

DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

DOVER JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD – 16 MARCH 2017

BUS/COACH PARKING PROPOSAL - DOVER SEAFRONT

Recommendation:

The Board is asked:

To consider the proposals and options for providing coach parking along, or near to, the seafront in Dover and to decide which, if any, options it deems best to pursue.

Contact Officer: Gordon Measey Ext 2422

Reasons why a decision is required

1. Members will recall the report that came before the Board at its last meeting on 8 December 2016 to find alternative parking for coaches along Dover seafront. It was explained that as part of the Dover Waterfront development, The Esplanade (the section of the seafront road between Harbour House and the end roundabout at Union Street) would be stopped-up (closed) and, that as a consequence, the Pay & Display coach and bus parking that existed there would be lost.
2. The original proposal that came before the Board was to provide alternative bus parking along Wellesley Road and Camden Crescent. Whilst this proposal was thought to be the one that would attract least objections from adjacent properties, it was acknowledged that larger buses using Camden Crescent would have difficulty turning around the memorial roundabout at the junction with Cambridge Road.
3. For this reason an alternative proposal was put forward at the last meeting to consider providing bus parking in Wellesley Road and Marine Parade instead. This proposal, shown as **Appendix A** to this report, was recently advertised with the closing date for the receipt of written objections being Monday 6 March 2017 at 12 noon.
4. Numerous objections have been received in response to the formal advertisement, mainly from residents in the Gateway Flats who are concerned about the impact (visual, safety and environmental) of buses parking in front of the flats and in Wellesley Road.
5. In terms of the number of objections received, at the time of writing this report 57 residences addressed in The Gateway Flats along Dover Seafront had written in and objected to the proposals by letter, petition or both. **Appendix B**, attached to this report, shows a template letter prepared for those who wished to use it. 29 residences submitted this template letter; 9 residences sent in their own letter and 63 residents responded by signing a petition. 22 had both sent a letter and signed the petition, so to keep the numbers meaningful, these 22 objections have been counted just the once. Nevertheless, the quantity of objections received is significant. In addition there were 4 objections received from non-Gateway Flat addresses, 3 from residents in Dover and one from Dorset who visits family at The Gateway. In total, 61 objections were received from residences. There were no letters of support.

6. A copy of the wording of the petition submitted by residents and the email to which it refers are attached as **Appendices C** and **D** to this report.
7. The objections raised in the template letter (Appendix B) are self-evident. The main objections raised in the other letters are quoted in the table below:

COMMENTS	NOTE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The seafront along with the Castle is one of Dover's greatest assets, it would be extremely detrimental to turn this area into a coach park for tourists. • the seafront will be spoilt. • crossing the road for the elderly and children will be an issue, as it will be for The Gateway residents with reduced mobility, impaired vision and hearing. • coaches parked with engines and air conditioning running will add to the pollution. • you have not engaged with the residents of the town to gauge their feelings. • a dropping off point could be allocated near the Premier Inn with coaches then encouraged to park at Maison Dieu Car Park. This would encourage visitors to walk through the town and increase footfall for the shops. • A better drop-off point would be the Market Square with quick access to the seafront via the subway. • Additional parking is available at Whitfield or by the Castle. • Potential accident hotspot with parked coaches obstructing the view for traffic using Wellesley Road and Marine Parade. • Safety aspects of buses disgorging their customers in the middle of a busy road . • During the summer there will be additional traffic and children. • Buses should drop off and then park away from the seafront and town. The following sites should be considered: Camden Crescent and/or Camden Crescent car park, De Bradelei's car park, Maison Dieu car park or the Cruise Terminal. 	<p data-bbox="1189 1061 1407 1227">Castle Hill is heavily used in summer by visitors to the Castle</p> <p data-bbox="1189 1308 1398 1574">2 of these car parks belong to DHB. Options for using Camden Crescent car park is referred to in this report</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the closure of The Esplanade, coaches will have to turn around somewhere along the seafront. 	Coaches can exit at the Premier Inn end
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have any other seaside towns allowed coach parking along their seafronts? • There are no toilets along the seafront. • The only conveniences are at Pebbles Kiosk and De Bradelei shopping outlet, neither of which are open all the time. • Increased noise levels from coaches and passengers waiting for disembarking. • Not good to site parked coaches opposite a residential dwelling of more than 200 apartments. 	Deal has seafront coach parking

