



Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Statement in response to Parking Loss at Southend Road – Hunstanton

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1. Introduction

This report seeks to detail the changes that the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is proposing to mitigate the impact of developing on the south end of Southend Road carpark, and therefore help ensure a policy compliant and successful planning application.

2. Application 20/00811/FM

Planning application 20/00811/FM was submitted by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in June 2020 seeking the construction of 32 apartments with associated access, cycle stores, infrastructure and landscaping. The original proposal was refused by the authority's Planning Committee on the 8th December 2020 on two grounds:

1. The proposed development would result in the significant loss of 100 public car parking spaces, which would cause an adverse impact, especially during summer months, upon the ability to accommodate visitors to the town to the detriment of the local economy and amenity. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the provision of Policy CS05 of the Core Strategy (2011) and the Hunstanton Town Centre & Southern Seafront Masterplan (2008).
2. The proposed development has inadequate parking provision within the application site to serve the number of dwellings sought. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the provision of Policies DM15 & DM17 of the SADMPP (2016).

3. Proposed changes

3.1. Additional onsite parking

In response to concerns raised regarding the provision of onsite parking the Borough Council of King's Lynn, in consultation with the project architects (The Design Partnership Ely Ltd) revised the site plan to (without altering the number of flats, the proposed site size, or further altering Southend Road carpark) add an additional 7 parking spaces to serve the buildings' occupants and their visitors. This will lessen the burden that visitors to the development, may place on the 395 spaces that remain on Southend Road carpark.

This results in a total of 39 parking spaces on the development, which is **1.2 parking spaces per flat**. This figure is in excess of other comparable developments recently approved within the town including:

- a) Bus Station / Library Development – 20/00817/FM - **1** parking space per flat (with an additional 4 parking spaces to serve the library and retail unit)
- b) Land South of Seagate Hunstanton (Former Kit Kat site) - 19/01558/FM –17 Parking Space – 16 Flats – **1.06** parking spaces per flat (with no additional parking spaces to service the 3 retail units proposed)

- c) 19 - 21 Church Street (Whitney Press) - 20/00962/FM - 18 Parking Spaces – 18 Flats – 1 parking space per flat.

3.2. Loss of 100 parking spaces

The northern end of the Seagate East / southern end of the Hunstanton Coach park is poorly utilised and inefficiently laid-out, resulting in land that offers no usable parking spaces.

Previous consultation on the coach park, and whether this could be relocated out of town with convenient town centre drop-off points gained significant feedback that largely demonstrated that its current position meets the needs of local businesses and provides a safe a convenient location close to the seafront, with welfare facilities nearby for those using and operating the coaches. It therefore remains the council's intention to retain the coach park in this location for the foreseeable future.

However, the current coach park has capacity for 19 coaches within lined spaces and further coaches within unlined areas of the coach park.

Usage of the site by coaches is more frequent in the core summer months (June, July, and August) during the week, especially during the period when schools send many pupils to the Sea Life centre and other seafront facilities. Conversely the coach park is more frequently used by the smaller motorhomes over the weekend, however significant capacity remains at these times.

Coach Park Statistics

The Hunstanton Coach Park located off Southend Road has two predominant uses, Coach Parking and Motor Home Parking.

For the purpose of this exercise the 2019 season has been used for analysis, from 01/Apr/2019 to the 31/Oct/2019.

Each buy a ticket from either a parking machine on site or online. There is no way to differentiate between Coaches and Motor homes from the ticket data collected, however:

- Data is collected from the ticket machine on the time that these tickets were purchased. Borough Council resort staff report that most coaches visiting the resort arrive prior to midday. 50% of the tickets purchased from the ticket machine where purchased after 12.00pm.
- It is assumed that majority of online sales are made by coach companies paying for parking in advance of arriving in Hunstanton with these vehicles likely arriving prior to midday.
- A number of the ticket purchased in the morning relates to motorhomes renewing tickets following overnight parking.

- Once adjusting for online sales, it is estimated that around 56% of visits start prior to midday, and are predominantly coaches, and 44% of visit start after midday, and are predominantly motor homes.

Usage

- Between the 1st of April 2019 and the 31st of October 2019 on average there were 12.3 vehicles using the Coach Park each day. As noted above these vehicles arrived throughout the day with coaches arriving predominantly in the morning and motor homes arriving later in the day.
- Statistically of the 12 vehicles per day around 7 are coaches and 5 on average are motor homes.
- The above will fluctuate, with a higher proportion and number of motor homes over weekends, and a higher proportion and number of coaches during the week, especially in the run-up to the school summer holiday when schools use the Sea Life Centre and other local attractions for school trips.

