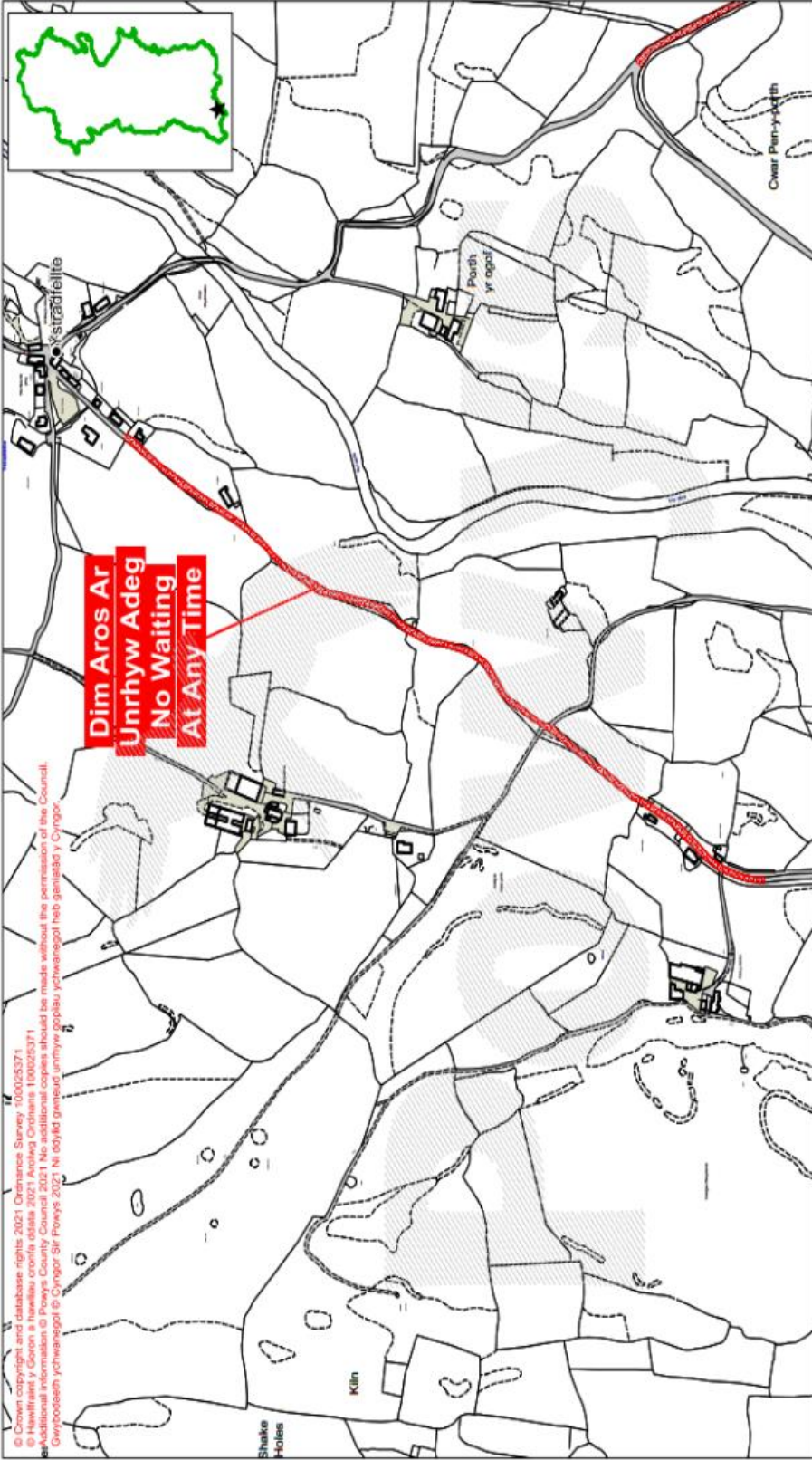
- 9.1 It is recommended that the objection is noted and over-ruled. The proposed restrictions will help prevent the continual inconsiderate parking around waterfall country and maintain the unimpeded passage of vehicles along the public highway

