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Date: 23 May 2011
Your ref:
My ref: TM/S29/61

Dear Dr Ayres

Pay and Display parking in Swanage

I am writing to seek your Council's views on a proposed pay and display scheme for the town. I will be writing similarly to the local County member, Mr Trite, the District Council, Police and the Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

It has long been County Council policy to introduce pay and display (P&D) parking in all our coastal and market towns to better regulate and enforce short stay parking in a cost effective manner. More recently the County's Performance Overview Committee (POC) at their meeting on 9 December 2010 received and noted the Civil Parking Enforcement annual report for 2009/10 which set out the proposal to introduce P&D in Swanage and Corfe Castle by the end of 2011 subject to consultation. Lyme Regis (summer 2012) and Bridport (summer 2013) are also proposed.

This follows the successful introduction in August 2009 of the P&D scheme in Dorchester (reported to POC on 22 June 2010) to complement schemes already in place in Wareham, Blandford and Weymouth.

As you know the on-street parking in Swanage is presently free on a first come first served basis. This is a very attractive proposition for shoppers when compared to the car park charges of £1.80 for one hour in season or £1.20 at the Station Place and Co-op car parks.

We surveyed the parking in Swanage car parks and at various on-street locations on a Tuesday and Wednesday in August 2009. You may recall that I sent a copy of the results electronically in May 2010. Based on our findings we have drawn up the scheme described below and shown on Drawing 2204/1/60 attached.

Shore Road

This road has always been a premium site for parking and is now proving to be very attractive to motor home visitors out of season when the parking restrictions do not apply. This has become a cause for concern to Swanage residents and I understand a petition of objection has been received by the Town Council and will be considered at your next Transport Committee on Wednesday.

The proposal here is for P&D bays along the full length of Shore Road for cars and motorcycles only, although the charges by themselves would undoubtedly displace the motor home problem. In the summer period the southern part of Shore Road is closed and P&D would only apply to the northern part. Blue Badge Holder vehicles would still have three hours free parking in season as they do now but would be restricted to three hours free parking out of season.

Station Road

The parking bays in this central shopping street are frequently full to capacity with parking also taking place on yellow lines. This results in motorists touring round looking for a free parking space. Many vehicles overstay the maximum one hour allowed especially when the Civil Enforcement Officers are not around.

As an example of this from the parking survey which took place on Wednesday 26 August 2009, vehicle occupancy on that day in Station Road quickly reached and exceeded the maximum provision. One vehicle was seen on all 11 visits at 70 minute intervals between 08:16 and 19:56; one vehicle was seen 9 times, one 8 times, one 5 times, three were seen 3 times and six vehicles were seen twice. During these times there was generally space available in the Town Council's car parks although the amount varied by car park and time of day. The short stay car parks at Station Place and the Co-op car parks were fairly busy as you would expect in the town centre but even in these a quarter of the parking bays were vacant for 8 of the 11 survey visits.

The desire to seek out free parking in Swanage is consistent with the parking practice in Dorchester before P&D was introduced. Now that the Dorchester on-street shopping bays are simpler to enforce their occupancy rate is running at about 85% with a regular turnover. Motorists can find a bay without having to cruise round the town as they did before. Other than for the convenience factor there is little or no merit in not going straight to a car park especially for drivers wishing to stay for a full hour or longer.

The proposal for Station Road is to make all existing free parking P&D and to introduce additional (P&D) parking on the north side by converting some yellow lines.

