



ALDEBURGH TOWN COUNCIL

THE MOOT HALL, MARKET CROSS PLACE
ALDEBURGH, SUFFOLK, IP15 5DSTel: 01728 452158
Email: townclerk@aldeburghtowncouncil.co.uk

Aldeburgh Town Council Response East Suffolk Area Parking Plan Consultation

Aldeburgh Town Council broadly supports plans by SCDC to implement a new parking regime but has reservations about the current proposals.

The consultation document covers many points but does not, in the opinion of ATC, address adequately the matter of enforcement. There seems little point in introducing new parking arrangements if there are insufficient human resources to enforce regulations.

On this point, Councillors believe the consultation document is strong on rhetoric but weak on detail as the document's credibility is somewhat compromised by its failure to address the issue of enforcement.

ATC would also like to see an accurate analysis of the cost of enforcing parking regulations, set against the likely income from the proposed scheme. ATC believes this scheme should be cost-neutral with no additional financial burden falling on council tax payers. There is an argument to suggest that if the Police are no longer responsible for enforcing off-street parking, there should be theoretically a reduction in the policing bill.

A major area of concern to ATC surrounds parking on the High Street. The town has a vibrant local economy heavily dependent on the tourist trade. Any attempt to introduce charges for parking on the High Street would be resisted by ATC and the Aldeburgh Business Association. The Town Council accepts that there should be strict time limits on parking in the High Street but believes short-term, free parking is vital for the economic well-being of the town to increase the turnover of vehicles and to prevent employees of various businesses from parking there all day.

Aldeburgh is constantly being encouraged to promote year-round tourism and the proposed parking arrangements should do nothing to deter this.

ATC believes there is an argument for introducing seasonal car park charges to attract winter visitors. We would suggest the harmonisation of charges across the whole of East Suffolk lacks imaginative thinking. There should be scope for free or reduced-priced parking, particularly in the winter months and particularly in destination towns.

ATC notes with concern suggestions the District Council might become responsible for enforcement action involving driving offences. We strongly believe this is an area which should remain within the jurisdiction of the police.

Equally, ATC is unhappy with the proposal to replace pay-and-display machines with cashless payment options in environmentally sensitive areas. Residents and visitors to Aldeburgh are

not all adept at dealing with digital devices - assuming there is sufficient wireless connectivity to support these machines.

ATC rejects the idea of H-markings to deter inconsiderate parking. From the experience of the Town Council, these measures are unsightly and ignored and could result in a proliferation of non-enforceable road markings. A more sophisticated solution needs to be found, particularly on Crag Path where vehicles are frequently parked outside the front door of permanent residents.

The Town Council believes that current planning policies are contributing to increased congestion in the town. Planning applications involving the change of use from garage to dwelling should be rejected by SCDC. ATC believes there should be a more integrated approach to planning and parking consultations.

Parking in the town could be alleviated if land at Slaughden Road was properly surfaced and parking bays clearly delineated. Ownership of this land would need to be established but the adoption of this area would produce a significant improvement in parking congestion in the town - particularly if the charges were set at a reasonable level to reflect the out-of-town nature of the site. Charging at Slaughden Road could result in more vehicles parking for free on the adjacent sea wall. As part of this consultation process, ATC believes the sea wall, a vital part of the town's flood defences, should be surveyed to assess the long-term impact of vehicular activity in this environmentally-sensitive area, where displacement activity should be properly managed.

ATC welcomes plans to improve parking problems in the town and is keen to work in partnership with SCDC to ensure this can be achieved. However, we believe the proposed changes should not have a detrimental effect on the town's vitally-important tourist industry. The scale of charges should be fair, proportionate and, in some cases, unique to Aldeburgh.