



# St Helier Boat Owners Association

28 March 2024

Captain Bill Sadler  
Harbourmaster  
Ports of Jersey

By email to : [William.sadler@ports.je](mailto:William.sadler@ports.je)  
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Dear Bill

STHBOA has encouraged all its members to respond individually to your consultation on South Pier parking, as set out in your letter of 15 March. In addition, the committee of STHBOA wishes to make its own submission on behalf of the association and its members.

As you probably expected, the plan has met with widespread dismay amongst the users of this area.

1. It is our view that there is not a significant problem with parking. There are certain pressure points at certain times on certain days, but generally there is a lot of flow in and out of parking there. The vast majority of visiting vehicles (i.e. those not operated by South Pier Marine (SPM) and DK Collins/Premier Marine Service (DKC) have a fairly short stay, as visitors to one of the chandleries or workshops, and of course the yacht club (SHYC). As such there is good flow, and it is the experience of the committee members that it is pretty unusual to not be able to park somewhere on the pier.

It is also our experience that the traffic flow is spread throughout the day.

It is our view that the plans you are outlining are disproportionate to the size of the issue. It seems that the primary motivation is to generate extra revenue for PoJ, over and above the swingeing increases we have seen to our mooring fees.

***Have any studies have been carried out on traffic flow volumes at different times to assess whether there really is the issue you claim?***

2. Whilst we understand SPM has a business to run, and plays an important role in supporting the local boat owning community, it is our view that SPM contributes an element of the pressure points that do exist, due to the practice of claiming parking spaces to use as a boat park. Some of the boats are being worked on, some are awaiting time in the workshop, whilst others are simply sales displays. It is our view that SPM should not be allowed to use designated parking spaces to manage their boat sales and holding bays. There are a couple of hatched areas that appear to be designated for this purpose, and they should operate only within designated areas.

3. You mention safety as a factor in the decision to introduce restrictions. We are not clear why you think charging for parking will reduce the volume of cars arriving on the pier, or the risks of cars manoeuvring between the boats on stands. It is our view that a more impactful way to improve safety is to restrict SPM use of the entrance to the pier as a boat sales display site. A number of boats (some quite large) are on stands, rather than trailers. The risk of serious injury if a car was to make contact with a stand is very high.

4. It is our view that allocating a number of parking spaces to each of the businesses on South Pier would be counter-productive. At the moment, there is a good flow of cars into and out of the area, as most cars are visiting for a specific purpose, which is fulfilled reasonably quickly. Designated spots would reduce the capacity of the pier by creating artificial impediments to the natural flows of cars arriving and leaving.

5. It is well recognised by those that use South Pier regularly that there are some people who abuse the free parking there to park and walk into town for a full working day.



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*Has any study been made on how many cars are consistently parked there every working day during the week?*

6. Whilst this response is made as representatives of the boat owning community, almost all our members are also members of SHYC. We understand SHYC is making its own submission, at a face to face meeting. We believe that the enjoyment of the club by our members would be adversely impacted if the parking spaces were lost, and that visits to the club would reduce, which would have a negative impact on both the sustainability and conviviality of the club.

7. A number of our members have boats in the old harbour, and use South Pier to access their boats from the dinghy pontoons, to either work on them or to go out boating for the day.

There are a number of racing series which take place during the day, which draw in a number of skippers and crew, who access their boats from the dinghy pontoons, and wind up the days racing at SHYC.

Designating parking spaces for the various business will reduce the number of spaces available for general boating use, which generally is accommodated pretty well through the ebb and flow of users. As we note earlier, designated spaces for the various businesses would actually reduce effective parking capacity as there would frequently be a mismatch between supply and demand for any given subgroup. Maximum flexibility will equate to the most efficient utilisation of spaces.

8. We recognise there are a small number of pinch points at certain times. For example, from time to time, SHYC hosts wakes for former members which can lead to a large influx at the same time. The rowing club session creates a lot of cars on a Saturday morning. Parking can be hard to find at these times. In our view, these pinch points are quite short in duration, and people work around them. In our view, the proposals are a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

9. It has been a continuing source of disgruntlement amongst boat owners, especially those that have paid for parking permits, for example for the town marina, or the underground parking at waterfront for EM before it was moved, and now at Albert Pier, that most of the spots are taken by those with a marinas parking permit who are parking for work, rather than those using their boats. Whenever this is raised with the marinas office, the response is 'we can't control what people do after they park'. In our view, this is a pretty weak response. The barrier controls allow daily reports of the cars coming in and out, and it's pretty elementary to spot the cars that arrive at 8.30 and leave at 5.30 every week day, from a computer terminal in your office.

