

Appendix II

Parish / Town Council Objections to Variation 10

Minster-on-Sea Parish Council

Dear Swale Borough Council

I am writing on behalf of Minster on Sea Parish Council to express our strong objection to the proposed introduction of parking charges across car parks in Swale, including The Little Oyster car park within our parish.

The Parish Council has significant concerns regarding the negative impact these charges would have on both residents and visitors. The Little Oyster car park serves as an important access point to our beach and seafront. Introducing parking charges will act as a deterrent to visitors at a time when we are actively encouraging responsible use of our coastline and promoting local tourism.

In light of the recently declared mental health crisis in Swale, we feel it is especially important to highlight the role that natural spaces and accessible beauty spots play in supporting residents' wellbeing. The beach and surrounding coastal areas offer vital respite, particularly for individuals and families who may be struggling. Imposing parking charges risks reducing access to these important spaces, disproportionately affecting those who rely on free, local outdoor environments to support their mental health.

The Parish Council also wishes to place on record that Minster on Sea Parish Council previously requested to take over management of The Little Oyster car park. At no point were we informed that this option was no longer being considered, and we are disappointed that this change in position has not been communicated to us. We request clarification on why this opportunity is no longer available and whether further discussions may still be possible.

We are particularly concerned that charging for parking will inevitably push vehicles into surrounding residential roads. These roads are already under pressure during peak periods, and any additional parking displacement will exacerbate congestion, create safety issues, and reduce accessibility for residents, pedestrians, and emergency services.

Furthermore, increased on street parking is likely to lead to greater frustration within the community and will undermine efforts to maintain safe, accessible, and welcoming public spaces.

For these reasons, Minster on Sea Parish Council strongly urges Swale Borough Council to reconsider the proposed charges and to work with local councils to

explore alternative approaches that support both financial sustainability and community wellbeing.

We would welcome further discussion on this matter and look forward to being kept informed of any developments.

Sheerness Town Council

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Proposed Parking Charges at Little Oyster (Minster), Park Road (Queensborough), Queenborough Library, Front Brents (Faversham), Grafton Road (Sittingbourne) and Halfway Road Car Parks

I am writing on behalf of Sheerness Town Council. At the Council meeting held on Monday 15th December 2025, Members resolved to object to the proposed parking tariffs across Swale.

Although these car parks are not located within the Town of Sheerness, the proposals will directly affect Sheerness residents who regularly use these facilities and access services across the island. Members are of the view that the introduction of charges will have a significant negative impact on both residents and visitors.

Little Oyster is a key access point for beach users, and the introduction of a parking tariff is likely to deter visitors or displace parking onto The Leas Road, which would adversely affect local tourism and increase pressure on surrounding roads.

The proposed parking charges at Halfway Road car park would have a particularly detrimental impact on local businesses in the immediate vicinity. It is anticipated that charges would result in vehicles being displaced onto nearby residential roads, which are already heavily used at peak times. The existing road infrastructure already experiences daily congestion, and these proposals would further exacerbate the situation.

Members also expressed concern that the cost of implementing the parking charges, including the installation and ongoing maintenance of ticket machines, is likely to outweigh the revenue generated from these car parks. A similar situation has already occurred at the Ship on Shore car park, which is largely underused, with residents instead parking on surrounding roads. This has resulted in increased congestions and additional traffic problems in the area.

For the reasons outlined above, Sheerness Town Council formally objects to the proposed parking tariffs.

Queenborough Town Council

Dear Parking Services Manager,

Re: The Borough of Swale (off-street parking places) (Variation No. 10) Order 2026.

Queenborough Town Council write with strong objection against the proposed car parking Orders, to change the use of the Queenborough Library and Park Road Car Parks to a Pay and display parking facility and introduce parking charges.

Queenborough Town Councillor's have continued to listen to the residents, visitors and Queenborough businesses and there remains strong objection to the introduction of these parking charge proposals. The Town Council writes and objects for the following reasons to the Car Park charges, along with questions, in this comprehensive letter of objection. Please note that many of these questions are a repeat to the Town Council questions, raised in the letter of objection sent to the same address as this letter's addressee on the 23rd February 2024. In the letter of February 2024, the Town Council objected to the same proposals from Swale Borough Council for the introduction of these charges but under a different order namely The Borough of Swale (off-street parking places) Variation No. 6) Order 2024, to which the Town Council have never to date received a reply to that letter, to those questions raised.

Swale Borough Council has again, failed to consider relevant parties, should Queensborough Town Council as landowners, of part of the Castle Site Library Car Park have not been consulted prior to any planning to introduce parking charges to this Car Park where made. Copy title plans submitted to the Borough Council in February 2024. Swale Borough Council also failed to consult local businesses and local organisations prior to any planning to introduce charging, by omitting to do this, the authority that has not safeguarded the needs and requirements of residents, visitors and businesses in Queenborough.

