

Summary of Key Points Raised by Responders

(Proposed Overnight Motor Caravan Parking Prohibition, Dover Seafront)

Response to proposals: Objections 13, Support 3

Key points raised by Objectors:

- By far the majority of these are foreign registered vehicles on a “comfort” stop before onward travel or awaiting embarkation. The proposed changes will, undoubtedly, adversely affect many of these travellers. The £10 overnight charge for motorhomes and caravans will deter “overnight” parking of both GB and foreign registered vehicles. Foreign drivers are likely to ignore the proposed charges with all that ensues for monitoring and enforcement. Health and safety require a period of rest from driving that may well be ignored if onward travel is continued when a break is deemed unnecessary. Current free parking overnight allows this safety to be achieved. Where would these visitors go to find alternative parking? Enforcement of parking fines requires permanent overnight patrols requiring extra manpower and attendant cost implications (ultimately a charge passed to DDC taxpayers). Visitors to Dover (even those transiting the area) deserve to be welcomed to our town and not driven away by an extortionate levy on their short stay. For the above reasons, I object to the proposed changes to parking on Dover Seafront.
- As a tenant of Waterloo Mansions, we have witnessed over the past couple of years since we have been there, the seafront being used and sometimes abused by owners of caravans and motorhomes. We have witnessed the area being used as a public toilet which includes the front gardens of Waterloo Mansions. In December 2020 when the Port was gridlocked for 4 days prior to Christmas, HGV and van drivers were using the area as a toilet because there are no facilities down there. There is also the issue of rubbish. The bins that are there are inadequate, allowing seagulls to gain access them and disperse the rubbish everywhere. Again, the bins that are there are not emptied enough. Most of the residents and tenants are now retired, looking for a peaceful life; this I feel will destroy the peace and quiet of the seafront. It always seems as though when these ideas are put in place, those that live in the areas of concern are never consulted. I know you have invited us to send our concerns but how do we know anybody takes any notice of them or even takes them seriously? Sad to say at the end of the day it all comes down to revenue for the Council and I fear that will be the reason this will probably go ahead.
- I strongly object to the instigation of parking fees for overnight parking of caravans and motorhomes on Marine Parade and Waterloo Crescent. There is no valid reason, apart from extracting money from visitors to Dover, for the imposition of overnight parking fees, when the same does not apply to cars and goods vehicles under 3500kg as most caravans and motorhomes are under 3500kg.
- We totally oppose the proposal for the following reasons. We did not buy a £1/4m apartment to look at, basically what will be, a caravan park. There are no controls as in management whereby the area will be monitored at **all** times, so that people are not parking outside the timings. We have seen over the years many caravans, motorhomes etc., parked along Marine Parade at times when they should not park, and nobody seems to mind. There are no facilities as in toilets for these people to use. No facilities for washing etc. I appreciate you will respond by saying they have the facilities in their vehicles, but the managing, as in emptying etc., which you can do on a caravan park, but not on a seafront. Totally unhygienic. No facilities for disposal of rubbish, other than the bins along the seafront. No control over noise at night. No control over delinquent behaviour. Dogs seem to be unsupervised along Dover seafront. This will be exacerbated with this caravan park and their pets. It is very sad to see the way dogs foul the seafront, the new pier etc., day after day without repercussions. It is also a health hazard, especially on the beach. You have empty waste land where the Dover Swimming baths used to be. Would you not consider using that area for this purpose? You could put toilet and washing facilities which could be monitored by a security guard. They would be contained in one area without being spread along the whole seafront, turning the environment of the seafront into a caravan park. Very sad.

- I wish to OBJECT to the proposed parking charge on Dover Seafront areas as when used it may only be for a 2hr period between the hours of 1800 & 1600, so the proposed £10 charge is excessive for such a short period. I am sorry but this action will deter people from travelling out of Dover Port and, in the long term, lead to lost revenue for the Borough.
- I would like to strongly object to your proposal, as would the rest of my team.
- I write to formally object to the proposed parking charges for motorhomes and caravans on Dover seafront between the hours of 6pm and 6am. My reasons are, the parking is not oversubscribed, no charge is justifiable. The parking is typically used as a rest stop for those transiting the Channel. It will disproportionately affect UK drivers as foreign vehicles are likely to ignore any charge or subsequent fine. It strikes me as a simple money-making exercise at the disproportion detriment to the travelling motorist. It also targets unfairly the leisure traveller by specifying caravans or motorhomes. This by implication would then not apply to other types of vehicles that people may sleep in, e.g., curtain sided transport vans with sleeping cabs etc.
- I remember a questionnaire last year, I disagreed with it then as I disagree now. You have not supplied one public toilet or one ablution block along the seafront! The drivers of these vehicles leave all sorts of rubbish along the seafront, including human excrement, in plastic bags! Last summer we even had ethnic community representatives occupying pavements with their chairs, tables and whatever. They cooked on the pavement too and again left bags of leftover food on the lawn, inviting rats, seagulls and foxes. Is this hygienic? Do you care?? Is DDC interested in what the people say? No. All that interests you is taking parking fees and Council tax. I am disgusted with the present Council. I sincerely hope to vote you out in the next local election!
- I strongly object to any motorhome or caravan parking on the seafront. The owners/users empty their toilets and rubbish bins in the Gateway gardens. The noise of them going and coming is awful, they do not seem to realise it is a residential area and conduct their meeting and greetings at the top of volume all night long. With their noise and dumping of their stinking waste, life becomes intolerable during the summer months. No caravans or motor caravans at all on Dover seafront please.
- I live in the Gateway Flats and *centre stage* to the seafront (Marine Parade) and the proposed changes to parking restrictions set out in your letter dated 6th February 2021 with attendant drawing (TRAN/2020/0005 - Rev C).

