

The following are suggested responses to the grounds for many of the objections received during consultation, though it is not an exhaustive list of all issues raised in the objections. It is intended that these responses will be used as a generic response to be sent to all objectors to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order and scheme, with some individual responses adjusted for those who raised additional matters not covered, to provide an overall rationale for the proposal and the reasons for the objections to be over-ruled.

Objects on the grounds of concerns about public transport

- i. On-street parking along the sections of Aberystwyth seafront designated as part of this proposed scheme is already regulated by the County Council with parking generally limited to specified hours, with designated bays for disabled parking, deliveries and certain vehicle classes (coaches and taxis) at various locations, and parking will remain available at these locations.
- ii. Aberystwyth is generally well served by public transport along the main arterial routes (A44, A487, A485 etc.) and to/from nearby settlements through a combination of national and local bus routes, the new railway station at Bow Street, and these public transport travel opportunities will remain viable for visitors/commuters.
- iii. Where public transport travel opportunities do not meet the needs of commuters/visitors, then the charged for parking along the promenade will provide yet another option, alongside the numerous/various restricted/unrestricted and free/paid parking opportunities which exist within the town centre.

Objects on the grounds of a perceived loss of commuter parking

- i. The proposal includes only a slight reduction in the number of spaces available due to realignment of a kerb on the landward side by the pier and the introduction of longitudinal parking there, but no change to the length of stays permitted.
- ii. It is not therefore accepted that it will result in a loss of commuter parking, although it is not considered that the promenade is deemed to be a suitable location for commuter parking as the section of Aberystwyth seafront which is the subject of this proposed scheme is considered to be a '*premium*', high demand location due to its proximity to both the town centre (day-to-day services, retail, and hospitality trade) and being situated along the seafront (supporting the hospitality trade and visitor attractions).
- iii. Commuters should be encouraged to park outside the town centre, so that premium parking locations, such as those along the Promenade are available to those wishing to visit and spend money within the town.
- iv. Commuters should be encouraged to purchase season tickets (with proposals being considered for these to be made available at a cost of £295/annum) which would provide the appropriate parking opportunities in CCC's car parks, most of which are located within a similar distance to the town centre.

Objects on the grounds that the proposals will deter visitors to the town

- i. Support for a proposed scheme is founded on its potential contribution to supporting the County Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-2027 and its Corporate Well-being Objectives <https://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/your-council/strategies-plans-policies/corporate-strategy/>
- ii. The proposal seeks to provide greater availability of vehicle parking on the seafront by increasing parking turn-over providing a positive impact on the economy of the town and well-being of its residents.
- iii. Based on examples of similar coastal towns elsewhere in Wales and across the UK, charged-for on-street parking schemes have been in place for many years, accepted by residents and visitors alike and have not in themselves been proven to be detrimental to the continued viability or prosperity of these towns as places to live, work or visit.

Objects on the grounds that the proposals will have a negative impact on businesses

- i. The proposal introduces fees for on-street parking where none currently exist and attempts to strike a balance between the needs of local residents accessing local services and where they live/their homes; local businesses; University students; and visitors to the town.
- ii. The review/proposal considered the wider parking context within the town and did not treat the seafront in isolation, considering the wider context of parking supply and demand.
- iii. Parking (both on-street and off-street) must be available in the right places and for the right purposes. The section of Aberystwyth seafront which is the subject of this proposed scheme is considered to be a '*premium*', high demand location due to its proximity to both the town centre (day-to-day services, retail, and hospitality trade) and being situated along the seafront (supporting the hospitality trade and visitor attractions).
- iv. The intention of the proposal is to seek to ensure availability of parking to those wishing to visit the town in a location that is both convenient for the town centre and the seafront, and by doing so seeks to support the retail, hospitality and visitor attractions situated along/within both.
- v. Based on examples of similar coastal towns elsewhere in Wales and across the UK, charged-for on-street parking schemes have been in place for many years, accepted by residents and visitors alike and have not in themselves been proven to be detrimental to the continued viability or prosperity of these towns as places to live, work or visit.

Objects on grounds of displacement parking causing problems elsewhere

- i. The strategy for all long stay parking in Aberystwyth should be on the approaches to the town centre, with the parking that does exist in the town being used by either transient visitors or for those with mobility problems. The limited parking available along the Prom merely encourages drivers to enter the town and drive around looking for spaces. By creating adequate

provision on the approaches, time can be saved, displacement issues avoided, less pollution generated, and a better environment for people created.

- ii. These mitigation measures are planned for the current financial year and funding has been earmarked to take this forward.
- iii. It is considered that sufficient spare parking capacity exists within County Council and private off-street car parks (including those to be developed) and other regulated on-street locations and the displacement of parking is therefore not anticipated as a significant potential negative outcome of this scheme.

Objects on the grounds of there not being mitigation measures in place to deal with the impacts of the change

- i. Mitigation which is at an equivalent or shorter distance to the town centre is being provided alongside these proposals.
- ii. The strategy for all long stay parking in Aberystwyth should be on the approaches to the town centre, with the parking that does exist in the town being used by either transient visitors or for those with mobility problems.
- iii. These mitigation measures include a proposal for reduced cost season tickets; proposed extension to Maes-yr-Afon Car Park; and changes to the charging structure at Lower Park Avenue car park, and these are planned for the current financial year and funding has already been earmarked to take this forward.

