

Notify an issue to the Competition and Markets Authority

Please use this form to notify any issues relating to a market not working well, unfair terms in a contract, or any issues related to poor competition.

*** denotes mandatory fields**

Your contact details*

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Details of the issue you would like to report*

Which organisation do you represent (if any)?	Nil
Which business are you raising issues about?	The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<p>Please describe your issue as precisely as possible below. Any supporting documentation should be attached to the email.</p> <p><u>Introduction</u></p> <p>The RSPB currently plan to install parking meters and charge for parking at their 3 car parks on the South Stack RSPB Reserve, Anglesey.</p> <p>A planning application was submitted to the Isle of Anglesey County Council(IoACC) but was rejected on Health and Safety Grounds. The RSPB have stated that they will appeal this decision and, to date, they have submitted appeals for 2 of the car parks to the Planning Inspectorate in Cardiff (details of the currently submitted appeals can be found at https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?Caseid=3206443&CoID=0). An appeal for the third parking area (the smallest of the 3) will probably be submitted in due course.</p>	

This notification is not about the planning application as such, instead it is submitted as I feel that if the planning applications are successful the RSPB will have an unfair monopoly on parking in that area.

Background

The RSPB South Stack site on Anglesey is situated on an area of land on Holy Island that is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The majority of the land (approx 88%) was donated to the people and is owned by The IoACC. The RSPB have been leasing the land from the Council since 1977, the latest lease is attached to my email as **Attachment 1**, this shows the extent and conditions of the current lease (this copy of the lease, released by the IoACC can also be found at

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/south_stack_rspb_lease?nocache=incoming-1141259#incoming-1141259.)

Details on the Reserve itself can be found on the RSPB website at

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/south-stack-cliffs/>, within the visitor information section it is noted that there is no public transport to the site, so for the majority of people the only access will be by the use of a private motor vehicle.

In 2010 the RSPB bought the Cafe, adjacent house and car park at South Stack, this meant that they controlled 3 of the 4 car parks at the location. The location of the car parks can be found on the image at **Attachment 2**, this document also shows the car parks themselves along with a Google link to the online view. Whilst the 3 RSPB car parks are not marked, it can probably be seen that there is capacity for at least 100 parking spaces. However the parking area for the lighthouse can only accommodate 6 cars, meaning that the RSPB controls at least 94% of the available parking slots. The car park at the cafe (RSPB owned) probably accounts for 50% of available parking on it's own.

The area does contain attractions other than the RSPB Reserve, these are:

Anglesey Coastal Footpath. Details of this publicly funded initiative can be found at <https://www.visitanglesey.co.uk/en/about-anglesey/isle-of-anglesey-coastal-path/>, a map can be found of Section 12 of the route in **Attachment 3**. The map and table show that South Stack is a way point on section 12 of the Coastal Footpath, the 2 car parks on IoACC land are shown as these may act as start/end points for sub sections of the route. The RSPB owned car park is not listed on this map, indicating that it would not be an official stop point.

Holyhead Mountain Hut Circles. This site is the “Remains of about twenty dry-stone-built huts and associated field systems, belonging to a series of prehistoric and later farmsteads.” The CADW URL for the site is at <http://cadw.gov.wales/daysout/holyheadmountainhutcircles/?lang=en>, the full visitor information page is at <http://cadw.gov.wales/daysout/holyheadmountainhutcircles/visitorinformation?lang=en>, this page lists the RSPB leased car park as an available parking area. The initial view in Attachment 1 shows that RSPB car park 1 is directly opposite the site.

South stack lighthouse. Arguable the most popular destination for visitors to the area (Trip Advisor lists it as number 1 on things to do in Holyhead). Tours of South Stack Lighthouse are organised by South Stack Ynys Lawd Ltd. under licence from the Corporation of Trinity House. Details can be found on their website at <http://www.southstacklighthouse.com/>. South Stack Ynys Lawd Ltd is a not for profit company that was set up in 2017 to ensure tourists could visit the Lighthouse, it also raises money for local heritage and youth activities. Although the most popular destination it has the smallest car park, meaning many visitors do use one of the RSPB car parks, but this also benefits the RSPB as people visit their cafe and shop.

Finally, it should be remembered that lots of people just go for the spectacular views, it is used by many local people as a place to go and de-stress.

The RSPB must be aware that the Reserve is not the only reason for visits to the area, in 2011 they published a document called “RSPB Reserves and Local Economies” **attachment 4**, but also available at https://ww2.rspb.org.uk/Images/reserves_localeconomies_tcm9-290937.pdf), page 90 shows:

“Around 22% of all respondents said that the reserve was the main reason in them visiting the area.

74% said that South Stack was one or the main reason for visiting the area. “

So according to the RSPB themselves, more people (26%) did not go to the Reserve than the 22% who’s main reason was to go to the Reserve, plus 52% (the 74% less 22%) tied in a visit to the reserve whilst visiting for another reason.

Conclusions

It would seem to be the case that the RSPB have had a monopoly on parking in this area since 1977, however it has never really been a cause for concern as previously there seemed to be a willingness to provide free parking which benefited everyone.

If the RSPB insist on charging for parking it may have a negative effect on visits to the area for other attractions, whilst 2 may not be effected financially (other than spending public money for something that isn't used as often), there will probably be a financial adverse effect on the business at the lighthouse.

Is this something that the Competition and Markets Authority should look into?

Which market do you think the issue is in? Please define it in as much detail as possible, using the [UK Standard Classification Index](#)*

Class 94.99 - environmental and ecological movements, associations for the protection of animals.

Names of any other organisations you have contacted about this issue

None, but an objection will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate regarding this and other issues not covered under by the CMA.

Please email the completed form to: General.Enquiries@cma.gsi.gov.uk

Or post to: General Enquiries, Competition and Markets Authority, Victoria House, Southampton Row, London, WC1B 4AD

Please note the following about the information you have provided:

Please read our guidance on [how the CMA handles information and complaints about businesses](#). We will acknowledge receipt of completed forms or emails, but we cannot enter into correspondence about your report or provide individual help or advice. Instead you should contact [Citizens Advice](#).

Unless you indicate otherwise, we will assume that information you provide is intended to be used by us and is to be shared or disclosed only so far as is necessary and in line with legal requirements. All information is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and other legislation designed to protect individual privacy and commercial confidentiality.