

# Appendix A1

Tel: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

The Gateway  
Marine Parade  
Dover  
Kent  
CT16 1LG

15<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Parking Operations Manager  
Dover District Council Offices  
Honeywood Road  
White Cliffs Business Park  
Dover  
Kent  
CT16 3PJ

Dear Sir

**Re: Proposed Coach/Bus Parking : Marine Parade – TRAN2018/33**  
**: Waterloo Crescent - TRAN2018/23**

I wish to raise objections to the above proposal on environmental, unsuitability, safety and health grounds much along the lines as set out in my objection to TRAN2016/003 Proposed Coach/Bus Permit Parking, in my letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017. I feel very passionate about the seafront and what I feel are DDC's efforts to foist commercial vehicle parking along this wonderful amenity we have. It is there to be enjoyed and no thought should be given to ruining it for Dorvians. I hoped this letter would be a shorter diatribe that my last but I'm sorry, I simply could not precis my heartfelt thoughts and objections, and have had to voice my fears about the chaos the creation of these seemingly innocuous coach/bus bays could bring about.

I notice the word **Permit** has been removed from the above applications presumably because you are charging these coaches £7.50 each to park (ticket from the current parking machines?) for a 24 hour period, which means any coach can arrive at any time during that 24 hour period and stay for as long as they choose, as long as they put £7.50 in a parking machine as each 24 hour period comes to an end. This means any coach from anywhere in the UK or abroad can park at any time and stay indefinitely should they so choose. With a permit system at least DDC would have some control and could ensure that it was coaches parking in the designated areas whose occupants are visiting local attractions or using local hotel accommodation. Once word gets round about our cheap 24 hour parking, this free for all means any coach coming out of the docks, coming down Jubilee Way, or the M20, etc, going anywhere in, or from, the UK, could simply decide to pull over and buy a ticket, which means these limited designated spaces wouldn't be available for coaches serving the immediate community.

To allow parking this limited number of coaches at either end of the seafront is simply tinkering at the edges and will do nothing long term to solve an evergreen problem, i.e. DDC's need to find a coach parking area away from the centre of Dover, and especially away from our beautiful seafront. Inevitably these few spaces designated for coaches/buses will lead to 'creep'. A coach driver isn't going to worry about leaving his vehicle next to a coach occupying a designated space, he'll just park there, then gradually from either end of the seafront, coaches will creep further and further along until the seafront is carpeted with them. The more there are, the more lorry drivers will be inclined to park their vehicles amongst these 'illegally' parked coaches as they'll just see 'commercial vehicles' and so, by default and stealth, permanent seafront parking for any vehicle will be here to stay.

Parking is very rarely monitored on the seafront and, after 5 pm not at all, which means these coaches, together with any other large unofficially parked vehicles, will remain there unchallenged. These proposed bays send a message that DDC has no problem with large commercial vehicles blighting their seafront and a precedent will have been set.

On online motorhome forums it is widely publicised that 'no one comes near you' so the likelihood of getting ticketed or moved on is negligible. I'm sure the same message will reverberate round the coach/commercial driving fraternity before too long.

I truly believe this is DDC's agenda, it's the lazy ready-made option which means DDC won't have to bother to find land to create a coach/bus park; DDC has no compunction whatsoever about spoiling, defacing and destroying our seafront.

Pencester Gardens, and many of our parks and open spaces, are no longer safe and are peopled by gangs, drunks and drug addicts, they are 'no go' areas, the seafront is our only remaining safe open space where people know they can come and enjoy the views, relax and sit awhile, especially if they have poor health or mobility problems.

Why would DDC even consider this area as suitable for parking large commercial vehicles anywhere along its length? Who wants to walk past a wall of intimidating parked coaches? It is already a strange experience driving between dozens and dozens of towering motorhomes (sorry cars) parked both sides of Marine Parade for months on end, and walking on the pavements beside them parked nose to tail does not only ruin the whole seafront vista, it is indeed a very claustrophobic, depressing and unsettling experience too. Why does DDC persist in trying to make things even worse for us all (the people of Dover) by encouraging coaches and buses to park here too, albeit initially in a few designated bays?

Then there is the matter of lost revenue, a coach will take up at least 3 car spaces and these 70 seater-plus monsters will no doubt want at least 4 or 5 which means at any one time the spaces you propose procuring at either end of the seafront will accommodate no more than 4 – 6 coaches in total. How is this going to solve the coach parking problem, when you're not issuing permits and it's a 'free for all' on a 'first come first served' basis?

