

CUMBERLAND COUNCIL DELEGATED PLANNING DECISION

1.	Reference No:	4/25/2408/DOC
2.	Proposed Development:	PARTIAL DISCHARGE OF CONDITION 2 OF PLANNING APPLICATION 4/08/2298/0
3.	Location:	YOTTENFEWS CAR PARK, YOTTENFEWS LANE, SELLAFIELD, SEASCALE
4.	Parish:	Ponsonby
5.	Constraints:	ASC Adverts - ASC;Adverts, Flood Area - Flood Zone 2, Flood Area - Flood Zone 3, Safeguard Zone - Safeguard Zone, Coal - Off Coalfield - Data Subject To Change, DEPZ Zone - DEPZ Zone, Preferred Route Corridor - Within Preferred Route Corridor, Outer Consultation Zone - Sellafield 10KM
6.	Publicity Representations &Policy	See Report
7.	Report:	
	Site and Location	<p>Yottenfews is an extensive parking area situated just off the Sellafield Nuclear site on the eastern edge of the site's boundary. It is accessed via a mini roundabout off Yottenfews Lane and is in close proximity to the former Visitor Centre site. It nestles discretely into the landscape being barely visible from outside its boundaries. This is the only facility of its kind close to the Sellafield site and extends some 14.28 hectares and provides 1300 car parking spaces divided over 5 areas. It also incorporates a crane testing area, HGV parking, a bus pick up area/ drop off area as well as a heli-pad.</p> <p>The primary purpose of the car park is to provide parking for Sellafield employees, visitors and contractors. They are bussed to and from the site direct from the car park.</p>

Relevant Planning History/ Context

The car park was originally constructed as a temporary facility in 1985 and then benefited from a subsequent series of temporary permissions. At the time it provided much needed off-site parking for contractors working on the construction of Thorp (Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant) on the Sellafield site which was a massive construction project. Permanent planning permission for its retention and continued use was eventually granted full planning permission in 2010 (4/08/2298/0F1 refers).

Condition 2 of the planning permission requires the provision of a Travel Plan every three years on a rolling basis with the following primary objectives:

- To reduce the number of single occupancy car trips to and from the SL site
- To promote the use of sustainable transport modes to and from the SL site
- To reduce traffic flows on the A595 in particular those travelling from the north of the SL site; and

At all times maintaining the safe and efficient operation of activities at the SL site.

It also requires that it contain details of:

1. An assessment of the SL site
2. The results of the most recent survey of employees and visitors travelling to and from the site.
3. A reasonable set of measures / work streams aimed at achieving the Travel Plan objectives with a view to reducing the number of single occupancy vehicle trips to the SL site.
4. A system for monitoring the operation of the Travel Plan and for reporting such monitoring to the LPA.
- 5 That the applicant implements the Travel Plan in full (as approved by the LPA), monitors its implementation and keeps its objectives and measures and/or work streams under review in accordance with the monitoring and review procedures set out above.
6. Six months prior to this Travel Plan coming to an end and every three years thereafter the applicant shall submit a further new Travel Plan in accordance with the above to the LPA for approval.

However, whilst an initial Travel Plan was produced covering the first period 2010 – 2013 and submitted with the application, a subsequent Travel Plans covering the period 2013 – 2016 and the period up to 2020 never materialised. Following the threat of enforcement action and subsequent negotiations to address the issue a new Travel Plan covering 2020 – 2023 was eventually submitted in 2020 to regularise the situation. This was eventually approved via a partial discharge of Condition 2 in March 2022 under reference 4/20/2010/DOC.



Cumberland Council

Proposal

his application seeks the approval of the third version of the Sellafield Travel Plan for the period 2025 – 2028 via partial discharge of Condition 2 of planning permission 4/08/2298/0F1.

Consultations

Ponsonby with Calderbridge PC – summary of response; neutral

Express concern about the Travel Plan`s relevance if assessed solely in relation to Sellafield, as the matter extends to other associated organisations operating within the area, including (but not limited to) the NDA, LLWR, Pioneer Park and the GDF programme. The Parish Council therefore requests that travel plans and their impacts on the wider local area are considered holistically, rather than being assessed in isolation for Sellafield as a single entity. Full and appropriate consideration should be given to the cumulative impacts arising from these other organisations and associated developments.

They request:

1. Copy of the implementation plan from Sellafield, confirming when this will be effective and clarification as to why this is necessary given the limited infrastructure and no current plans for improvements/alterations.
2. A response from Cumberland Council to confirm their views and position on this item.