It is our view that PoJ is very poor at controlling parking abuses, even when it has the tools to do so. There would be substantially more parking available for people accessing and using their boats around the various harbours were you to concentrate your efforts on this.

10. You have attempted to justify the substantial increases over the last 15 months in berthing fees by comparing fees with U.K. south coast marinas. You also proudly boast of your 5 anchor rating. The reality is that parking for boat owners is already extremely poor by any comparison with U.K. or French marinas, where plenty of parking is available without extra charge for berthholders. There is a chronic lack of drop off places for boats in all the marinas and harbours, and a shortage of available parking whilst out on the boat. This proposal will make the situation even worse. In our view, the acute parking situation disqualifies PoJ marinas from 5 Anchor rating, and we will be feeding this back to the Yacht Harbour Association.

**In summary, it is our view that there is no need to introduce parking restrictions on South Pier, and your planned changes would lead to less efficient use of the parking spaces available and harm the interests of the boat owning community who use the area at the moment. Some restrictions on the way SPM use the space available will create extra capacity and improve safety.**



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On the premise that you are going to ignore this view, and that of other consultees who we know express similar views, we have given some thought to how you might implement the changes you intend to make, in a way that at least gives some protection to the boat owning community who use South Pier at the moment.

1. We understand that it is your intention to introduce paid-for parking, and we accept the idea that some parking fees may be appropriate in certain instances, but these should be primarily to either dissuade people from abusing the parking (for example, commuters working in town) or those leaving their cars for several days whilst off on their boats.
2. The majority of the boat owning community use the parking spaces on a flow through basis, to stop in to the chandleries and workshops, to go to SHYC for a coffee, a meal or a drink, or to access their boats in the old harbour.
3. It is our view that parking for boat users flowing through for a limited time should be free. Disc parking with free parking for 2 hours would allow efficient utilisation of spaces and throughput of boat-owners, SHYC members and customers of the various businesses on the pier, and those dropping off people and gear for boats accessed from the pier. Boat-owners could claim their free time and pay a top up parking fee if they need longer.

This would allow identification and screening out those using the pier for commuter parking or leaving their cars whilst going away.

4. We have given consideration to the issuance of annual parking permits for South Pier for boat-owners especially those with moorings in the old harbour, to allow those with boats there to spend the day out on their boats, and to go away for the weekend, without paying excessive hourly parking rates.

As parking spaces would be shared with other users, any permits should be offered at a discount to the cost of permits in other marina car parks.

We do however have serious misgivings about how PoJ might operate such a scheme. As we note above, it is clear that marinas permits are widely abused for people to park for reasons other than using or accessing their boat. At present, PoJ take no steps to monitor usage outside the T&Cs of marina parking, and it is not clear what measures PoJ would take to police the misuse of permits on South Pier.

***Does PoJ have a policy or limit on how many parking permits are issued as a multiple of the number of available spaces?***

Given the clear agenda and point of the initiative is to maximise PoJ revenues, we also have misgivings about how many permits PoJ would issue for a given number of available spaces. In our view, it would be an abuse of PoJ's position to over-issue the number of permits. This would result in permit holders turning up to find all the spaces taken, and those without permits unable to park anywhere.

As we noted earlier, the parking on the pier works well now, as it is almost all short term transient flow. If the spaces are all filled with cars with permits, then the short term flow and ease of access for people looking to make a quick trip to SHYC, one of the chandleries, or drop things off for their boat, would be lost, and the wider community of boat owners adversely impacted.

5. It is our view that designated spaces for electric vehicles and any significant increase in disabled parking, though may be demonstrate fashionable virtue signalling, but would compromise the efficiency and utilisation of the parking spaces.
6. Business vehicles of the businesses on the pier (in the main, vans) could be given permits, but staff personal vehicles should not be allowed free unlimited all day parking.



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7. Boat-owners who have booked the drying pads should have an all-day parking permit issued by the marina office.

8. Any restrictions and charging put in place should only be effective between 9 and 5 Monday to Friday. Times outside this, in the evening and weekends, should have no restrictions or charging.

**We are firmly of the view that the revenue-generating emphasis of this initiative will disadvantage the regular, short term users of South Pier. We would welcome the opportunity for a face to face meeting with the key decision makers as this initiative is progressed.**

Regards

St Helier Boat Owners Association