These proposed orders do not lay out a clear method for members of the public; they are not open and transparent. Where will the responses be published and shared with the public? Where and when will the proposed orders be voted upon by Swale Borough Councillor's and how the public can attend and have their say at these meetings?

Swale Borough Council predicted budget income from the borough's car parks form part of the council's overall income and contributes to the authority's budget allowing the authority to deliver all services, factored into this is projected income from car parking spaces that Swale Borough Council does not own. There is confusion over the ratification of this budget with the fact that Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 as amended states local authorities in England and Wales can only primarily fund transport-related services and not general spending.

Vehicle parking should consider the availability of local public transport, with an adequate level of car parking within the town to ensure that viability is not compromised, there are limited buses to Queenborough, there is no train from other areas of the Isle of Sheppey apart from Sheerness to Queensborough. People from Rushenden, Leysdown, Eastchurch, Minster on Sea, Halfway, Warden, Elmley, Harty must drive here, there is no infrastructure for connecting cycle paths and in some places no connecting footpaths to reach Queensborough from these areas and certainly there is no infrastructure of this kind connecting coming onto the Isle of Sheppey to visit Queensborough. These free car parks satisfy the reasonable needs of visitor parking because of the varying occupancy patterns across the day, they should not have to pay to visit Queensborough.

On street parking will be caused by introducing charges at these car parks and will lead to indiscriminate street parking i.e. blocking carriageways, footway parking, blocking the streets themselves and poor visibility on the highway. Overspill parking on surrounding streets, where the public realm should be attractive and safely encourage walking and cycling, the car should not but will dominate the public realm if they are parking in the narrow width Queenborough highways in this historic town.

There is no place in Queensborough for defined on street parking bays, houses are of a terrace nature in the vicinity of both car parks with width historic high density terraced housing. Negative parking behaviours in residential side streets mean people will choose not to visit Queensborough and this parking will block up every single street in Queensborough. The properties do not have driveways or parking spaces; the frontage width of these houses is less than that of a parking standard space. Swale Brough Council only must look at the double yellow lines already in place along these neighbouring Queensborough streets to see how difficult parking already is in this community.

If parking charges are imposed this will often be higher than the charges agreed by Swale Borough Council with parking machines not giving change, realistic costs to consumers will be higher, than those agreed.

Park Road Car Park

This Car Park is used by visitors and residents visiting local businesses and enjoying the seafront, harbour and Park.

Proposed charges to this car park will have a negative impact on companies operating Charters and Ferries from Queensborough with day-trippers having to pay for a day's parking on top of the fee for the ferry. Charging this Car Park will drive tourism out. Visiting the All Tide Landing, using the harbour and seafront, moorings and other boating facilities will also be impacted by any proposed charges. Volunteers cleaning up the seafront and beaches, use this car park; they will not come and pay to clean up the beach. Memorial benches supplied by Swale Borough Council in Queensborough Park, will people really have to pay to visit these

benches? Dog walkers, walkers, runners who cannot afford gym membership can come here without cost to enjoy the open space without being charged to do so. Local families with little in this deprived area, take their children to the beach without cost, it should remain free for them to use these outside areas.

This car park is used by visitors to Admirals Arm, Bosun, Old House at Home, Flying Dutchman all serving food, local authorities need to support these small business, bringing people into Queensborough.

Park Road falls in the conservation area of Queensborough requiring planning permission from the conservation officer, has the Conservation Officer been consulted for any changes to these Queensborough Car Parks? If so, please could the Town Council see a copy of the Conservation officer's report as this Car Park is fenced by bollards and chains in keeping with the historic character of the area.

New parking meters are made of unsympathetic modern materials which would look out of place being detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area and historic town. The bays are without time restriction or charge, these bays reduce resident and visitor parking in the streets by providing free car parking, as reported above on the width of the properties with on street parking already limited in this area.

The top layer of gravel at this car park makes relining impossible in remarking the bays as reported by Swale Borough Council, a few years ago. Would this mean the whole cost of resurfacing the car park would be required at cost to the Borough Council? If the authority were to charge here, please could you advise.

The Town Council ask if it not biased to propose to allow Swale Brough Council Staff a No limit, No Charge Parking Permit when Kent County Council and Queenborough Town Council staff also use this Car Park whilst on official duties, especially with the Town Council working closely with the Community. Unsubstantiated but other Swal and Town Parish Council's may also have officers using this car park for official duties, could this proposal not be for all local government staff collaborating with these communities.

Queensborough Library Car Park

This Car Park is used by the following and others, to which the usage is briefly described.

