



Southwold Harbour

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

SOUTHWOLD HARBOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	
Date	01/05/2024
Subject	Harbour Vison and Static Site Revitalisation
Report Author(s)	James AJ Milnes Southwold Harbour, Caravan and Campsite Manager James.milnes@eastsoffolk.gov.uk
Head of Service	Kerry Blair Head of Operations Kerry.blair@eastsoffolk.gov.uk
Director	Kate Blakemore Strategic Director Kate.Blakemore@eastsoffolk.gov.uk

Is the report Open or Exempt?	OPEN
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Category of Exempt Information and reason why it is NOT in the public interest to disclose the exempt information.	Not applicable
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Purpose/Summary

This report presents a set of strategic recommendations for the revitalisation of Southwold Harbour and Caravan site, derived from extensive community feedback and consultation efforts. The report details proposed changes to contractual agreements for caravan owners, enhancements to operational management and the future physical layout of the site.

Recommendation(s)

That the Harbour Management Committee:

1. Review and Finalise Vision and Strategy

Task the HMC Task and Finish Committee with reviewing and finalising the updated vision, priorities and strategic plan reflecting all of the feedback received from this consultation regarding the wider harbour vision.

2. Transition to Lease Agreements & Develop Heads of Terms for Lease Agreements

Transition all caravan owners from a license agreement to a lease agreement, facilitating the potential for sub-letting of caravans, thus providing owners with opportunities for revenue generation, initially developing Heads of Terms for the new lease agreements and conduct direct consultations with all caravan users to ensure transparency and address any concerns.

3. Commission a Business Case for Council-Operated Plots

Commission a detailed business case to explore retaining 30 plots for council-operated year-round rental accommodation, considering various accommodation types to enhance revenue and diversify usage.

4. Facilitate Co-Design Workshops

Conduct co-design workshops facilitated with key stakeholders help shape the future site layout to best accommodate and integrate the proposed lease system, managed rental plots, wider amenities, and environment.

5. Develop a Programme Plan

Prepare a comprehensive programme plan if recommendations 1-4 are accepted for proposal at the next HMC meeting in July, and to support a report to be considered by the Council's Cabinet later in year.

6. Develop a Comprehensive Q&A Document

Support the creation of a comprehensive Questions & Answers (Q&A) document. This document should address the broader issues and common queries that have arisen throughout the consultation process with stakeholders.

Strategic plan

How does this proposal support Our Direction 2028?

Environmental Impact	We are committed to enhancing sustainability, mitigating flood risks, and preserving the natural beauty of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Every phase of our planning and execution is designed to align with these critical environmental objectives, ensuring that our actions not only protect but also enhance the ecological and scenic value of our cherished harbour
Sustainable Housing	Transforming the caravan site aligns with sustainable housing objectives by providing more flexible accommodation options that can adapt to changing environmental conditions and user needs.
Tackling Inequalities	The proposals address inequalities by transitioning from a restrictive license model to a more equitable lease framework. This allows for sub-letting opportunities, giving caravan owners potential revenue sources, thus economically empowering them.
Thriving Economy	The redevelopment plan supports a thriving economy by enhancing the harbour's appeal as a tourist destination and increasing its capacity to attract a broader visitor base. This stimulates local businesses and promotes regional economic growth.
Our Foundations / governance of the organisation	The proposal upholds the principles of good governance by ensuring transparency, community engagement, and accountability throughout the redevelopment process.

Justification for recommendations

1. Background

1.1 The Southwold Harbour redevelopment project has undergone extensive consultation to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders, including caravan owners, local residents, business owners, and harbour users. The feedback received highlighted a strong interest in revising operational models, enhancing community engagement, and improving financial and legal frameworks associated with the site.

2. Introduction

2.1 This report outlines a series of recommendations developed in response to the community's feedback regarding the Southwold Harbour Vision 2035 and Caravan Site Revitalisation Consultation. Notably, over 60% of survey respondents were caravan owners, highlighting their significant interest and potential impact on the project. Additionally, approximately 70% of responses indicated openness to some form of change in the operational model. These insights have been instrumental in shaping the proposed changes aimed at aligning the operational and strategic framework of Southwold Harbour with contemporary needs and expectations, ensuring its viability and sustainability as a community asset.

3. Proposal

3.1 The proposed recommendations include transitioning caravan site licensing to more flexible lease arrangements, developing a business case for council-operated plots, facilitating co-design workshops, and creating a comprehensive Q&A document to address ongoing queries and concerns from the community.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The transition to lease agreements and the retention of council-operated plots are expected to generate additional revenue through sub-letting and year-round accommodation offerings. Initial investments in legal and strategic consultancy will be required, but these are projected to be offset by increased revenue streams and enhanced site valuation.

5. Legal Implications

5.1. Transitioning from license agreements to leases will require careful legal structuring to ensure compliance with local and national regulations. Direct consultations with caravan owners will also mitigate potential legal challenges by ensuring that all parties are adequately informed and their interests are considered.

6. Risk Implications

6.1. Potential risks include stakeholder resistance to changes in lease terms and operational models. These risks will be managed through transparent communication, direct stakeholder engagement, and phased implementation of changes.

7. Options

7.1. The primary alternative to the proposed recommendations would be to maintain the current operational model, which poses significant sustainability and compliance risks given evolving regulatory and environmental standards.

8. Recommendations

8.1 Approve the transition to lease agreements, commission the business case for council-operated plots, facilitate co-design workshops, and develop a Q&A document as outlined.

9. Reasons for Recommendations

9.1 These recommendations are grounded in feedback from extensive consultations and are designed to address key community concerns, enhance operational flexibility, and improve the economic sustainability of Southwold Harbour.

10. Conclusions/Next Steps

10.1 Upon approval of these recommendations, the project team will proceed with detailed planning and execution phases. This will include the development of legal and financial frameworks for the lease transitions, initiation of the business case study for council-operated plots, and organisation of co-design workshops. A comprehensive Q&A document will be prepared to continuously address stakeholder inquiries throughout the process. Regular updates will be provided to the HMC and broader community to ensure ongoing transparency and engagement.

10.2 As these recommendations are refined, a formal set of proposals will be presented to the Council's Cabinet. Prior to this, they will be submitted to the Harbour Management Committee for approval.

Areas of consideration comments

Section 151 Officer comments:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Monitoring Officer comments:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion/EQIA:

Consideration given to making all new facilities accessible and inclusive.

Safeguarding:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Crime and Disorder:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Corporate Services implications:

(i.e., Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Digital, Customer Services, Asset Management)

Click or tap here to enter text.

Residents and Businesses consultation/consideration:

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Appendices:

Appendix A	Initial Feedback Summary
Appendix B	Free text question responses

Background reference papers:

None