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Appendix A







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Proposed No Waiting At Any Time
 Ystradfellte

Appendix B

Objection 1

1. Information provided in the way of **marked maps is of insufficient quality, making it impossible to read.** – The objector was *subsequently emailed with the plans in pdf form to allow him to look at them in more detail. There has been no further communication from the objector.*
2. Notices placed within the neighbourhood or in places where it is difficult to read. Firstly, due to location and second the colour is **not readily identifiable as sign that is as a public notice.** -*The notices were placed in the locations of the proposed traffic regulation orders and is correctly following the legal procedure.*
3. We object completely to the notion that this will prevent the problem of parking. – *The objection is recorded as part of the public consultation, however no reason for the objection and officers remain of the view that the propose restrictions will alleviate the problem of visitors parking in the narrow sections of the road.*
4. We object to the lines that are to be placed into the village centre. - *The objection is recorded as part of the public consultation, , however no reason for the objection and officers remain of the view that the propose restrictions will alleviate the problem of visitors parking in the narrow sections of the road., including the village.*
5. Within the context of a National Park, linage detracts from the overall context of the landscape. This should be a matter of a planning application. - *The Highways Authority does not need planning consent to implement Traffic Regulation Orders.*
6. Consultation with local residents is non existent. The feedback from residents, is that Powys, BBNP and NRW are more concerned about tourists rather than residents. The way this Order has appeared in the locality is by way of stealth and not resident consultation. - *The 3 week advertisement is the consultation process where residents and visitors alike are invited to object to the proposals if they so wish. We are not legally obliged to consult with individual residents. The proposed restrictions are for the benefit of residents as they aim to ensure access to emergency vehicles.*
7. A overall plan needs to be formulated for addressing the issues - Firstly to stop tourist traffic from entering the road system, Secondly by placing car parks in locations such as Penderyn which are serviced by suitable road systems -*We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution.*
8. Passing places need to be constructed and paid for by those public bodies that encourage tourists to come to the area. Namely BBNP or NRW. - *We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution.*
9. Additional car parking, should also be at the expense of BBNP or NRW - *We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution.*

10. No further marketing or reference to Waterfall Country should be used by BBNP, NRW or Powys until a full resolve of the issues is made to address the long-term solution. - *We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution.*
11. **For the reasons noted in 1, 2 and 6. A stop should be placed on this order until proper resident consultation has been made.** - *– we have fully complied with the consultation process set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and for public safety reasons of ensuring access to emergency vehicles, we do not consider that a stop should be put on the proposed restrictions.*

Objection 2

1. We object to more double yellow lines because we cant see that adding more will improve the situation. Saturday 07/08 was a good example. Farmers had not opened their fields for parking due to the rain and there were numerous cars parked on the verges as a result. More yellow lines will just shift the problem and cause even more disruption and damage. Vehicles park on the common where double yellow lines have already been added. We see many vehicles parked illegally and inappropriately. Unless the facilities and manpower to monitor and control are available it is madness to introduce more restrictions that cant be enforced. -- *Vehicles are legally allowed to park along the edge of common land, and whilst this is not ideal, it does keep the carriageway clear, allowing the free flow of traffic. Enforcement has been, and will remain to be carried out as much as possible.*
2. This area cannot cope with the current volume of traffic. It is damaging to the environment/ecology of the National Park and causing a nuisance. There are so many different bodies involved with the BBNP it is impossible to know who is responsible for what. Unless they start working together towards the same goal there is no hope of improving a situation which is becoming untenable for the people who live and work here. -*We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution.*

Objection 3

1. We strongly object permanent or even short-term yellow lines around Ystradfellte. They are a complete waste of time and money as cars simply park on grass verges beyond the double yellow lines which cancels any safety measures your department want to put in place. The whole landscape has been ruined with unsightly paint running along country roads together with tin signs that BBNP have erected that are completely hideous. Traffic management needs to consider and come up with a more sympathetic approach in rural areas, The roads in general are not suitable for such a volume of vehicles that drive into the area and the traffic department and BBNP need to address this ASAP - *Vehicles are legally allowed to park along the edge of common land, and whilst this is not ideal, it does keep the carriageway clear, allowing the free flow of traffic. Unfortunately, the legislation regarding signs and Roadmarkings only allow us to use whats prescribed. We try, wherever possible, to be sympathetic to the surroundings, but signs and Roadmarkings are meant to be highly visible so that they are no missed by drivers.*

Objection 4

1. I wish to lodge an objection to the proposal to install 'No waiting at any time' restrictions on the C0180 at Ystradfellte, particularly outside 'Tai'r Heol' property at said road. Currently parking difficulties are experienced much more acutely further south on the C0180, approx 200m south of the entrance onto the C0180 from Plas Y Darren, to the entrance to 'Nant Y Carrad'. I am unsure of the exact problem that is trying to be solved here, and previous experience in this community is that where a significant verge exists (as it does from the southerly edge of the Ystradfellte C0180 proposal to the junction with Penllwyneinion Farm), vehicle park on the verge not on the roadway, therefore seeming to circumvent the restrictions. Outside our property at Tai'r Heol, this means vehicles on both sides of the road parking on the grass verge, severely restricting vision heading southbound and northbound, increasing danger to pedestrians (there are 2 footpath entrances on Plas Y Darren), other vehicles and cyclists, for which the C0180 is very popular and well used thoroughfare. Placing double yellow lines between the southern end of the C0180 at Ystradfellte proposal as far as Penllwyneinion Farm is in my view likely to exacerbate the propensity of vehicles to park along the verge and increasing the likelihood of a vehicle accident, due to vehicles and cyclists being forced to veer into the oncoming traffic to improve their view. – *I understand that parking either side of the access would impede visibility leaving their property. However if vehicles are parked on the verge rather than the carriageway, it is unlikely that through traffic will have to veer into oncoming traffic due to lack of visibility. If the carriageway is free from parked vehicles, then the forward visibility is at its optimum. Pedestrians will also be safer by walking along the edge of the carriageway without having to negotiate parked vehicles in their way.*
2. Current obstructions on the verge are a much more effective and safe deterrent, as well as being in keeping with the aesthetic image of this popular tourist destination. A more long term solution needs to be found, such as increasing the size of existing hard standing car parks, or the purchase of land at Clun Gwyn to create a new all weather car park. At present farmers open their fields when dry but when they are closed the traffic finds other places to park. My other concern is that this will push vehicles to park in other unsuitable areas, making more of the community a road hazard. – *There are no plans to remove any current obstructions. The lines will dissuade drivers to park adjacent to the verge where obstructions are in-situ. The proposed lengths of double yellow lines are where there currently is an issue of parking that is preventing the passage and repassage of traffic because the parking is on the carriageway. Wherever parking restrictions are introduced, it is inevitable that parking will migrate, but by introducing these restrictions they will be using the wider areas of carriageway instead of the narrow sections.*
3. I think a proper engagement exercise with the community, BBNPA and PCC is required to find a longer term solution here. These proposals are unnecessary along some of the route, and will decrease the safety of the road. There are two young children at my property and other children at the two neighbouring properties, and any steps to make this 60mph limit road less safe, such as the proposal from the southern end of the C0180 to Penllwyneinion Farm, should be removed from the orders as laid. - *We are working with BBNP and NRW to try and alleviate traffic problems throughout waterfall country and also talking to neighbouring authorities to try and find a solution. BBNP have also engaged with the community to try and find the best solutions.*