The Community Centre housed in the historic Old School Building, a vital asset to Queensborough and Rushenden, offering support groups, bereavement counselling etc. The centre is run by staff and volunteers, staff earning minimum wage and unpaid volunteers in one of the most deprived areas in the United Kingdom, these people will not be able to afford parking charges that will take a big part of their wages or pay to volunteer at the centre. The centre also, provides meals at a reduced cost, to those who are sometimes lonely and only get out to meet people

once a week, do not discourage this by introducing parking charges, it would not be looking after Queensborough's interests, this is a Non-profit charity, which could close if these parking charges are introduced. All highway boundaries of the building are surrounded by double yellow lines.

The Hop Yard a small centre supporting vulnerable adults. Adults with learning difficulties, they cannot be dropped off and picked up outside the Hop Yard at Well Road, due to double yellow lines outside the building, disabled wheelchairs must sometimes be unloaded from minibuses, ambulances and cars and it is safe to conduct this in the library car park. This should remain available without charge ensuring this takes place safely and legally away from the highway.

The Queensborough Library offering social events in the community and free books, in a deprived area where some local children may not otherwise have access to books, within families being unable to afford to purchase books as a luxury item.

Small business shops including a chemist and dentist along Railway Terrace. People visiting the takeaways along these shops would have to pay £1.60 for a five minute food collection, do not drive these shops out of Queensborough by introducing these proposed charges.

Town Councillors object to the introduction of these charges at Halfway Car Park along Minster Road for the same reason the proposed implemented cost to pick up and drop off children to Halfway School and for a food collection at a proposed £1.60. This would then cost parents £3.20 as a round cost for using this car park on the daily school run. There again is limited on street parking in this already highly congested area along Minster Road at school pick up and drop off times.

The Queen Phillipa Hotel provides accommodation, a bar and restaurant bringing visitors into Historic Queensborough, who sometimes use this Car Park.

Commuters using the Queensborough Train Station, some travelling all over the United Kingdom, parking sometimes twelve hours or more, how will this affect the residents when commuters will not pay to park but park in neighbouring streets.

Visitors to the Castle Site open space and play park in making this car park pay and display will bring kerbside parking, on a short street which will create visibility problems to traffic with the zebra crossing in place. Residential streets like Castle Street will become thronged with those seeking to not pay for parking. As mentioned previously there are double yellow lines at every highway perimeter of the Castle site.

The Library Car Park is on the Gatehouse site to the Queensborough Castle and falls within the scheduled monument and conservation area of Queensborough, wiring required for parking meters will surely require Historic England consent due to the digging. Again, parking meters made of unsympathetic modern materials would be

out of place, again, being detrimental to the character and appearance of the Castle Site and require planning permission from the Conservation Officer.

Also, emphasizing and repeated from above for this Car Park regarding the proposed Swale Brough Council Staff a No limit, No Charge Parking Permit at this Car Park.

Tourism

Queensborough is dependent on seasonal tourism and marine leisure, and local organisations work extremely hard on bringing tourism into the town.

Queensborough is not a large town but a small town trying to improve local tourism, which should not have to compete with bigger towns to bring visitors to see the historical grade II listed buildings and use local businesses, to keep Queensborough public houses and local stores in operation.

Unlike many towns who have seen public houses closing these parking charges if introduced will affect their business with a negative outcome, please this about the car parking strategically or it will be an erosion of the town's viability and lead to the underutilisation of the town's assets including Queensborough Church Guildhall Museum and Queensborough Guildhall the latter two properties both owned by Swale Borough Council. The town will become less attractive to residents, customers and businesses, footfall declines and spend declines because they cannot afford the parking charges.

Please meet the best interest of road users, communities and businesses, overzealous enforcement and high parking charges which will drive people out of Queensborough, push up the cost of living and harm local shops, organisations, public houses and make it harder for people to park responsibly and go about their everyday lives.

Could Queensborough Town Council suggest that in the future Swale Borough Council look at developing the Queensborough Railway station waste land that lies alongside the Station, this could be a car park for fifty plus cars for commuters, inviting them to travel from Queensborough.

Queensborough has the status of Royal Borough following the granting of its charter in 1368. This Charter guarantees Queensborough amongst other things exemptions from taxation, which, guarantees the town free parking forever.

Queensborough Town Council ask that Swale Borough Council consider the points raised in this letter and reconsider not introducing the proposed charges to Park Road and the Library Car Park, considering the Town Council's and public concerns about the damage use charges could do to business leisure, tourism and resident sectors in Queensborough.

Please find attached further petitions' handed into the Town Council.

Once again, Queensborough Town Council finish by saying how nice would it be to say welcome to Queensborough, free parking provided by Swale Borough Council, rather than charging people to visit and live in this small historical town.