Charges

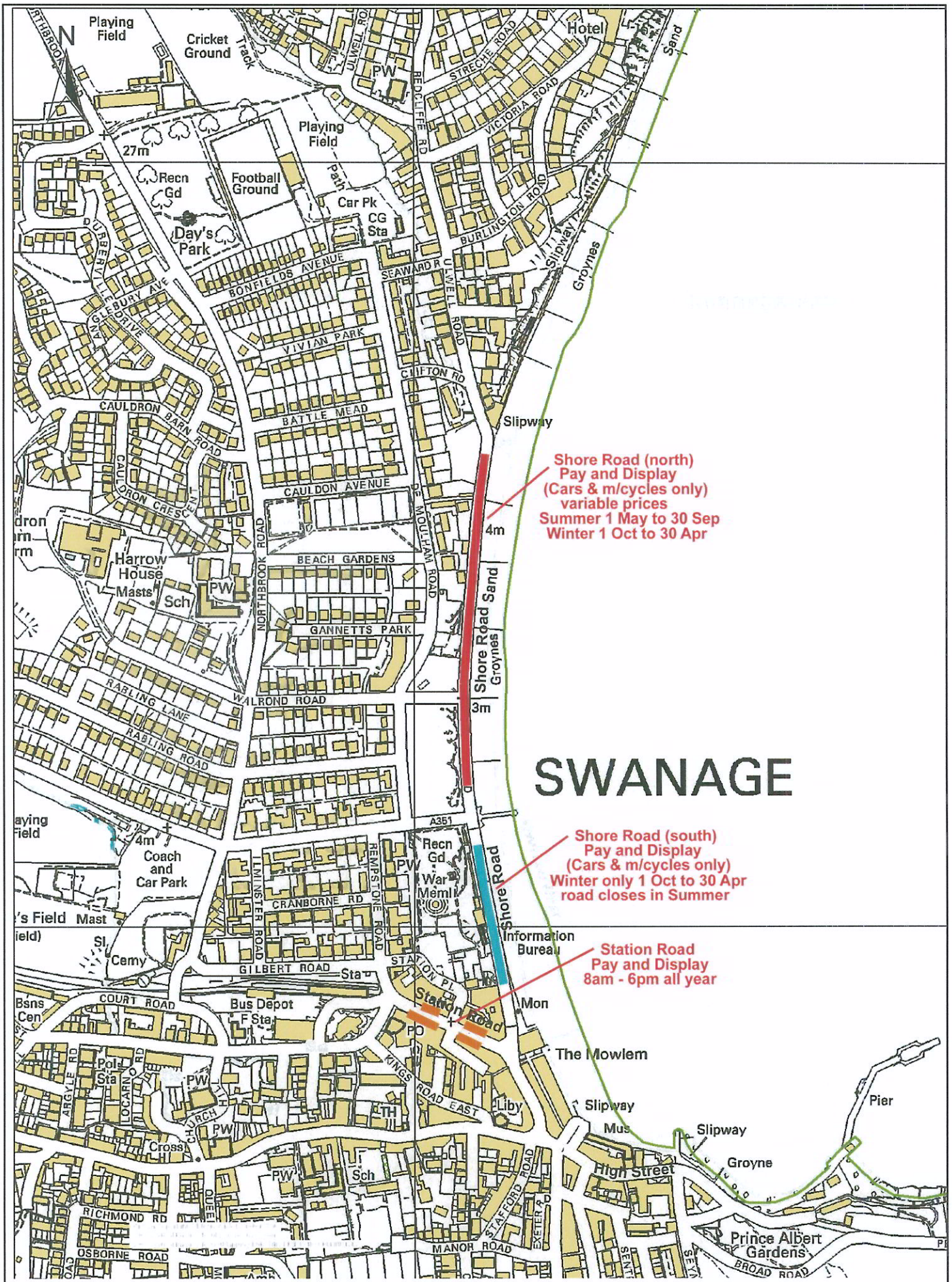
The County Council policy is to match on-street parking charges to the off-street charges levied in nearby car parks by the local District Council. In this case it would be the Town Council's charges. The recommendation therefore would be to charge motorists £1.20 for a maximum stay of one hour in Station Road. There would be pro rata charges for shorter stays than this to cater for 'pop in' shoppers.

Charges for Shore Road could be seasonal and for a longer maximum stay period.

I should be pleased to receive your Council's response which will be reported to the Roads and Rights of Way Committee for their consideration in due course. If you need any more information before you reply I would be pleased to assist.

Yours sincerely

Tony Mackle
Senior Manager
Traffic Group



SWANAGE

Shore Road (north)
Pay and Display
 (Cars & m/cycles only)
 variable prices
 Summer 1 May to 30 Sep
 Winter 1 Oct to 30 Apr

Shore Road (south)
Pay and Display
 (Cars & m/cycles only)
 Winter only 1 Oct to 30 Apr
 road closes in Summer

Station Road
Pay and Display
 8am - 6pm all year

<p>DORSET County Council</p>	Swanage proposed Pay and Display			<p>MILES BUTLER DIRECTOR COUNTY HALL DORCHESTER DT1 1XJ</p>
	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE</p>	<p>SCALE Not to Scale</p>	<p>DATE 4 May 2011</p>	
<p><small>Reproduced from the 2002 Ordnance Survey 1:25000 2500 scale Land Line map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Dorset C. County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset. Licence No. LA070590</small></p>				<p>Drawing No. 2204/1/60</p>