There was a vociferous complaint by Cllr Peter Wallace about lost parking revenue in the local paper published on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018, has no one done the sums? I admit that not every car space is going to be occupied 8 hours a day at £1.10 per hour, or £6.50 for a day's parking, I've no doubt either this proposed cheap coach parking won't be used every minute of the 24 hours it's available to coach drivers, but if you lose 12 spaces as you're proposing at £1.10 per hour from 9 am – 5 pm (i.e. 8 hours) that's £8.80 per space per day x 12 which equates to £105.60; 12 spaces at the £6.50 per day tariff equates to £78. You propose charging £7.50 per **24 hours** for coaches so, if you squeeze say 6 into the purloined car spaces, then £7.50 per 24 hours x 6 equates to £45. Hasn't anyone sat down and taken in to consideration the loss of revenue, which equates to £33 per day or, in the worst case scenario £60.60 per day which, over a 7 day week is a loss in revenue of either £231 or £424.20? The projection is of course based on daily full capacity usage which I admit is unlikely, but using these figures over say a **40 week period** (which includes a 12 week allowance for less usage during the winter) then these coach/bus bays would give DDC a **financial loss of £9,240 or £16,968 annually**.

DDC are very good at making Rules and Regulations, i.e. dogs on leads, flying drones, electronic equipment, littering, parking for cars and motorcycles only (then ignoring motorhomes taking up a couple of spaces) etc, etc, but they're very bad at enforcing any of these as there's no policing, no enforcement, so no deterrent.

DDC's refusal to acknowledge that motorhomes are not cars is farcical, and all that will happen is that we will get more and bigger motorhomes who will feel even more comfortable ruining our seafront as they nestle in the shadow of commercial coaches. Many of these motorhomes are as large as the commercial coaches themselves and many are converted 3-ton lorries, yet all this is ignored.

Waterloo Crescent is much too narrow for coaches to be parked either side and I've been told by residents that cars are regularly damaged by coaches trying to manoeuvre in such a tight space, also diesel fumes pour into their homes as engines idle to operate cooling or heating systems. This is certainly NOT the place to even consider parking large vehicles.

I've noticed that the lorries delivering supplies, beer, beverages, etc, to the Premier Inn have to park on the corner as you leave Marine Parade to join Townwall Street at the Eastern Docks end, which means overtaking vehicles have to pull out and cross on to the oncoming carriageway on a blind corner. Parked coaches would make negotiating this bend dangerous as overtaking vehicles would spend the majority of their time in the middle of, or on the wrong side of, the road.

**I do not understand why DDC don't address their coach/bus/commercial parking problem NOW and stop tinkering around the edges by appropriating our seafront by stealth.**

I recall saying in my letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2017 that **IF there was no other solution than to use Marine Parade for coach parking**, that Douro Place itself, or the area close to it, would be the only sensible option. However, now that Premier Inn have been granted permission to extend their establishment by 30 rooms, plans which must have been approved by DDC, they're losing a huge chunk of their car park, when in fact they will need more parking spaces to accommodate their extra clientele. Was this not taken into account when the planning proposal was submitted? *(I've been told the extension is being built on stilts to retain some parking spaces but I don't know if this information is correct or not.)*

Why was provision not made for coaches to park within the St James' shopping complex to accommodate Travelodge's clientele arriving by this method? Indeed, why can't a section of this car park be allocated on a permanent basis for coach parking? Why is it that planning applications are waved through without someone addressing the obvious parking issues these bring with them, then foist upon the residents of Dover some cobbled together ham fisted solution by trying to take away their only picturesque, unspoiled and safe open space?

As the result of yet another attempt on DDC's part to foist commercial vehicle parking on to Marine Parade/Waterloo Crescent, (DDC having failed to find a solution since the last proposal was rejected some 17-18 months ago), I have tried to come up with some alternative suggestions:

1. I notice on your website that DDC advertise motorhome parking in Maison Dieu Car Park where vehicles are allowed to occupy two bays, but this is not advertised on either Marine Parade or Waterloo Crescent. It is presumably because DDC's Parking Operations classify motorhomes as 'cars'. As you continue to allow these 'cars' to litter and blight the seafront willy-nilly, then why not utilise Maison Dieu Car Park for coach parking?

You obviously recognise that coaches and buses need extra length parking bays, so why not use Maison Dieu Car Park for such parking? This would make good and sensible use of the allocated but unused space already set aside for motorhomes. It wouldn't be difficult to mark out appropriate sized bays, and would seem the ideal solution to the coach/bus parking problem. It could be organised in a trice and probably operational within no more than four weeks. Maison Dieu Car Park would hold up to 10 coaches/buses easily and you'd still have a few spaces left for local use. Facilities would be easily accessible for coach drivers too.

