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**West Mersea
Town Council**

**APPLICATION AND PROPOSALS TO THE NORTH
ESSEX PARKING PARTNERSHIP**

JULY 2022

Application Statement

West Mersea Town Council

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1. Proposals

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- b) Coast Road, West Mersea - adoption of changes marked in the attachment.
- c) St. Peters Road/New Captains Road, West Mersea junction - adoption of changes as specified
- d) Firs Road/High Street North, West Mersea junction – adoption of changes as specified

This application is for a revision of the parking arrangements affecting West Mersea. This follows consideration by the Town Council. The proposals set out, in the view of the Council, parking restrictions that are suited to the needs of local residents and business whilst recognising that West Mersea attracts significant visitor numbers. The proposals came forward in the light of discussions after a Red Route Experimental Traffic Regulation Order was withdrawn in the autumn 2021.

2. Background and context

The need to update parking improvements is contained in the West Mersea Neighbourhood Plan that was adopted in March 2022. Residents voting in the referendum with 88% in favour on a turnout of 21%.

The Council wishes to promote changes on a calibrated basis with the first being on some principal roads that need improvement as soon as possible.

The proposals have been put forward by a working group drawn from societies, local business, local residents, clubs that use the roads concerned. The group has publicised its work and has been expanded to take on a wide range of views. The group has widely discussed amongst residents the work it has undertaken. The Council has publicised the existence of the group and has received regular reports about its work.

3. West Mersea

For those unfamiliar with West Mersea, the following is from the Colchester Borough Council's Core Strategy (Local Plan 2018-2033). The town "is a relatively self-contained coastal community offering quality tourism and recreation opportunities. The West Mersea waterfront will be conserved for its historic maritime character and distinctive maritime-related local businesses."

Located some 8 miles from Colchester in an area of the highest significance in terms of the natural environment. All of the coastline is covered by international, European and national wildlife designations.

Tourism plays a significant role in the economy of West Mersea. Tourism increases in varying degrees across the year. Depending on the time of the year, caravan and other accommodation can bring 13,000 tourists and with day visitors reaching 20,000. This exceeding the capacity of the island's 1000 public car parking spaces and any other suitable permitted roadside parking. This is therefore resulting in consideration of 'park and ride' and 'park and walk' for future adoption and other possible proposals.

4. Specifics

Changes are principally along coast roads where significant issues have arisen. In summary, it is not believed they are major changes but significantly provide parking measures to be in place with local usage in mind.

They are in our view easier understood and can bring about more compliance. The update of markings and signage it is believed will not involve significant relative cost.

In respect to proposed changes on the Victoria Esplanade the new markings have been adjusted for a later starting time to reflect the need of residents and beach hut owners to obtain earlier access; the proposals reflect that it is still appropriate to have some restrictions applying throughout the year; parking on one side at certain times is more appropriate than a complete ban; there should be enhanced restrictions around corners that lead into the Esplanade. Restrictions are needed since the entry roads and car parks often have parked vehicles beyond the present restrictions. The changes are brought forward since it will assist Highway Safety; assist in the Flow of Traffic; allow for more usage but still retaining necessary parking restrictions.

Regarding Coast Road, this is not a through road, considerably used by visitors, recreational boat users as well as local oyster and fishermen. There are numerous restaurants. Usage is considerable during the summer months.

The Council supports a later starting time for restrictions and a calibrated application of parking restrictions based upon one side dependent on the time of year. It is strongly believed that it will significantly aid Highway Safety; Aid to Movement and/or Free Flow of Traffic, Preventing Hindrance and/or Nuisance to other Road Users; Supporting Business, Deliveries and Servicing; provides appropriate Parking Bays.

The proposals for Coast Road are being made with proposals that will be put forward by WMTC for changes to signage for the car park in Coast Road.

For St. Peters Road/New Captain Road junction we seek double yellow lines due to the danger posed by poor sight line at present. The current situation is that cars park close to or actually on this junction. Any car exiting New Captains Road is felt to be blind to traffic travelling in both directions along St Peters Road thus the exiting vehicle has in our view to dangerously drive a considerable distance out into St Peters Road before it can see any approaching vehicles or, have room to make a turn, some vehicles we have observe travel at fast speeds along this road. It is therefore on the grounds of Road Safety this is proposed.

For Firs Road and High Street North junction we seek double yellow lines on the western side of High Street North. The proposal is for 15 yards each side of the Firs Road entrance. On Firs Road we seek 20 yards each side almost up to the lamppost on the south side and just before the vehicle entrance to the bungalow on the north side. The reason for this is that Firs Road is one of the main roads for traffic towards the Coast Road and far end of it. Turning right out of Firs Road there are cars parked 24/7 on the west side of High Street North blocking a view of cars travelling north towards you on the wrong side of the road because of the parked cars, made far worse if two more cars are parked up to the entrance to Firs Road.

Turning left is dangerous in our view if cars are parked north of Firs Road on High Street North as drivers need then to drive on the wrong side of the road into cars travelling south. Turning left into Firs Road from the south is very tight as the turning is over 90 degrees and the front of your car crosses the centre of the road. This means you have to stop to allow a car to exit Firs Road first, hoping the next car holds back to let you complete your turn. It is therefore on the grounds of Road Safety that the change is proposed

5. Summary

West Mersea Town Council welcomes the opportunity to present proposals. As stated, they reflect detailed consideration and believe they offer the basis for improvement and the commencement of further proposals that will seek to reduce parking issues arising in West Mersea.

With parking enforcement, it is believed that these proposals will provide for more effective parking provision. The changes have been publicised on the Council's website and notice given in local magazine – 'Mersea Life'.

It is recognised that any implementation will require further review with NEPP officers before they are then formally consulted upon, and the Town Council wishes to assist in any way possible.