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grass area in front of The Gateway is used by many children and teenagers for game and physical activities. Breathing the coach fumes will be detrimental to their health. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If coaches do not have to pay overnight for parking then there will likely be continued overnight noise and pollution for the residents of The Gateway. • With the works associated with the building of the new Marina, they'll be even more people wanting to use the amenities at this end of the promenade. • Perhaps the Dover Harbour Board should find replacement coach parking in one of their sites. 	<p>Currently all DDC parking is free overnight across the District</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am astounded that The Gateway residents have only been given until 6th March to lodge an appeal. • Crazy idea of buses parking to obstruct our views • Without any toilets, passengers will use the bushes outside our flats. • This is a residential area and western end of the Seafront is more commercial and therefore was more appropriate. • the detrimental effect of the pollution and eyesore of the coaches would have on visitors who are only here fleetingly. • Might I suggest that Camden Crescent car park, which is rarely fully utilised, be turned into a coach park. • A dozen coaches could be "lost" in the De Bradelei Wharf car park, preferably parked nearest to Snargate Street so that the prevailing winds direct the fumes into the A20 traffic. • If you have no other possible solution other than Marine Parade, then the obvious solution is the Premier Inn end of the road. • I make this suggestion reluctantly as coaches shouldn't be allowed to park near anyone's home, but Douro Place would be the ideal cul-de-sac to park coaches out of sight of the seafront. It is also where there are toilet facilities opposite, in the kiosk, during the summer months. • Why does the Council not use other spare areas to provide coach/bus, campervan and caravan parking? They could provide services such as toilets, power, refuse etc and make a reasonable charge for this. Surely there are other areas that can be used e.g. the parking area opposite De Bradelei Wharf 	<p>21 days is the standard period for a formal consultation/ advertisement</p> <p>The western end of the seafront and other car parks are referred to later in this report</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this were temporary measure, I could go along with it. Why haven't the car parks at Camden Crescent, De Bradelei Wharf and Union Street not been considered first? • I actually question the need for coach parking. Dover has the only seafront where coach parking is provided. 	<p>The car parks in Union Street belong to Port of Dover</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Camden Crescent been considered as a set-down point? • This will obstruct the view from many apartments in The Gateway, where residents pay a premium rate on their council taxes, just to live here. 	<p>The problem of large coaches trying to turn around the memorial roundabout would still exist</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will coach parking return to The Esplanade end of the seafront? 	<p>The Esplanade will have no parking because of the Marina development, but parking at the western end is referred to in this report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the Harbour Board have any input into the siting of the new coach areas • It appears that DHB is able to dictate to Dover District Council what type of development takes place on the seafront without any concerns about the impact for the seafront residents and businesses in particular 	<p>No, the problem has been left for DDC to try to resolve.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much income is generated by DDC for allowing camper vans to park on the seafront at night • By charging tourist coaches for parking, they are unlikely to come 	<p>None, as overnight parking across the district is free</p>

8. The task of finding alternative parking for buses and coaches along Dover seafront is proving problematic. The recently closed coach parking in The Esplanade was, in most people's eyes, the best location for it:

- It wasn't immediately outside any property (residential or business)
- It was easily accessible from the A20 via Union Street
- It was located at the commercially busier end of the seafront
- There were no nearby side road junctions that had emerging traffic and/or sight-lines issues.

9. Whilst there is space on Marine Parade to park coaches outside The Gateway Flats and the building is set back further away from the road than others along the seafront, there are drawbacks to coach parking at this location:

- This is the most open section of the seafront, so the impact of parked coaches is most visual and can be seen for a greater distance than if it were to be positioned at one or other end.
- It is the one location that impacts on most residents
- As coaches, and the tourism it brings, benefits business, it would seem reasonable for parking to be placed closer to those businesses that would or could benefit
- It is generally more acceptable to have commercial parking outside business premises, rather than outside residential properties

10. There are other options that the Council could consider:

- There is space to provide parking for two coaches outside the Premier Inn at the eastern end. This would hopefully remove it sufficiently far enough away from The Gateway Flats. The Premier Inn already has its own off-street parking area in front of its building, therefore coach parking on the road outside

would be somewhat off-set. The coach visitors could benefit from the eating and drinking facilities at the Premier Inn and would also have the option to use the Pebbles Kiosk on the seafront in summer. The coach parking here could interfere with the sight lines for traffic emerging from the Premier Inn car park off Douro Place, therefore advice would need to be sought from KCC Highways.