In response Sellafield Ltd comment as follows:

With regards the comments from Ponsonby Parish Council, it is not clear exactly what the request is. As part of initial discussions, it was requested that a 12-month action plan was included, which can be found at appendix 12 of the document. This highlights when the implementation plans for active travel and EV strategy are anticipated to be complete. There has never been a request for an implementation plan for the whole Travel Plan so this is not something which will be produced.

Furthermore, in relation to the comment regarding 'limited infrastructure and no current plans for improvements/ alterations'. There is already significant infrastructure in place to support the travel network, and it is continually improved and altered to ensure it runs effectively. This would continue as part of aiming to meet the Travel Plan measures.

The comments from Sellafield Ltd have been passed onto the Parish Council.

Council Comment:

To comment further on the requests from the Parish Council and to confirm our position,

whilst there isn't an implementation plan as such Condition 2 of the permission for Yottenfews Car Park adequately provides for monitoring of the implementation of the approved Travel Plan. It requires that the applicant implements the approved Travel Plan in full, monitors its implementation and keeps its objectives and measures and/or work streams under review in accordance with the agreed monitoring and review procedures. This is undertaken via a series of Travel Plan meetings and workshops as considered necessary between the Council and Sellafeld Ltd.

Gosforth PC - no comments received

Beckermeth with Thornhill PC – no comments received

Drigg and Carlton PC - have concerns regarding worker travel and parking pressures.

They raise ongoing concerns regarding the impact of Sellafeld commuter traffic on our villages and neighbouring towns, particularly in relation to workers travelling from the south of the site.

Due to current access and travel rules, increasing numbers of Sellafeld workers are parking in local village and town car parks before continuing their journey. This behaviour is placing significant pressure on already limited parking infrastructure, affecting residents, businesses, and visitors. The issue is especially evident in communities to the south, where local car parks are frequently full during the working week.

Sellafeld Ltd's own policy states that the company has a responsibility to "monitor our travel arrangements and collect meaningful data to understand the impact of these arrangements on the wider community." In addition, the Yottenfews planning condition requires Sellafeld Ltd to provide updates to the local council and highways authorities on progress against their Travel Plan measures.

We acknowledge that a 12-month action plan has been developed to address the identified workstreams. However, given the scale and ongoing nature of the issue, the Parish Council requests that Sellafeld Ltd continues active monitoring—particularly of parking behaviours and travel impacts from the south—and ensures that mitigation measures are put in place where necessary.

They formally request a written response outlining:

1. What monitoring Sellafeld Ltd is currently undertaking in relation to staff travel and parking in surrounding communities.
2. How impacts identified in southern villages and towns are being measured and addressed.
3. What actions are included in the 12-month plan that relate specifically to reducing parking pressure in local communities.
4. How the planning authority will ensure Sellafeld Ltd continues to meet the obligations set out in the Travel Plan and Yottenfews condition.



Cumberland Council

They look forward to continued engagement on addressing the impacts of Sellafield operations on our local communities.

In response Sellafield Ltd offer the following:

What monitoring Sellafield Ltd (SL) is currently undertaking in relation to staff travel and parking in surrounding communities.

- SL record daily bus passengers from all locations. We have also just installed traffic counters around the site for a 12-week period to give better information on traffic flows near the site. Each month, car park counts are undertaken for on and near site car parks.
- SL will soon launch the employee travel survey which includes questions on where people park when accessing different travel modes and why they park there.
- SL is not able to monitor all parking in all local communities however SL representatives have attended areas of concern raised through the `problematic parking working groups`. If specific areas are of concern, this can be carried out for more locations.

How impacts identified in southern villages and towns are being measured and addressed.

- SL are actively engaged in the `problematic parking working group` and are working alongside council and local highways authorities' colleagues to develop a way forward. Specific location issues should be raised through this group.
- The business is actively looking for a location to host a park & ride car park to the south of the site. This is challenging given geographical and commercial constraints.
- Individuals who live to the south of the site are now able to apply for a single occupant vehicle pass for Yottenfews car park. This removes the need for them to car share to access the car park and should therefore not result in car shares leaving cars in inconvenient locations.

What actions are included in the 12-month plan that relate specifically to reducing parking pressure in local communities.

- As above, the business is actively looking for a location to host a park & ride car park.
- SL are actively engaged in the `problematic parking working group` meetings that are coordinated by Cumberland Council. Actions to mitigate this parking and timescales to implement them will be agreed through these meetings.

This is included in the 12 month implementation plan as follows:

Line 15: SL representatives to continue attending problematic parking working group and visiting areas of concern.

Line 16: Mitigations developed through problematic parking working group to be

implemented in line with timescales agreed through the working group

Council Comment re Point 4: How the planning authority will ensure Sellafield Ltd continues to meet the obligations set out in the Travel Plan and Yottenfews condition

Continual monitoring and review is fundamental and essential to ensure the successful and effective implementation of the Travel Plan and is a requirement of Condition 2. To ensure compliance regular monitoring meetings are held with Sellafield Ltd on at least a quarterly basis and more often as required. Specific groups have also been created to focus on target areas of the Travel Plan such as car sharing and community parking issues.

Seascale PC - no Comments received.

Highways England

Based on the information provided within the updated submitted Travel Plan, National Highways have no objection to this proposal.

Highways and LLFA

The submitted 'Site Travel Plan' covers the three-year period from 2025-2028 as required by this part of Condition 2. The LHA has been consulted and has provided feedback and comments during the development of the plan over the past 12 months. The plan has the same overarching objectives as the earlier plans but with a suite of new and revised measures aligned in workstreams against the three objectives. The LHA is satisfied with the proposed Travel Plan's reduced reliance on basic numerical targets, instead focusing on sustainable travel measures and considers this plan to be a suitable replacement, reflecting the dynamic and changing working practices, locations and projects etc. The LHA have no objection to the partial discharge of Condition 2, but it is important to note that due to its recurring nature in replacing the Travel Plan every three years, this part of the condition must remain in place.

Advisory Comment - suggest that the applicant considers a section 73 variation to this condition to make it applicable to more than the Main Sellafield site and in particular this Car park. TPs are constructed as “dynamic processes”, with content indicating that they will be reviewed, updated, and adapted over time as business use and needs evolve. It should consider the site's broader transport and travel strategies and integrate the Site's long term operational planning. They suggest a more rounded TP strategy along the following lines - “A site-wide Travel Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the Acceptance of the Travel plan for the 2029 - 2031 Travel Plan. This Plan shall cover all operational areas, including the Yottenfews car park and all satellite locations associated with the Sellafield operation. It shall include:

- baseline data for each location,
- objectives and targets for modal shift
- measures and management responsibilities covering the full site



Cumberland Council

- monitoring arrangements and remedial strategies,
- a review mechanism to incorporate new satellite locations as they become operational. It is our view that this echoes best practice guidance across the UK and will ensure coverage of all operational areas within Sellafield.

Sellafield Ltd Response

The comments provided by the Highways team are advisory, therefore we will keep a record of these for future reference.

Council Comment

There have already been tentative discussions regarding making the `Travel Plan` more relevant to today's highway conditions and how it can be assured that future iterations encompass the local and wider highway network as opposed to just the A595T etc. as the current condition requires. Options as to how this is undertaken need to be considered. It maybe that there is sufficient scope and flexibility within the wording of the existing condition to enable this or whether further formal alterations (such as a S73 or a new full application for permission) are needed to secure this. This is a matter for future debate.

Assessment

Although there is an acknowledged gap of some 2 years between the provision of the last version of the Sellafield Travel Plan, which covered the period up till 2023 and this version which runs from 2025, it is accepted, especially in view of the implications of the post pandemic era and the new ways of working this has brought, that no action is necessary. It was considered more important to allow an additional period of time for the new working protocols to settle and for the employee/visitor travel survey (which is an integral part of the plan) to be undertaken at a later date than originally intended so that it would be a more realistic reflection of the travel situation to, from and on site.

It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that this Travel Plan covering the time period 2025-2028, has the support of the local highway authority, National Highways and local community representatives.

Whilst this version of the Travel Plan differs from the previous version, in that it has a reduced reliance on tangible numerical targets and more focus on sustainable travel measures, it does on balance reflect the changing nature of working practices and the increasing focus on climate change. As such this is considered acceptable and it is recognised that it has the potential to meet the condition objectives and requirements. Its overall effectiveness in practice however, will be assessed via the Action Plan, implementation and monitoring procedures.

Conclusion

Taking the above into account, the Travel Plan 2025-2028 and accompanying submitted

	documents is considered satisfactory and as such condition 2 of planning permission 4/08/2208/0F1 can now be formally discharged (in part).
8.	Recommendation: Approve
Case Officer: H.S. Morrison	Date : 28/02/2026
Authorising Officer: N.J. Hayhurst	Date : 02/03/2026
Dedicated responses to:- N/A	