

From: Poad, Andrew [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: 30 April 2014 16:06
To: Derek Proudlock
Cc: KELTIE, Carole
Subject: Housesteads Car Park

Hi Derek

The busy Easter weekend we have just experienced has prompted me to write to you to express our disappointment that the planning application for the car park extension at Housesteads was turned down. We experienced up to 16 cars parked on the roadside which apart from the traffic hazard they were causing on what is a clearway, then caused subsequent potential visitors to turn away, thinking the car park was full. Clearly, if the extension had gone ahead, we could have coped with the capacity required on this busy weekend and prevented a safety hazard and additional staff resource required to try and manage the situation.

This doesn't mean, however, that we would want the extension at any cost. I believe from earlier discussions we had with you regarding this that your committee were insisting on height restriction barriers to be incorporated into the scheme? This would be something we would find totally unacceptable, on aesthetic grounds, in a location such as Housesteads; unless of course deemed essential by the Highway Authority, which I believe from previous discussions was not the case. I believe they found the alternative mitigation you had incorporated into the scheme to be sufficient.

All our stars came into line this Easter with it being relatively late and the weather being so good; meaning people were keen to get out and about resulting in us all having a bumper weekend. This doesn't take away from the fact that the economy now seems to be recovering and our visitor figures are demonstrating that with this, combined with the investment we and English Heritage have already made at Housesteads (and others at sites such as Vindolanda), we are beginning to turn around the downward trend in visitor numbers we had been experiencing. This is great news for us all in the region and it would be a great shame if this long running issue were to in any way restrict this continued improvement. Also I believe, along with a successful development at 'The Sill', and we will be well on the way to getting visitor numbers back to where they were a decade ago.

I'm copying Carole Keltie into this at English Heritage and please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist in moving this forwards.

Kind regards

Andrew

Andrew Poad
General Manager
Hadrian's Wall Country Group
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