Objects on the grounds the scheme will lead to Increased air pollution (e.g. due to drivers circulating trying to find parking spaces)

- i. The limited parking available along the Prom in the wider sense encourages drivers to enter the town and drive around looking for spaces.
- ii. By creating adequate parking provision on the approaches to the town centre through the planned mitigation measures, time can be saved, less pollution generated, and a better environment for people created.
- iii. Another outcome/benefit of charging will be to reduce the amount of commuter parking on the promenade making it more available for visitors to use and reducing pollution through reduced vehicle movements.

Objects on grounds there should be a wider review of parking/traffic management in Aberystwyth

- i. Previous parking studies have identified over 1,500 on street parking spaces available within the town centre (both time limited and unlimited), alongside over 850 spaces within CCC car parks.
- ii. Over 1,000 further spaces are available within the various retail car parks within the town centre, which significantly increases the availability of parking within the town.

- iii. Proposals are being finalised to increase the parking available within Maes-yr-Afon car park which will look to increase the available spaces by over 150 spaces.
- iv. The proposals put forward, which amend the regulations as opposed to removing the spaces available, therefore only relate to approximately 5% of the total parking spaces available within Aberystwyth Town Centre.

Objects on the grounds that there should be a Residents parking scheme available within Aberystwyth Town Centre.

- i. A residents parking scheme can be considered in the future, but this would have to be done on a wider basis and include other towns in Ceredigion to make it financially sustainable.
- ii. Residents should also be aware that any such scheme would also need to be self-financing, and that only a proportion of the available parking would be allocated to such a scheme which would also likely be oversubscribed, and therefore '*guaranteed*' parking for town centre residents would never be a realistic outcome.

Objects on the grounds of concerns related to vulnerable user groups

- i. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Exemptions for Disabled Persons) (Wales) Regulations 2000 requires that Blue Badge holders displaying their badge in the prescribed manner are exempt from the requirement to pay for on-street charging and are exempt from any limit on maximum period of stay.
- ii. It is not possible to identify and therefore cater for those within vulnerable groups who do not hold/display blue badges.
- iii. It is the intention to install pay and display machines so as to cater for those without Smartphones, with the same arrangement and support for all users as provided in off-street car parks.

Objects on the grounds that they consider max stay of 4 hours too short

- i. The strategy for all long stay parking in Aberystwyth should be on the approaches to the town centre, with the parking that does exist in the town being used by either transient visitors or for those with mobility problems.
- ii. The current limited parking available along the Prom, and the pressure on that exerted by commuter parking, merely encourages drivers to enter the town and drive around looking for spaces.

Objector requests that revenue from parking charges be directed to Aberystwyth Town

- i. The introduction of on-street parking charges will sustain the costs of operation of the proposed scheme. Should any surplus income be achieved, it would be used to support funding of other essential public services provided

by Ceredigion County Council which fall within the scope of what is permitted under Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These are:

- (a) Making good any deficits in the parking account
- (b) meeting the cost of provision and maintenance of off-street parking
- (c) if it is deemed that further off-street parking provision is unnecessary or undesirable, for the following purposes:
 - costs incurred in the provision or operation of public bus services
 - highway improvement projects
 - the purposes of environmental improvements
 - any other purposes for which the authority may lawfully incur expenditure

Objects specifically to charging for parking in Laura Place and King Street, and to the introduction of more restrictive measures on Police Station Road, Albert Place and Queens Avenue

- i. Some free overnight parking will remain in these spaces for local residents between 18:00 - 08:00.
- ii. It is anticipated that there will be a significant increase in the use of this area that will be generated by the redevelopment of the Old College. The car park in St Michaels Church will be used by visitors to the Old College using the new hotel arrangements and imposing charging for parking on these streets will balance this demand.
- iii. Mitigation includes the proposal for reduced cost season tickets; proposed extension to Maes-yr-Afon Car Park; and changes to the charging structure at Lower Park Avenue car park. It is not reasonable to expect that everybody is able to park in front of or close to their property in a busy and thriving town centre.
- iv. St Michaels Church car park is being reconfigured and a proportion is now controlled by the Old College for parking for the new development. This was a planning condition that has been discharged.
- v. The additional restrictions on Police Station Road, Albert Place and Queens Avenue are included to prevent displacement parking there causing obstruction, particularly for larger vehicles.
- vi. Charges for parking on King Street and Laura Place are included to prevent undue parking pressure due to drivers seeking to avoid parking on the promenade itself.

Objection on grounds that the Statement of Reasons was not in line with legislation

- i. All four of the Statements of Reasons (increase on-street parking turnover, encourage greater use of public transport, reduce traffic congestion and improve traffic flow, promote greater levels of active travel) fall into sub-section c of section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, that of '*facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians)*'.

- ii. In addition, Section 122 of the 1984 Act sets out:
 - a. It shall be the duty of [every] local authority... to secure the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities...

Objection on the grounds that works associated with the scheme on the southern end of the seafront (the Ceredigion County Council (Prohibition And Restriction Of Waiting And Loading And Unloading) Order 2019 (Aberystwyth Seafront) (Amendment Order No. 11) 2024) which this subsequent proposal presumes, commenced before objectors to that scheme had been notified of the outcome of their objections

- i. Works associated with the Ceredigion County Council (Prohibition And Restriction Of Waiting And Loading And Unloading) Order 2019 (Aberystwyth Seafront) (Amendment Order No. 11) 2024 did not commence until after the end of public consultation; the consideration of objections received; and the formal decision making process associated with their implementation.