Current Coach Park

- The coach park (*fig 1*) currently has coach space bays for around 19 coaches and additional unmarked spaces for motor homes along its northern boundary.
- Whilst the motor home bays are unmarked is it anticipated that around 30 motor homes could fit on the site at any one time.
- The coach park therefore has a capacity for 49 vehicles, well in excess of the 12 vehicles that on average use the site on any single day.
- Only on a single day in 2019 did the number of tickets sold on the site exceed 49 spaces when the site was used by the Borough Council as overflow parking on a busy bank holiday weekend.



Fig 1 – Existing Coach Park / Seagate East Carpark

Proposal

Action 1

- Seagate East be extended into the poorly utilised area of the coach park (its southern end) Fig 2. Reconfiguration of this area will add 50 parking spaces accessible from Southend Road without impacting on the number of spaces available for coaches or access to the coach park.
- These new parking spaces are approximately 150m from the Southend Road development site and therefore service the same area as the Southend Road carpark with easy access to the promenade, leisure centre, and town centre.
- Adding capacity in this area also takes cars off the local highway network earlier. Cars entering this additional capacity within the Seagate East carpark shall enter the site using the existing access off Southend Road opposite Tesco. This therefore reduces the need for cars to use the Southend Road / Beach Terrace Road mini roundabout, and Beach Terrace Road, to enter a carpark.



Fig 2 – Proposed carpark reconfiguration

Action 2

- The Borough Council will revise management arrangements for the Coach Parking off Southend Road.
- On busy parking days - when coach parking is unneeded - 6 of the existing 19 parking spaces will be used for additional carparking through use of 'flexible spaces'. This will add approximately a further 38 spaces to the Town (Fig 3).
- Parking for a minimum of 13 coaches will remain even when some of the other spaces have been converted under the flexible spaces arrangement. This will ensure that coach spaces remain available on all days of the year. 13 spaces were selected as it is above the average number of vehicles parking on the site on any day (2019) and significantly higher than the 7 coaches that we believe on average park on the site. This therefore allows for capacity on days busier than average, but not so busy that all coach parking spaces are used.
- We therefore believe that the additional 34 spaces will be available for majority of the year and only used by coaches on the busiest of periods in the run up to the school holidays, see fig 3.
- Parking for Motor Homes is not expected to be effected by the proposals, with around 30 motor homes still being able to park on the site. Only on the busiest of days, when the Coach Park is opened up for flexible parking as detailed above, may they have to compete for spaces. If motor homes are not present on the site this gives a further 30 spaces for car parking along the western edge of the site bringing the total number of flexible spaces to 64.

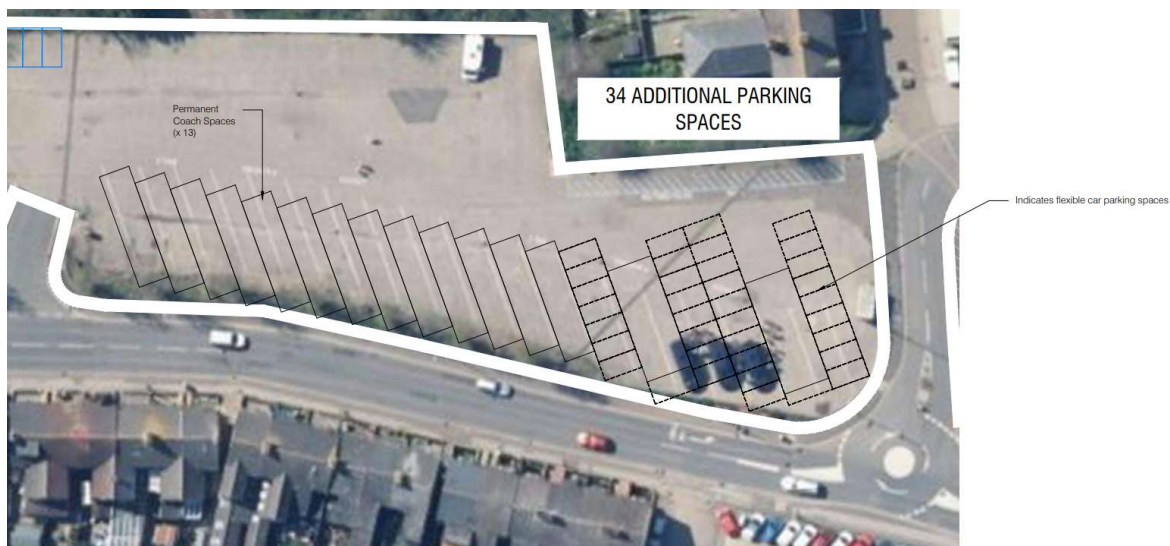


Fig 3.

Variable Message Signage

The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is considering to add Variable Message Signage (VMS) on the approach to Hunstanton Town Centre, along the A149, advising incoming visitors on the availability of carparking within the town and therefore direct motorists to carparks with capacity. The date of this installation is yet to be determined.