4. I also believe that these proposals are in contravention of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act's five ways of working and seven wellbeing goals. **A Healthier Wales:** This does not support enabling this place to support the wellbeing of the community at this proposal will not make the highway safer, it could make it less safe – *These proposals will prevent obstruction to the highway ensuring that all vehicles, but particularly emergency services vehicles can pass safely. Also as the highway will be kept free of vehicles then forward visibility will also be improved.* **A Prosperous Wales:** This does not enable my community to support the foundation economy because no long term solution to parking is proposed to benefit the community, and it will not reduce carbon emissions by supporting alternative methods of accessing the waterfall country, such as through a park and ride scheme. – *BBNP and NRW are talking with adjacent authorities to find a solution to the issues in waterfall country.* **A Resilient Wales:** The damage likely to be inflicted by vehicles parking more firmly on the verge will damage biodiversity and soil quality and yellow lines will irreparably damage a natural green space. - *where there is currently obstructions in the verge, no damage will be created as its not planned to remove such obstructions the double yellow lines are to prevent drivers parking on the adjacent carriageway and causing an obstruction. Where appropriate PCC and BBNP can look to add further obstructions to the verge. Whilst yellow lines are visually intrusive when they are first laid, they are there to ensure that drivers don't park in those areas. Therefore they need to be visible. However, when they have been insitu for a short while the brightness of the yellow does fade slightly, allowing them to sit more sympathetically within the rural setting.* **A Wales of Cohesive Communities:** This contravenes supporting my community to be well connected and safe, by increasing the danger along the road – *These parking restrictions will help communities be well connected as they will allow vehicle to pass along the public highway without obstruction.* **A Global Responsible Wales:** This is not tackling the issue in a sustainable way, as it will no discourage car use. *This is true, but waterfall country is a rural location with access to public transport being very limited. Visitors will always use their cars as there is no alternative. However, BBNP and NRW are looking for solutions that will negated the need to park throughout the area on the public highway.* **Ways of Working Long Term:** This is a short term solution that will not reduce vehicle use and travel and will make the current road more unsafe. – *It is a short term solution, but a necessary one until other more sustainable solutions can be found.* **Integration:** It is unclear how these proposals integrate with BBNPA's role as creating a safe environment for visitors and resident. – *BBNPA are in continual dialogue with NRW, PCC, RCT and NPT to find a solution to make visiting the area a pleasurable experience, whilst not intruding too much on the day to day lives of the residents.* **Prevention:** There is no long term view to a solution to the parking issue here, which is about volume of vehicles and lack of appropriate parking – *BBNPA, NRW, PCC are working together with the neighbouring authorities to find a long term solution.*

Objection 5

1. Over the past decade there has undoubtedly been a sharp rise in the number of tourists into the area (encouraged by parks via advertisements on television and social media). Unfortunately the narrow roads, few passing spaces, peoples incapability's at times to drive, and not enough sufficient parking has left the area in total chaos, with residents furious and the village completely inaccessible to emergency vehicles should they be needed at times. The double yellow lines has seen tourists just park badly on the verges/ half on the verges, occasional traffic

officers have been around however this is not enough to det the inconsiderate parkers. The proposition of double yellow lines outside our property (Plas Y Darren) will not stop tourists from parking on the verges, which is still dangerous given the speed people drive on these roads. We object to the lines spoiling our scenery. A place where we live. Posts with orange tape has been in place over the past few months and where this has stopped parking is an eyesore. A more appropriate solution should be put in place (smaller posts or stones/boulders?). This again should be reflected and something similar put in place up by Clun Gwyn car park where people have disregarded the double yellow lines and park awfully on the verges half on and off the road/on the common on blind bends. More traffic enforcement officers need to be brought into the area to clamp down on people who have no disregard for the area. Tractors and other emergency services cannot get passed in some places recently due to inconsiderate parking. There is not enough car parking spaces, especially when the overflow car parks have closed during the bad weather/quieter days. Not that we should be encouraging these vast numbers into the area en mass but there should be a place for them to go instead of cars littering themselves all over the road wherever they fancy. A tarmacked secluded area perhaps in the forestry should be considered. Roads are too narrow, people who come into the area unfortunately seem incapable of reversing or pulling in appropriately (the double yellow lines in fact make thing worse the take a wider berth. You can tell by the verges that people are pulling tight and driving on banks rather than reversing back to bigger areas. Perhaps parks need to buy more strips of land to make the roads wider. They cannot withstand the 300+ cars that come through on a busy day. Shuttle bus – would rely on an experienced driver, wider road spaces and less people on the roads meeting the bus otherwise more congestion will just occur. In conclusion we do not think double yellow lines are going to stop/solve the parking issue as it has not done so in other areas. We need more law enforcement officers, and actual resolutions to this ever increasing number of tourists, not a poor attempt at a 'quick fix', which at the same time is ruining and spoiling our idyllic country side. *-The double yellow lines are proposed for the narrow sections to discourage drivers from parking there and blocking the carriageway. Without these restrictions inconsiderate drivers will park there without thinking they are causing an obstruction. They are a solution that can be done now whilst discussions are ongoing to find a long term answer to the parking problems around waterfall country. Where there are no physical obstructions on the verge, it is likely that drivers will use that instead, but whilst not ideal, its preferable to them blocking the carriageway. Yellow lines can be visually intrusive when first laid but over time they do settle to a less vibrant yellow, which is more in keeping with the area.*