You ask for comment/objection to the proposal. My views derive from personal experience over the past five years and I would not wish to speak for others.

Present parking arrangements in this area allow overnight parking free of charge (6pm-9am). Covid restrictions aside, overnight parking comprise chiefly motor homes and the occasional caravan that have alighted from, or waiting to embark, ferries at Dover Eastern Docks.

By far the majority of these are foreign registered vehicles on a 'comfort' stop before onward travel or awaiting embarkation.

Although summer is the busiest time, this is an all-year round phenomena.

Most arrive early afternoon or evening and depart before the present 9am parking charges come into force. Others arrive during the late evening or night following disembarkation seeking a rest before continuing their journey. Cars (without caravans) parked overnight are unusual and small in number. Save one exceptional circumstance where two associated GB registered mobile homes stayed for 48 hours, were somewhat vocal and departed leaving litter behind, no others, in my experience, have caused any problem or nuisance during their stay, despite being situated within 60-70 metres of Gateway flat residents. Some regard these overnight stayers as a nuisance and an eyesore. I dissent from those views. Better to look out on a quiet social scene than an empty road.

The proposed changes will undoubtedly adversely affect many of these travellers.

The £10 overnight charge (in truth not actually just overnight but applicable from 6pm every day of the week) for motor homes and caravans will deter 'overnight' parking of both GB and foreign registered vehicles. Whilst GB registered vehicle drivers will think twice about paying £10 just for the privilege of simply sleeping in their vehicle for a short period overnight, they are likely to disperse elsewhere in the locality with potential adverse consequences for the town [see footnote].

Foreign drivers are likely to ignore the proposed charges with all that ensues for monitoring and enforcement. *[Presently supermarket delivery vehicles often park on the seafront whilst making deliveries up to 10pm at night. Is it proposed that they too should pay £10 for each and every visit to many local shoppers who are unable to shop in person?]*

Health and Safety requires a period of rest from driving that may well be ignored if onward travel is continued when a break is deemed necessary (not, as for larger vehicles a legal requirement but nonetheless as important to keep our busy roads safe). Current free parking overnight allows this safely to be achieved.

Where would these visitors go to find alternative parking? In-town off street parking is available and currently free of charge overnight although Stembrook car park is just as much in a residential area as the seafront and with capacity limitations. Albany Place car park is another possibility as is the old Dover Leisure Centre car park but again with limited capacity.

Enforcement of parking fines requires permanent overnight patrols requiring extra manpower and attendant cost implications (ultimately a charge passed to DDC taxpayers).

Fines levied on foreigners are all but unenforceable (even more so now that we have left the EU) and where attempted will incur recovery costs far in excess of the £10 charge or the manpower needed to monitor and enforce recovery.

Visitors to Dover (even those transiting the area) deserve to be welcomed to our town not driven away by an extortionate levy on their short stay. In my view this proposal is nothing more than an ill-conceived attempt to raise cash at the expense of our visitors and doomed, I suspect, to fail as an economically unsound proposal and a waste of taxpayer money.

For the above reasons I object to the proposed changes to parking on Dover Seafront.

Note: Proposed Parking (P&D) signage. This sign as per your 'Key to Map' is totally incomprehensible to most foreign visitors in a camper van/mobile home. They are neither a caravan nor a car as depicted. Although this is made clearer on the Machine Tariff Label the roadside signage is unhelpful and what visitors first see.

- I would like to see Motor homes and Caravans Banned at anytime for reasons.
 - [1] They come and go at all times of the night some toot their horns.
 - [2] They leave a substantial amount of rubbish cleared at ratepayers expense.
 - [3] Some use our bushes and underpass as a toilet which the Residents have to pay to be cleaned and Disinfected .

If the Proposal goes ahead it should be enforced on a regular basis. Payment should include Blue Badge holders. How will Fines be collected if people live outside of the UK or of no fixed abode.