- An alternative is to provide coach parking at the other end of the seafront, outside Harbour House. There is sufficient space to provide two coach spaces on the Harbour House side, and if need be another two on the opposite side of the road (as there are footways on both sides of the road at this end). This location has the advantage that it's nearest to where the coaches used to park, it can provide up to 4 spaces in one location (if both sides of the road are used), has no nearby side road junctions that have emerging traffic and/or sight-lines issues, offers a choice of appropriate nearside parking for both left and right-hand drive coaches, and is within closer walking distance to De Bradelei Wharf and the subway to the town centre.
- Consideration could be given to adapting Camden Crescent car park to accept coaches. This would involve losing a sizeable quantity of car parking. Early indications are that to provide just 4 coach spaces would involve the loss of 29 car parking spaces (this compares with the 3 car parking spaces required on-street to provide one coach space). Additional parking out in the road may also need to be removed to allow the space for larger coaches to exit the car park, and if this still wasn't sufficient, a new exit from the car park may be needed (all subject to planning permission). If this option were to be considered a more detailed survey would be required to test the feasibility.
- The use of De Bradelei Wharf Car Park: this car park is owned and controlled by the Port of Dover. It is ideally located, but the Port may have good reasons why it couldn't or wouldn't use this or its other car parks for coach parking, not least the impending seafront development. This would be a matter for the Port of Dover to consider.
- Drop-off points have been mentioned and could be considered. They still require space and locating somewhere and don't necessarily address all the issues associated with parking bays. On the plus side, less spaces are required because of the shorter periods of use, but on the negative side coaches aim to arrive early when picking up passengers and therefore have a tendency to stay longer than desired. Providing drop-off points still leaves a potential problem of providing replacement coach parking elsewhere. Drop-off points also create enforcement issues when a bus arrives early and isn't loading and/or another bus is waiting. As an aside, there is already a loading bay in Cambridge Road which could be used for dropping off and picking up passengers, so it could be deemed redundant to provide a drop-off point on the seafront.

11. The Board is asked to consider the proposals, options and objections received for providing coach parking along, or near to, the seafront in Dover, and to decide which, if any, options it deems best to pursue.

12. Evaluation of options available to the Board:

- a. To recommend that the advertised coach parking proposal as shown as Appendix A to this report be sealed and brought into effect.

- b. To decide which, if any, of the options discussed in this report should be pursued and/or advertised.
 - c. To propose an alternative option to be pursued and/or advertised.
 - d. To withdraw this and any proposal to provide replacement coach parking on or in the vicinity of Dover Seafront
13. All the received written representations referred to in this report will be available to the Board meeting on 16 March 2017 and can be viewed in advance by prior arrangement with the Parking Operations Manger, Gordon Measey (ext 2422). Any additional qualifying representations received after the time of the writing of this report, will be reported verbally to the Board at its meeting.

Background Papers

Parking Services Files.

Consultation Statement

The Portfolio Holder for Access and Licensing has been consulted on the proposals outlined in this report.

Impact on Corporate Objectives

The proposed changes to the waiting restrictions outlined in this report will foster improved opportunity and access.

Attachments

- Appendix A Wellesley Road and Marine Parade, Dover - Plan showing the advertised extent of the proposed "Pay & Display" Bus (Coach) Parking.
- Appendix B Template letter submitted by 29 Gateway residences.
- Appendix C A copy of the wording of the petition (signed by 63 Gateway residents)
- Appendix D The email referred to in the submitted petition

ROGER WALTON

Director of Environment and Corporate Assets

The officer to whom reference should be made concerning inspection of the background papers is the Parking Operations Manager, Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ. Telephone: (01304) 821199, Extension 2422