Other comments received are as follows

1. Firstly I commend the Highway Authority and Brecon Beacons National Park Authority for working together to propose measures to tackle to problem of inconsiderate parking in the waterfall area. The problem has increased over many years and it has heightened during the period of the pandemic and the easing of restrictions. Inconsiderate parking on the local roads is currently a daily occurrence. However I have my reservations over the likely effectiveness of the proposal for a few reasons: 1) Yellow Lines create a visual cue to drivers that parking where the lines stop is acceptable. Although the proposal may reduce the obstruction caused by parking at some of the worst pinch points, the inconsiderate parking will continue and possibly intensify in the areas between the stretches controlled with yellow

lines, reducing the passible carriageway width in these areas. The mis-use of the village car park will undoubtedly increase. 2) Where the yellow lines have been introduced already, drivers frequently drive further into the soft verges in order to ensure their wheels do not touch the carriageway. Again this reduces the obstruction but parking still inconsiderately damages roadside vegetation and removes the refuge verges provide for pedestrians. 3) The proposed enforcement areas do not cover the full extent of the areas experiencing inconsiderate parking, dangerous parking and obstruction. For example, Heol Calch (particularly at Pont Melin-Fach), the stretch of road between the two enforcement areas you refer to as Cwmporth and Ystradfellte on your plans, and the roads in the approaching Ystradfellte village centre from all directions (although allowance must be made for some roadside parking in the centre). As an additional comment on the proposed order, it makes reference to residents in its interpretation but nowhere else are residents mentioned. While it may not be proportionate to provide a formal residents parking scheme in the measures, there are occasions when residents may need to park on the carriageway and, with visitor parking prohibited, be able to do so without causing danger or obstruction. I fully appreciate that the popularity of the waterfalls area creates a complex problem for authorities attempting to reactively provide the necessary infrastructure, and there are no easy solutions to any of the issues. I count myself lucky to live in such a scenic area and visitors should be able to travel here to enjoy it. However, the infrastructure both within and surrounding the waterfalls cannot cope with the pressure of the visitor numbers and a much more comprehensive approach is urgently needed. Aside from the obvious inconvenience to traffic and parking in the area, especially by foot and bicycle. Despite my reservations, I welcome any attempt to better manage the traffic and parking problems in the area and I would support the introduction of any measures on a trial and review basis, and regular consultation with residents. – *The proposed yellow lines are for the narrow sections of carriageway, when looking at the sites a balance between parking where it is wide enough to do so and restrictions where it isn't was sought. If, following monitoring of these restriction further restrictions are required then these will be considered and consulted upon. Properties within Ystradfellte mostly have off-street parking and as such resident parking has not been considered and wouldn't be appropriate. BBNP, NRW and PCC are working together to try and find more sustainable solutions to the parking problems within waterfall country.*