- We wish to raise objections to the above proposal on the grounds of anti social behaviour. Whilst some of the owners are respectful of their surrounding there are a large element that are not. It is not acceptable to expect the residents that live near by or the people of Dover to accept people urinating and defecating in the sunken gardens or the beach. Nor pouring urine down the drains. We have seen both. We would question what facilities you intend to provide for the travellers? The bins provided may look in keeping with the surroundings but they are not fit for purpose, they are not large enough to take the waste left by people staying over night.
- This is a total disaster and, if permitted, would surely represent the final nail in the coffin for our once proud town. The seafront, recently upgraded by Dover Harbour Board, is just about all we have left of the historic Gateway to England, free of through traffic. The seafront is lined with residential properties, hotels, restaurants and the Yacht Club, all very popular venues from which to enjoy the unique view. All this would be lost, and businesses would suffer badly. To permit caravans and

trailers to park in the evenings and overnight is totally misguided and wrong, particularly as a practical, viable option is planned on the A20 outside town. The disruption from people, children, dogs and rubbish would be unbearable. No more quiet evening strolls along the seafront, no more peaceful evenings overlooking the famous view, just rows of noisy, smelly wagons. Quite frankly, it is difficult to believe that anyone with the slightest knowledge of, or regard for our town and its inhabitants could seriously contemplate such a proposal.

Key points raised by Supporters:

- I am writing to agree with the proposal, but with a few important considerations; These proposals must be strictly adhered to with regular checks throughout the night. Additional larger bins for all the rubbish which ends up along the grass areas in front of the Gateway Flats. Please, please install bins that are fox and seagull secure. Please ensure that lorries and coaches do not use these proposed parking areas for their use. Daily litter picking from 7am to stop it being blown along the seafront. The Caravan Club advertises free parking along the Seafront overnight, they and similar organisations need to be notified in advance.
- I raised this matter about 5 years ago and am glad to see that someone, at last, has decided to “bite the bullet” and shown some positive action in this matter. I hope that it will contribute to the Budget for the Council and possibly reduce our Council Taxes! People using the spaces, as a free convenience will now have to contribute to the local economy when using local resources. Hopefully, it will also reduce the amount of rubbish they leave behind for the Council to clear. My only suggestion is that the signs should include a logo representing a motor caravan. The sign shown in your letter, could lead to a confusion with a MC owner believing that because a MC logo is not shown, it does not apply to him and it is free. This leads to fines, time wasted and expensive legal costs for the Council having to follow up those prosecuted. I seem to remember some years ago, the French having on their signs a logo for both caravans and MCs to ensure that there were no disputes or misunderstanding.
- I have no objections to caravans or motor caravans parking on Dover sea front, in fact I think they bring some trade to local restaurants and shops in the area.

Other comments submitted:

- I still cannot believe that your previous correspondence on using the beautiful Dover seafront as an approved caravan park got a positive response. Who voted for it? However, I understand it was and we are now asked about the £10 charge. I assume it is much lower than any real caravan site, which provide proper facilities, like toilets. Therefore, it will not discourage any van owners, desirable or not, from using it. Is there any reason why it could not be higher? Is it legally possible to apply conditions to those parking and indicate these on the ticket? Most people parking are reasonable, but a small minority are not and do not respect how near they are to a residential area. Could they, for example: 1) Be asked not to play loud music or generally be noisy; 2) Be asked to be inside their vans by 22:30; 3) Be asked not to use the garden as a toilet (or allow their dogs to); 4) Keep their rubbish inside their vans if the public bins are full. Finally, could the arrangement be subject to review after 12 months in the light of experience? Those parking could be notified of this too.
- I have seen the proposal to charge £10 for parking of motorhomes and caravans overnight for Marine Parade and Waterloo Cres. Whilst I understand that some may see it is a nuisance having such vehicles parking overnight – a lot or coming to Dover to catch the ferries, or having just come off a ferry, it is not sensible to force drivers to continue driving when tired. The Port does not provide any area for MHs to park up to wait for ferries. Also, quite a lot of MH owners would be using local amenities for food, shopping before catching ferries – a £10 charge is astronomical for a parking place. Over the water in France, £10 provides a secure overnight stop with water, waste and electricity. I feel a charge of £5 is very reasonable and would not push MH owners to park in other areas of town. If not, please push for ferry companies to provide a suitable waiting place.
- I do not object to the proposal outlined in your letter per se. My concern is what is likely to be left behind by those taking advantage of the parking facility and the need for it to be cleared up.

- I am pleased, after many months of waiting, that a decision has been made with regards to Over Night Parking on the Seafront. Over the 10 years of living in the Gateway Flats, we are aware that many Caravans and Motor Homes arrive and park after 22.00 hours and leave well before 07.00hours. How is it proposed to ensure that those that arrive late and leave early are issued with a Parking Ticket? Are you going to have Parking Ticket Officers patrolling all through the night? I also ask whether is is proposed to provide toilet and washing facilities on the seafront? Over recent years the adjacent sunken gardens are bushes are frequently used.