Result

- An additional 50 year-round parking spaces will be added to Hunstanton town centre to help mitigate the loss of parking as a result of the Southend Road development resulting in a total of 2985 permanent spaces within the town.
- An additional 34 parking spaces will be added to the town at busy periods through use of the flexible spaces on the coach park (when not needed by coaches) resulting in up to 3019 (16 less than the current number of spaces within Hunstanton. However this rises to 64 additional spaces should motor homes not require use of the site.
- The impact on motor home parking is considered to be minimal.
- Coach Parking spaces will be unaffected on their busiest days (weekdays). On weekends (when demand for coach parking is smaller and car parking is greater) coach parking will be minimised from 19 spaces to 13. 13 spaces is still greater than the average number of coaches that have used the coach park over previous summer seasons.
- 7 additional spaces have been included within the proposed development area to serve visitors of the flats. This brings the total number of parking spaces to 1.2 per flat, above that of other comparable developments within the town.

4. Local Economic Impact

Statement in support of parking loss at Southend Road – Hunstanton (October 2020) submitted as part of application 20/00811/FM outlined the two economic impacts that the development will have on the town of Hunstanton:

- a) The potential positive impact of an additional 32 flats and therefore approximately 61 residents, and
- b) The potential negative impact of losing 100 parking spaces.

The positive economic impact of the development as a result of new homes, and additional residents, within the town remains unchanged due to the unchanged flat design and unit numbers. The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk estimates a yearly local spend of **£283,745** or

£170.52 per household per week. Further information on how this figure was calculated can be seen within the original report.

The original report estimated a worst case economic impact from the development, losing 100 parking spaces over the 10 days when demand for parking within Hunstanton is at its greatest, amounting to £42,012 per year. This however was seen as a worst case with little if any actual impact likely being realised. Further details to be found within original report.

By offsetting the loss of parking as a result of the development, through re-providing elsewhere within the town in a location close to the existing carparking (and proposed development) any potential economic impact on the town will be mitigated.

Revised economic impact:

For further information and background information on methodology please see Statement in support of parking loss at Southend Road – Hunstanton – October 2020

Destination Research, as part of their analysis of tourism spend in West Norfolk (2018) estimates that spend per day trip to the area is £31.12. At worst (based on 2019 data) it could be argued that 16 parking spaces will be lost on the busiest days of the year. In 2019 there were 9 days in which more than 3019 parking spaces were sold.

The maximum number of visitors in 2019 on a single day was 5410. On average each space would have therefore been sold 1.795 times on that day. On those 9 days that spaces were used more than once, as to allow for it to be sold multiple times, on average each space was used by 1.35 visitors. Therefore:

$$\mathbf{9 \text{ Days} \times 16 \text{ spaces} \times 1.35 \text{ visitors per space} \times \pounds 31.12 = \pounds 6,049.73}$$

The above does not take into account the possibility for cars to use motor home parking at times where the need for car parking is greater than the need for motor homes. This would likely completely mitigate the loss of parking and result in no negative economic impact to Hunstanton.

4.1. Net Economic Impact

The positive gain of 32 units, and the additional estimated local spend of £283,745 per annum greatly outweigh the revised negative minimal economic impact of £6,049 resulting in an total positive economic impact to the town of **£277,696 per annum**.

5. Economic Recovery

Whilst tourism will play an important part of Hunstanton's economic recovery post Covid-19 the reliance of a town on a single sector, and the risks associated with this has been clearly demonstrated. Diversifying the town's economy, attracting new residents and supporting year-round jobs will result a more sustainable use of the land and a more sustainable wider town.

6. Consultation

Hunstanton Town Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's car parking team were given a draft copy of this report for review.

7. Conclusion

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk appreciates that tourism, especially day visitors, is a very important part of the Hunstanton economy and that car parking supports this trade. The changes detailed above mitigate the loss of 100 parking spaces on Southend Road and outline how instead the development will have a positive impact on the local economy.

In response 50 permanent spaces shall be re-provided and a further 34 provided on busy days in adjacent to the site greatly reducing the negative economic impact of the scheme. The importance of adequate parking provision to the local tourism economy is noted and, in this context, any loss of parking spaces in them town must be given careful consideration. However, the loss of 16 spaces must be considered in light of the (approximately) 1,500 spaces currently available within the town, with a further 1500 in the adjacent village within walking distance to the town.

The above does not included the additional parking spaces available through use of the motor home bays that would offer upto an additional 30 spaces and bring the total number of car parking spaces in the town to above current parking levels.

With these changes detailed above, both the additional on site spaces for visitors of the flats and the additional parking capacity added to the town, the Borough Council of King's Lynn considers that it has adequately responded to the previous planning refusal and hopes to obtain a planning consent in the future.