2. I am writing to express my support for both the proposed traffic consultation in Ystradfellte. Order 202, C0180 at Cwmporth and C0180 at Ystradfellte. I have concerns however that the road from the centre of the village over the bridge and up the hill should also be included for the following reasons. The field opposite Cefn y Garreg has an entrance on the road that has just been widened, potentially to accommodate cars as an overflow carpark for the four falls trail. The field has not yet been used as a car park but has previously been identified by BBNP as a potential site. My concern is that cars could be queueing to get into the car park causing traffic disruption in the village that is already extremely busier than usual. The road here is single carriageway. Cars also currently park on the verges around the bridge (Pont Rhydrhiwllan) which has the effect of narrowing the road and making passing very difficult. For these reasons I would request that no waiting is extended from the centre of the village to the bottom of Porth Hill. Ie just over the bridge. – *the proposed restrictions were kept to as minimum as possible throughout the village as we didn't want to remove the parking completely, this would have made life difficult for resident visitors and residents with no off street parking available. The car park,*

if it becomes one, should be marshalled. This would prevent too much queuing traffic on the highway.

3. The problems of access to and from the village over the last few years has increasingly deteriorated. In particular the road from the village to the Penderyn connection to the A4059 has become totally unmanageable at weekends and bank holidays, especially when weather is good. There are no obvious passing places and no signs warning of such and sometimes the cars coming off the A4059 just keep going without stopping and there is gridlock for sometimes 30minutes or more. There needs to be some creation of passing places, and some signage warning of sections where passing will be impossible. The other problem spot that has emerged more recently is that people have discovered the barbeque and picnic area on the river Neath at Pont Felin. They are parking along that section solidly and there is no access possible for those who live beyond all for the farmers. We have CCTV footage of this if required. The section leading down to the river especially for about half a mile has no passing places at all. Once again passing places need to be created along with some signage warning of problems. It is pointless banning people from parking. The national park has a duty and responsibility to assist tourism and to provide car parking and I feel strongly that they have utterly failed to take a proactive approach to the tourism industry which should be welcomed to as it is the lifeblood of the area and brings in money and the park is there for everyone not just the local communities. The BBNP local plan makes this an express I am, but that has been an almost reckless lack of resources committed to improving roads and parking access generally. As a result all that happens is the farming and local communities get angry and irate and become aggressive towards tourists. So although I welcome in principle the measures to control unrestricted car parking and witless blockages of our minor roads, I want to strongly press for a greater investment in more thought out solutions to access and passing places as well as signage. *-BBNP have been extremely proactive in trying to find solutions to the traffic problems within waterfall country. Most of the highway is edged either by private property, or common land. Unfortunately BBNP nor PCC can create passing spaces on land that doesn't belong to them. However BBNP, NRW and PCC are working together to find sustainable solutions for the area*
4. The issue of parking has mostly been addressed by Penllwyneinion Farm and Heol Fawr farm opening fields, and the yellow lines on Comin Y Rhos. But more needs to be done in Ystradfellte itself. I don't feel yellow lines is the answer there, could larger signs. Boulders/stones or permanent bollards be an option? We pride ourselves in having such a pretty little village of which we would like to keep as just that. Yellow lines anywhere in the village would spoil that. The lack of passing places and guidance is more of an issue at this present time, it would also help if the hedges were cut more frequently. This would help with passing and the general flow of traffic. Hopefully this will ease the huge pressure on the area if and when this is addressed. *- Most of the highway is edged either by private property, or common land. The purchase of land is a long and expensive process, so whilst passing bays may be a solution, these are unlikely to be created short term if ever.*
5. The proposed order does, at face value, provide the local residents with some respite from the inconsiderate on oad parking habits of tourists visiting the local waterfalls. With visitor numbers increasing following the easing of Covid restrictions the impact has been significant. I therefore welcome the proposed parking restrictions. At the moment the park wardens have erected orange fencing along

the section up to the brow of the hill, as this has historically been a parking hotspot. Those vehicles caused obstructions and danger for vehicles passing through as they approach the residential houses in the area. I would therefore request that the order be extended south by around 300m to ensure the parking problem does not re-occur if and when the fencing is removed or falls into disrepair. So in summary I am in favour of the proposed order but that the Ystradfellte section of the order be extended further south by at least 300m.

6. Can you extend the yellow lines as far as Nany y Carad please. I think without them the problem will be pushed down to our farm. We have cars parking on our yard even though the gate is closed – and I'm thinking this may get worse.