2. Why wasn't the land that was cleared at the bottom of East Cliff recently acquired and utilised for coach parking? It's the perfect solution, coaches would be out of site, spoil no one's facilities and would not inconvenience their drivers.
3. Why not Whitfield? You could use the bus and coach station? The drivers would have all the facilities they need at Whitfield, and they could use the local bus network to traverse between there and the town.
4. I don't know where they park the cruise buses but what about allowing coach drivers to use this facility?
5. Any space at Whitfield, and there is so much vacant land there at the moment, could be used as a temporary coach park then, when the land was acquired for development, an adjoining vacant area could be used for parking. You could park every coach operators' vehicles up at Whitfield for many years until the land is fully utilised, which would give you up to a decade to come up with a decent and permanent solution to bus/coach/commercial vehicle parking that wouldn't ruin Dover's seafront. Once again, coach drivers could use the local buses to travel into Dover,
6. Britannia coaches I understand park in the vicinity of Poulton Close. Could that option be explored?
7. The landowner beside Dover Castle doesn't seem averse to his land being used to accommodate vehicles at special events. Could an arrangement be made with the landowner to help solve the coach/bus problem on a more permanent basis?
8. There is a lower car park beside the castle which is used by a local coach company to ferry people into the castle on special event days. Could DDC liaise with English Heritage, or whoever owns this land, to allow coaches to be parked there at other times? It's a waste that this area is left unoccupied when coaches/buses require somewhere to park.
9. There is an under-utilised car park approached from a turning off York Street as you exit for Military Hill, the road to the car park is immediately on your left. Coaches would be out of the way and disturb no-one, with drivers being literally in the town.
10. There is still de Bradelei Wharf which would involve DDC coming to an arrangement with Dover Harbour Board but, as DHB's major development scheme was approved, but at the same time decimating the parking around Dover, surely they shouldn't be averse to assisting DDC overcome their parking problems, at least in the short term?

From recent publicity the government is actively encouraging a reduction in the use of diesel vehicles on our roads which have been proved to be detrimental to our health, maybe even going so far as to be considering financial inducement to encourage people to stop using these, or banning them altogether. Buses (coaches) are notorious for sitting for long periods with their engines running emitting foul smelling noxious black fumes for the purpose of cooling or heating their interiors according to the time of year. With all this in mind, we should not allow any part of our seafront to be littered with coaches/buses/any type of commercial vehicle, because DDC persist in pursuing an unnecessary and lazy solution to their parking problem. We may be told it's only a few large vehicles for now but, and I reiterate, once a precedent's been set, it's almost certain application will be made to extend the area, with some council official stating that no one objected when the proposal was mooted initially. Dover's seafront is its lungs, and the one remaining decent attractive open area which people are comfortable to frequent.

I have enclosed a stamped addressed envelope for you to acknowledge receipt of my letter, which I will email also, as I want to have confirmation you received this before noon on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018.

If the ticketed £7.50 x 24-hour bus/coach parking as published does go ahead, I'd like you to justify why allowing this to happen in such a public, populated and picturesque location was your only option.

Very few people I've spoken to know this consultation about introducing coach parking on the seafront has, again, raised its head, they were under the impression the decision to abandon coach parking on Marine Parade was made last year and the matter put to bed at that time. I have to say I came across the proposal by accident as you don't publicise forthcoming consultations very well, no doubt in the hope that no one sees these until it's too late, and then you tell us it was our fault as we didn't have our say!

As long as I am aware that you are considering any sort of additional or commercial, indeed any further parking on Dover seafront, i.e. Marine Parade, Waterloo Crescent, Wellesley Road, Douro Place, the Road with No Name, Cambridge Terrace and any other road, side road or street that links to the seafront then I will object all the time I have breath in my body.

DDC has made some dreadful dreadful decisions about what happens to our lovely town, most of which have failed or ultimately will fail, and there's no going back. DDC resurrect their policies again and again, just as is happening with the proposal to allow coach/bus/commercial vehicle parking along our seafront, until you grind everyone into submission and get your way. Please have the decency to stop this ridiculous suggestion which will be the beginning of the end of our seafront as we know it NOW, and look for a long term solution to this problem.

You should NOT be allowed to ruin the Jewel in Dover's Crown.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by a thick black horizontal bar redacting the name.

Copied to: *Mr C Elphicke - MP*  
*Cllr Nigel Collor (Castle Ward)*  
*Mr J Cope - The Dover Society*