

Parking at Steyning Cricket Club / Memorial Playing Fields

Further to a joint meeting at the MPF Car Park between Steyning Cricket Club and Steyning Parish Council on 30th March 2021, SPC's report of that meeting and subsequent discussion at the Communities Committee meeting on 6th May 2021, the Chairman of Steyning Cricket Club was asked to canvas the views of their Committee regarding parking and to provide a report to SPC for further consideration.

During discussions with SCC Committee and club members, the historical arrangements and agreements about the car park and how it was previously managed were discussed and form part of the report. We have taken account of SPC's site meeting minutes and note the thoughts and ideas contained therein.

Key to our suggestions and proposals is the original intended use of the car park when it was first installed and the Cricket Club's involvement in the building of the car park. The intended use of the car park being for Steyning Cricket Club and other sporting activities on MPF, with an informal arrangement for recreational users of MPF was historically respected and was managed at key times such as cricket matches by ensuring that the gate was closed before matches and was also closed overnight.

More recently, there has been a growing number of people using the car park for residential and work purposes meaning that there is diminishing availability for MPF sporting activities and informal recreational use. For the Cricket Club, this causes significant issues on cricket match and practice days as many spaces are often taken by people not using MPF in any capacity and means that our own players as well as opposition teams are unable to park.

As a club, we are always delighted to see the MPF being used both for sports and recreational use. It's a fantastic space which as a community we should all be proud of. The car park inevitably needs to have some order restored so that it can be utilised for its original intended purpose and we recognise that SCC continues to be best placed to do this, unless SPC wishes to engage with an outside parking agent.

There are different options which could be applied. These are considered as each has relative pros and cons. The final solution may well be a mix of options as no single option fully addresses the issue.

1. Emergency Access

The car park has a hashed area in front of a locked chain link fence. The area is marked as no parking. However, over time the hashed area lining has become worn and people regularly park on this area as well as on the approach which would impede / block emergency access. This area should be re-lined as soon as possible. It is understood that this work is being arranged.

2. Car Park Lining

The general lining is also worn and gives the impression that the car park is not well maintained. It is understood that agreement has been reached to re-line the car park which should help in identifying more clearly where vehicles can park.

3. Permanent Signage

The car park needs clear signage. It needs to be more direct in message along the lines of 'this is a car park for use of users of the MPF only and spot checks will be made to ensure adherence'. It is suggested that signage along these lines be provided on the approach road indicating that car park usage is for users of MPF only and that the access may be additionally restricted on match days or events. The sign on the gate should be renewed to indicate restrictions on car park usage reflecting village green status and intended use. Signage within the car park should indicate parking within marked bays only and in accordance with MPF usage policy.

4. Temporary Signage

On match days or other events, temporary signage could be used say 24 hours in advance to advise that the car park is out of use for MPF recreational use, similar to what happens with the High Street car park on Farmers Market days.

5. Gate

The gate should be cleaned and repainted as it is looking tired. The post to secure in the open position needs renewing. Signage should be renewed as above. The gate should be closed and locked ahead of cricket matches and other events. It is suggested that the gate is closed and locked the night before cricket matches as the car park is not supposed to be used for overnight parking anyway. This could be carried out by the cricket club. This is in line with what was done several years ago.

6. Notices on Vehicles

Reminders of car park usage could be placed on vehicles, especially ahead of cricket matches and events, advising of car park closure. This could be carried out by the cricket club and has been done previously with some success.

7. Lockable Bollards

The use of lockable bollards could be used to manage availability of some (or all) spaces ahead of cricket matches or other events. This could be effective as an additional measure and could be managed by the cricket club. In order to provide adequate parking for home and away cricketers, the majority of the spaces would need bollards. Our proposal would be 14 for cricket use and 4 for other MPF users on match days.

8. Allocated Spaces

An alternative to lockable bollards could be allocated spaces with signage, similar to company spaces in shared car parks. This would require a permit from the club in order to park. This would be a cheaper option than bollards but would mean permanent allocation of spaces.

Our view is that we should trial items 1-7 as a package. We could reasonably hope that this will be enough to manage the car parking but should it be insufficient, the installation of an automatic barrier with restricted access should be considered. Beyond that, or as an alternative, a third party parking management company could be used to enforce parking but we consider this should be a last resort if other measures are not effective.