

Ainstable Parish Council

Serving the villages of Ainstable, Croglin, Newbiggin, and Ruckcroft,
the communities of Dale and Longdales, and the surrounding farms and houses

Chairman: Nigel Vear,
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An extraordinary meeting of
Ainstable Parish Council
held at Holme Holt, Armathwaite at 7:30pm on Tuesday 14th September 2021.

Ainstable Parish Council Agenda

Present: Cllr N Vear (Chairman); Cllr H Bellis; Cllr H Proud; Cllr G Proud; Cllr M Robinson; Cllr D Bradshaw; Cllr D Smith; Cllr H Little

In attendance: K Lawson (Clerk); Mr G McGregor (PPM Ltd); approximately 60 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Sproat and the reason approved.
2. No members declared any items of interest.
3. The Chairman introduced Mr McGregor, the new owner of Armathwaite Manor, formerly Armathwaite Place. Mr McGregor briefly outlined his company's plans for redeveloping the house as luxury holiday lets, and the improvements they are planning for the Public Rights of Way across the land. The Chairman thanked Mr McGregor for his attendance and told the meeting that a longer discussion regarding the planning applications for Armathwaite Manor and access to the woodland will take place at the parish council's meeting on 21st September.
4. There was a lengthy discussion of the parish council's proposals for the Holme Holt amenity. Cllr Vear began by outlining the parish council's concerns about parked vehicles on Armathwaite Bridge obstructing traffic, presenting a hazard to pedestrians and wheelchair users, and potentially affecting the emergency services' ability to respond to incidents on the Ainstable side of the bridge. He explained that four years ago, the parish council had asked Cumbria Highways to restrict parking on the bridge, and that Highways will only consider this if the parish council can provide free, off-road parking elsewhere. The parish council approached the landowner of the field next to the bridge, who agreed to lease the land. Pre-application advice was also sought from Eden District Council.

Cllr Vear outlined the parish council's aspiration for a low-impact car park, with a grasscrete surface, native hedging and new tree planting. He assured residents that only work necessary to ensure safety would be carried out to existing trees. He expressed the parish council's hope that improved access to the footpath on the river bank could be made available from the car park, currently only available from the worn and often slippery stone steps at the end of the bridge. In summary, the development would be designed to look as though it belonged and had been there a long time.

Cllr Vear explained that the purpose of the meeting was as a consultation, that all views would be fed into the process, and he opened up the meeting to take questions from the public.

A summary of the points raised:

- Finance: the development will be paid for by grant funding, with Ainstable Parish Council responsible for ongoing maintenance costs. Use of the car park will be free of charge but an honesty box could be made available.

- Parking restrictions on the bridge are the purview of Cumbria Highways but the parish council is in ongoing discussions with them and the project will not go ahead if Highways are not willing to put restrictions in place.
- Tourism: the parish council is not trying to attract more visitors to Armathwaite and will not be advertising the car park. The parish council just wants to clear parked vehicles from the bridge.
- Litter: the parish council will ask Eden District Council to provide litter bins at the site.
- Overnight stays: Ainstable Parish Council will seek to establish byelaws for the site which would prohibit overnight stays and impose any other restrictions deemed necessary.
- Toilets: there are no plans for toilets on the site.
- Run-off: the grasscrete surface should absorb any run-off, it is a widely-used surface.
- Lighting: any lighting will be for safety only and will be low-impact
- Bike racks: this idea came from a member of the public and the parish council will consider including bike racks in the plans.
- Pavements on the bridge: widening or adding pavements is a question for Cumbria Highways.
- Traffic speed: parked vehicles on the bridge slow down traffic through Armathwaite. Highways can be asked to look at traffic calming measures.
ACTION: Cllr Vear to ask Highways what parking restrictions and traffic calming measures they would consider.
- Traffic survey: Ainstable Parish Council will need to carry out a comprehensive survey if the project is to progress.
- Visual impact of the car park will be as low as possible. It will take a year or two for native hedges to establish but it will quickly look like any other field boundary.
- Size of the car park: there was some discussion about the ideal number of spaces to be provided.
- Liability: the car park would be covered by the parish council's public liability insurance, just like Ainstable Millennium Green is.

When there were no more questions or comments, The Chairman concluded the meeting by asking members of the public to email any comments or concerns to him. Residents can also complete the parish council's online survey via its website, where the full results of the survey so far can also be viewed.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm