

Report to	Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Date	27 January 2009
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Destination Stade Transport Improvements
Purpose of Report	To (a) consider a petition requesting consultation proposals for coach turning north of the A259/Harold Road junction to be not taken forward; and (b) to advise the Lead Cabinet Member of the results of the public consultation exercise carried out for the proposed Destination Stade Transport Improvements Scheme and to seek approval to progress the agreed elements of the proposals through detailed design and construction

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1. approve the proposed Destination Stade Transport Improvements, as outlined in Section 3.3 of the report, subject to minor modifications identified through the consultation process and that may be found necessary at the detailed design stage;**
 - 2. authorise the progression of the amended elements of the proposals through detailed design, for construction in 2009/10 and 2010/11, subject to the availability of funding; and**
 - 3. advise petitioners that, following the outcomes of the consultation, it is proposed not to proceed with any of the options for the coach turning to the north of the A259/Harold Road junction.**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The total cost of the proposed transport improvements is approximately £1.3m. £320,000 has been allocated from the Integrated Transport Capital Programme towards these works. The remainder is funded from the wider funding package for the Destination Stade project, including contributions from Hastings Borough Council, and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA).

2. Supporting Information

2.1 Transport proposals have been developed jointly by East Sussex County Council and Hastings Borough Council, as part of the proposed siting of the new Jerwood Art Gallery and creation of a new public space on the existing Stade coach and lorry park. In order for the Destination Stade proposals to be implemented, the coach parking needs to be relocated. In addition, the transport proposals are designed to address concerns about pedestrian facilities at the A259/Rock-a-Nore Road junction and anti-social driving behaviour on Hastings seafront along the A259 and Rock-a-Nore Road, which were the subject of a petition considered by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment at his decision making meeting in November 2007.

2.2 The transport improvement proposals put forward for public consultation in November 2008, included:

- The introduction of either traffic signals or a roundabout at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction, including pedestrian crossing improvements, coach pick up and drop off bays, and revised access to The Stade;
- In parallel with traffic signals at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction, coach turning facilities be provided north of A259 Old London Road/Harold Road junction; (either a one way gyratory or a coach only link), and
- Relocated coach parking proposed for Sea Road and Falaise Road.

2.3 At the County Council meeting on 9 December 2008, Councillor Kramer presented a petition to the Chairman relating to the coach turning proposals north of A259 Old London Road / Harold Road junction. The petition states:

“To County Councillor Jay Kramer - we the undersigned hereby call upon you to petition members of the East Sussex County Council to reject the one-way gyratory system proposed for the junction of Harold Road and Old London Road, Hastings Old Town”

2.4 A copy of the petition is available in the Members’ room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and that a spokesperson for the petitioners be invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment.

3. Comments/Appraisal

3.1 A public exhibition on the proposals was held in five venues across the town between 6 and 11 November 2008. This was supplemented with briefings with the local County and Borough Councillors, local stakeholders and articles in the local press. The closing date for responses was 5 December 2008.

3.2 The wording of the petition received relates to the one-way gyratory option for the coach turning facility. However, it is understood that the petition should note opposition to both coach turning options.

3.3 In summary, based on the outcomes of the consultation, it is recommended that:

- Traffic signals be introduced at the A259/Rock-a-Nore Road junction;
- The coach turning options should not be progressed and consideration be given to routing options around the existing road network to relocated coach parking and in/out of the town;
- Additional coach drop off and pick up spaces be provided at the Stade and elsewhere in Hastings town centre;
- Investigations be conducted with Hastings Borough Council the possibility of resident permit holders being allowed to park in off-street car parks (Pelham Place and Rock-a-Nore) at no charge during the evening. This would help to offset the loss of on-street parking resultant from these changes;
- Following research on the number of coach spaces required, the maximum usage, at any one time, was found to be 26 spaces. Based on this information, and to allow for some flexibility, it is proposed to provide a total of 29 dedicated coach parking spaces in the town. This will comprise 21 spaces at Falaise Road as proposed (24 hour) and 8 (currently 6) daytime only spaces at Sea Road.

3.4 A detailed summary of the consultation process, including responses to the petition, is set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report.

4. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

4.1 The Destination Stade Transport Improvements Scheme will improve the safety for all road users, in particular pedestrians, and enhance the urban environment at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction. In addition, the relocation of coach parking in Hastings will enable the proposed Destination Stade and Jerwood Art Gallery to progress.

4.2 It is therefore recommended that the agreed elements to the proposals, subject to the amendments set out in Section 3.3 of the report, be approved, but that the coach turning option should not proceed and the petitioners informed accordingly.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Transport and Environment

16 January 2009

Contact Officer: Jon Wheeler Tel. No. 01273 482212

Local Member: Councillors Kramer, Waite, Daniel, Webb

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Destination Stade Transport Proposals Consultation Report, Jan 09; Stade Coach & Lorry

Parking: Survey of Coach & Lorry Operations + supplemental report, Dec 08

Petition

Destination Stade Transport Proposals – consultation outcomes and commentary

The consultation questionnaire sought views on the key aspects of the proposals. Respondents were invited to indicate their level of agreement on a scale from 5 (strong agreement) to -5 (strong disagreement). A total of 383 questionnaires have been received.

1. A259/Rock-a-Nore Junction

Two options were consulted upon for the improvement to the A259/Rock-a-Nore Road junction - the introduction of traffic signals or a roundabout. Both options also included pedestrian crossing facilities and coach pick up/drop off points.

In developing the options, a number of factors needed to be taken into account:

- The high number of pedestrians needing to cross at or near the junction (around 5,000 per day)
- Managing the traffic flow (14,000 vehicles 7am – 7pm) in summer 2008
- Anti social driving along Hastings seafront
- Need to maximise public space with wider pavements for pedestrians to access the new Jerwood Gallery and Stade public event space

Views were sought on how strongly people agreed or disagreed with each of the options?

Option 1 – Traffic light control at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction

Benefits

- Manages traffic flow on A259
- Provides new pedestrian crossing facilities at junction
- Improves access for people with reduced mobility
- Pedestrian crossing retained for High Street, Old Town
- Helps tackle anti-social driving on Rock-A-Nore Road
- Increases pedestrian footway widths in Stade area
- Increases public open space
- Less impact on on-road car parking than roundabout
- Coach drop-off/pick-up close to attractions
- Minimises walking distances to access main Stade site
- Visual impact on Hastings Old Town

Dis-benefits

- Could impact on free flow of traffic at peak times.
- Separate coach turning facility needed (please see separate panel for options)

Option 2 – Roundabout at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction (264 questionnaire responses)

Roundabout at A259 junction with Rock a Nore Road, and relocated pedestrian crossing. This option provides a solution for coach turning, but does not address the needs of pedestrians crossing the A259 and people with restricted mobility.

Benefits

- Manages traffic flow on the A259
- Provides a coach turning facility

Dis-benefits

- Does not address safety issues of high number
- of pedestrians crossing at the junction
- Adverse visual impact in Old Town location
- Less on-road car parking than Option One
- Reduces public open space at the Stade,
- including Winkle Island
- Coach drop-off and pick-up points further from main site
- Existing pedestrian crossing (opposite High Street)
- to be closed
- Creates pinch points for pedestrians
- Reduces space for pedestrians
- Does not help in addressing anti-social driving

Consultation results (283 responses)

	Agree (5 to 0)	Disagree (-1 to -5)
Option 1 – Traffic Signals	171 (60%)	112 (40%)
Option 2 - Roundabout	111 (42%)	153 (58%)

Don't know	14
None of the above	27

Recommendation

- **Proceed with option 1 – the introduction of the traffic signal controlled junction at the A259/Rock-a-Nore junction**

2. Coach Turning

Question 2: Please tell us your preferred option for the coach turning facility (to be answered only by those who chose the signals as their preferred option)

Option A – new junction linking Harold Road and Old London Road	41(21%)
Option B – Coach only link to enable coaches to turn at Harold Road	92 (47%)
Don't Know	62 (31%)

There have been a significant number of comments on the questionnaires and letters received as well as the petition received at County Hall on 9 December 2008 against the introduction of any coach turning facility to the north of the A259 Old London Road/Harold Road junction.

Consultation Analysis

Different Coach Markets

To help inform the consultation assessment, surveys of the coach operators who use the existing coach and lorry park have found that the visits made to the coach park can be divided into six distinct types:

- **Day trips** – coaches which bring visitors from their home town for the day in Hastings and returning to their home base at the end of the day. These visitors tend to arrive between 11am – 12:30pm and stay in the town for 5 to 6 hours;
- **Excursions** - coaches which bring visitors to Hastings from other holiday destinations, mainly Eastbourne, who come to Hastings for a couple of hours as part of a tour of the local area, returning to their hotel base at the end of the day. These visitors tend to

arrive between 10.00am and 11.00am or between 1.00pm and 3.00pm and tend to stay approximately 2 hours;

- **Holidays based in Hastings** - visitors who are brought to Hastings by coach and stay in local hotels, normally for a period of 4 to 5 days, taking excursions to other places during the day, but returning to Hastings in the evening.
- **Feeders** - coaches which pass through Hastings with Holiday makers in transit to or from their holidays, who stop in Hastings to pick up or drop off passengers or for a comfort break. They only stop long enough to allow the passengers to use the toilets and get something to eat, approximately 45 minutes.
- **School trips** - school children who are brought to Hastings by coach are dropped at the Stade for a morning visit and then return to the coach at lunchtime to collect their packed lunches which they then eat on the beach or elsewhere.
- **Language Schools** - continental coaches bring language students to Hastings. The students are dropped at three locations within the town to be picked up by their host families. These locations are Sea Road, Falaise Road and the Stade. Once empty the coaches using Sea Road and Falaise Road then park overnight at the Stade. Different language schools host students for varying amounts of time, the most common length of stay ranging from 4/5 days (used by the town's largest operator) up to 2/3 weeks (used by most other language schools). Some stays are for longer still. During the time that they are in Hastings, the coaches take the students on day trips, picking them up from and dropping them off at various locations throughout the town, returning to the Stade for overnight parking.

Existing coach movements - direction of travel

Previous surveys of coach drivers have been undertaken to identify the direction coaches arrived from and departed to when used the existing coach park. It was found that 64% approached from the A21 London direction, 22% used A259 coming from the Bexhill/Eastbourne direction and 14% used A259 coming from the Rye direction.

The survey also recorded the direction in which they turned on to the A259 when they left the Coach Park. 86% of the coaches turned left towards Bexhill/Eastbourne and 14% turned right towards Rye.

Commentary

With the loss of the coach park and the proposed relocation of the coach parking to elsewhere in the town, the coach turning facility was proposed to enable principally the excursion, daytime, school trips and feeder coach services to turn around dependent on their direction of travel. The following coach movements would be affected:

- (a) coaches travelling eastbound to turn around after picking up/dropping off on the north side of the A259 and go back along the seafront towards the proposed new coach parking areas, up the A21 to London or along the coast towards Bexhill/Eastbourne;
- (b) coaches travelling from the coach parking areas via the Seafront to turn around and use the coach pick up/drop off points on the south side of the seafront.

The petition received in response to the consultation requests that the coach turning proposals for the junction of Harold Road and Old London Road (A259) in Hastings Old Town are rejected. From the consultation, there was also a high level of opposition to the coach turning facility north of the Old Town, with a number of comments questioning the need for it when other towns/cities who have taken away their town centre coach park have not felt the need to provide a turning facility.

Along with the two coach turning options exhibited, a number of other 'permanent' options were also considered as part of the option testing assessment prior to consultation including:

- A259/High Street Link
- Sussex Arms Junction
- Pelham Place car park
- A259 Boating Lake
- Roundabout at A259/Rock-a-Nore Junction

From the option testing assessment, none of these are considered as suitable alternatives to the two options presented at exhibition, except the roundabout option. Whilst the roundabout provides a coach turning facility, it does have a number of dis-benefits which are contrary to the achievement of a number of the overall principles that the project is seeking to achieve. These include improving direct pedestrian accessibility to the Stade and maximising public space in the area. The roundabout option was presented at the exhibition, where it was highlighted that one of its benefits was that it enabled coaches to turn around. However, as set out in the analysis to question 1 above, it was the least preferred in comparison with the traffic signals option and therefore it has been recommended not to progress with the roundabout.

In considering possible changes to the coach circulation system by not providing a turning point for coaches to the north of the Old London Road/Harold Road junction, it is important to understand coach movements as a whole and the possible effects this has on the perception of Hastings as a coach friendly destination.

Currently the Stade Coach park is the simplest and most convenient solution for coach drivers and passengers. It provides a single point of arrival and departure for both passengers and vehicles close to many of the attractions of the town. At the end of the visit coaches can leave in whichever direction is most convenient to them.

Feasibility studies have shown that there is no site where it is practical to replicate this arrangement when the coach park is relocated.

Therefore the proposals on which the consultation were carried out comprised two coach parks sited away from the attractions of the town but with 8 coach drop off and pick up bays, 4 on each side of the road, sited near to the attractions. In addition a gyratory system which provided a way for coaches to circulate around the bays, so that in the busiest times the 8 bays could be fully utilized. It also enabled coaches arriving from the west to turn around and be able to get to the coach parks and park up within twenty minutes. Departing coaches would be able to leave the town in which ever direction was the most convenient for them. This solution was more complicated and less convenient for coach operators compared to current arrangement but passengers would be relatively unaffected.

A proposal where no turning point is provided to the north of the Old London Road/Harold Road junction becomes much less flexible and results in any drop off or pick up bays provided on the south side of the road being inaccessible to coaches arriving from the coach parks or west along the A259. This will necessitate a larger number of coach bays on the north side of the road.

In addition any coaches arriving from the west and dropping passengers at the Stade will either be required to go north to Ore and then west along The Ridge finally turning south down the A21 to park at Falaise Road or around the ring road. The former is a journey of approximately 5-6 miles taking a minimum of 30 minutes, the latter is 3-4 miles taking a minimum of 20 minutes. Either of these round trips would also need to be taken by coaches coming from the west if all the coach bays are full and they are unable to stop to pick up passengers.

Coaches whose arrival route is down the Old London Road, would either be able to drop passengers on the south side bays and go straight along the front to the coach parks or use the roundabout at Breeds Place to use the northern bays, after which again they will need to go via the alternative routes to get to the coach parks.

Coaches from the coach park which pick up passengers and then need to go towards Eastbourne would again have to go via the alternative routes or The Ridge and the Queensway. This solution is more complicated probably need some kind of signage of the route to direct coaches in and out of the town, it is certainly less convenient for coach operators and for small percentage of passengers who may well have to wait an additional 30-40 minutes for their coach if it has to do a circuit if all coach bays are being used.

To assess the number of coach drop off and pick up points required on the northern side of the A259 near to the Stade, it has been necessary to interpret and adjust the raw data using information obtained from various surveys carried out over the past few years. The analysis shows that had been 6 coach bays operating in summer season of 2008 there would have been 25 occasions when coaches would have had to completed another circuit. Whereas with 7 bays this reduced to 15 instances and with 8 bays 9 instances.

Coach operators have also been asked if they would like to see additional dropping off or picking up points elsewhere within Hastings although only 25% responded positively the most requested point was somewhere close to the Town Centre. The provision of stop off and pick up bays near the town centre, possibly adjacent the Carlisle Public House, would relieve some of the pressure on the drop off/pick up spaces near the Stade and also enable coaches to turn around at the Breeds Place roundabout.

Accommodating an increase in the number of coach pick up and drop off spaces is likely to mean a reduction in the number of on-street resident permit and pay and display parking spaces on the A259. To off-set the loss of resident permit parking bays, it is recommended that the Borough Council consider enabling residents permit holders to park in off-street car parks (Pelham Place and Rock-a-Nore) at no charge during evenings/weekends to help off-set loss of on-street parking resultant from these changes.

Conclusion

On balance, and in light of the high level of opposition identified from the consultation and in the petition, it is recommended not to progress with any of the coach turning options. Consequently, if it is decided that the less flexible option of not providing a turning point for coaches to the north of the Old London Road/Harold Road junction is the most suitable then:

- Eight coach bays should be provided on the northern side of the A259 and three coach bays on the side of the A259.
- The preferred route for coaches entering the town from the north, coaches leaving the drop off and pick up points to go to the coach park or whose destination is to the west should be indicated by a signed route.
- The alternative route proposed for coaches is using the existing Ring Road and this will need to be assessed to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made to reflect the increased usage by large vehicles.

Recommendations

- **Not to progress with any of the coach turning options proposed at the exhibition.**
- **Provide 8 coach pick up/drop off bays on the north side and 4 pick up/drop off bays on the south side of the A259 near the Stade**
- **The preferred route for coaches entering the town from the north, coaches leaving the drop off and pick up points to go to the coach park or whose destination is to the west should be indicated by a signed route.**
- **The alternative route proposed for coaches is using the existing Ring Road and this needs to be assessed to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made to reflect the increased usage by large vehicles.**
- **Review the level of drop off and pick up spaces elsewhere in Hastings town centre, possibly near the Carlisle public house.**
- **Investigate enabling residents permit holders to park in off-street car parks (Pelham Place and Rock-a-Nore) at no charge during evenings to help off-set loss of on-street parking resultant from these changes.**

3. Coach Parking

Views were sought on the proposals to relocate the coach parking from the Stade to new coach parking facilities at Falaise Road for 18-21 coaches (all day) and 24 at Sea Road (daytime only – 9am to 6pm).

The consultation responses were as follows (330 questionnaire responses):

	Agree (5 to 0)	Disagree (-1 to -5)
Coach parking	163 (49.4%)	167 (50.6%)

From the comments received in the questionnaire, the principle objection to the coach parking is to the extension of the coach parking in Sea Road from 6 parallel spaces to 21 echelon spaces which would result in a loss of the existing car parking on the sea side of the road, although this loss would be partially off-set with the formalisation of parking nearby on the edge of the old Bathing Pool site. Questionnaire respondents' main concerns relate to the loss of free parking, impact on the local residents and users of the gardens/beach, increases in traffic on A259, impact on the view/conservation area and that they don't feel they have been consulted. Appendix 2 shows the full range of comments

There has also been 33 letters received from local residents, and users of the bowls club and car parking against these proposals. This has, in part, been as a result of a targeted campaign based on inaccurate information relating to the proposals and their impacts.

The stated capacity of the Stade Coach Park is 42 spaces. A study of the number and pattern of coach parking between April 2008 and September 2008 shows that the maximum number of coaches parked at any one time is 26. This happened once over these months. On average there maximum number of coaches parked per day is 12. Therefore even at the busiest time of the year there will be plenty of capacity for expansion either of number of coaches or the length of time they spend in Hastings.

As part of the consultation with coach operators, only 6 % of respondents thought that the relocation would cause problems for their operations. When asked whether they preferred to park their coaches in Sea Road or Falaise Road, over 50% did not express a preference either way, whereas Sea Road was preferred by 29% of respondents against 19% preferring Falaise Road.

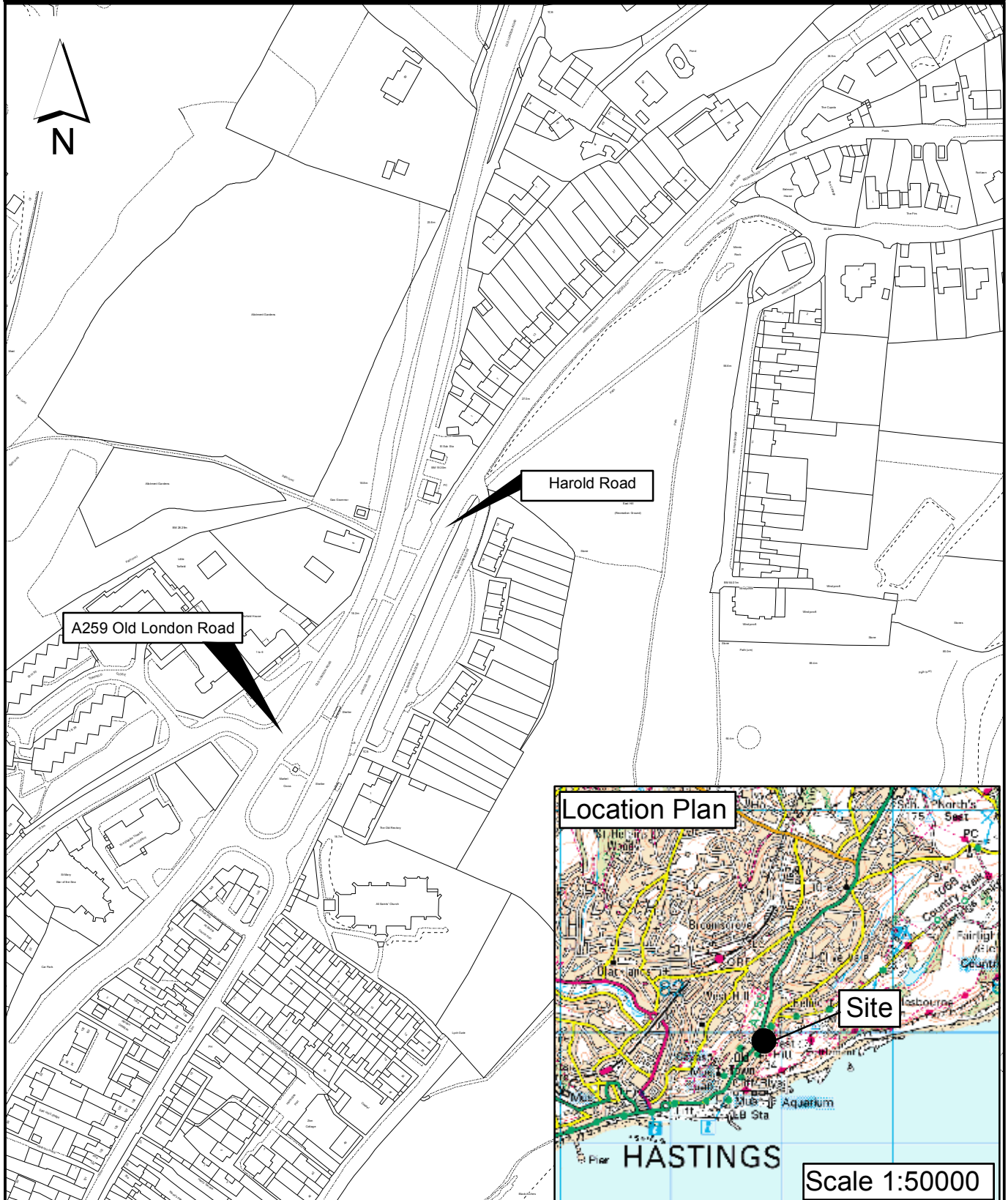
Therefore, based on the analysis of the existing number of coaches using the Stade coach park, it is recommended to revise the proposals for the coach parking at Sea Road and reduce the number of spaces from 21 to 8, 2 more than the existing numbers in Sea Road. These will still remain daytime parking only. These will, with the 21 spaces at Falaise Road, provide a total of 29 coach parking spaces in the town (3 more than the maximum usage during 2008) and provide some flexibility for additional take up in the future.

Although there are no specific numbers for coaches parking overnight the language schools stated that they can be up to 20 coaches parked in the Stade overnight during busy times of the year. Therefore overnight capacity at Falaise Road is at or over its limit depending on the size of coaches parking there. This can be overcome by allowing coaches to park in the drop off and pick up bays between the hours of 6.00pm and 9.00 am, this increases capacity by a further 12 spaces.

Recommendations

- **To provide the coach parking (21 spaces) at Falaise Road as proposed (24 hour).**
- **To extend the existing parallel coach parking in Sea Road, from six coach parking spaces to eight coaches, daytime only.**

To (a) consider a petition requesting consultation proposals for coach turning north of the A259/Harold Road junction to be not taken forward and
(b) to advise the Lead Cabinet Member of the results of the public consultation exercise carried out for the proposed Destination Stade Transport Improvements scheme and to seek approval to progress the agreed elements of the proposals through detailed design and construction.

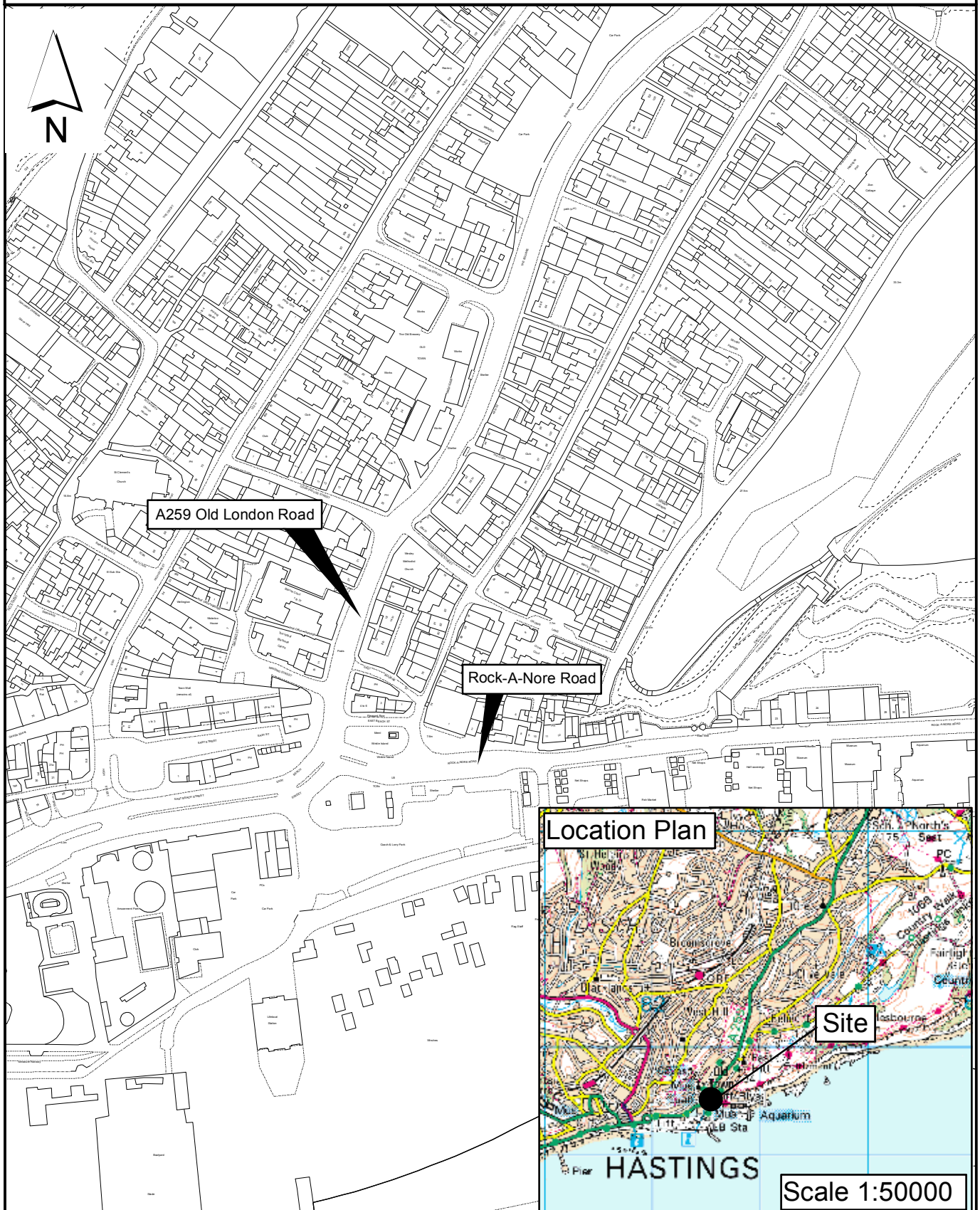


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Destination Stade Transport Improvements scheme, A259 / Rock-A-Nore junction

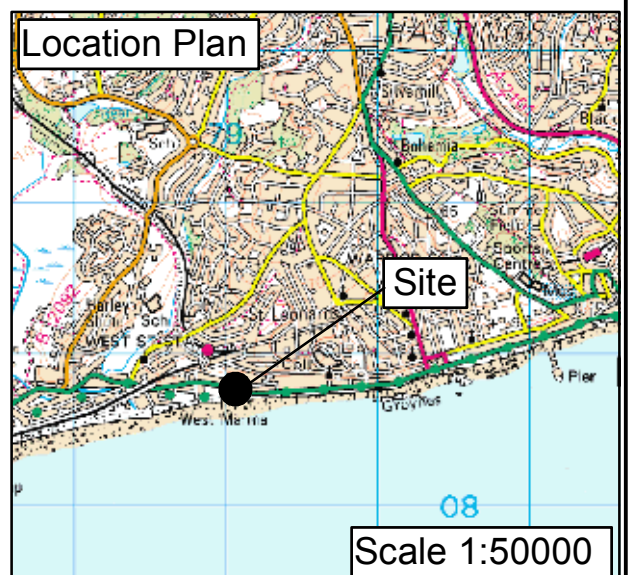
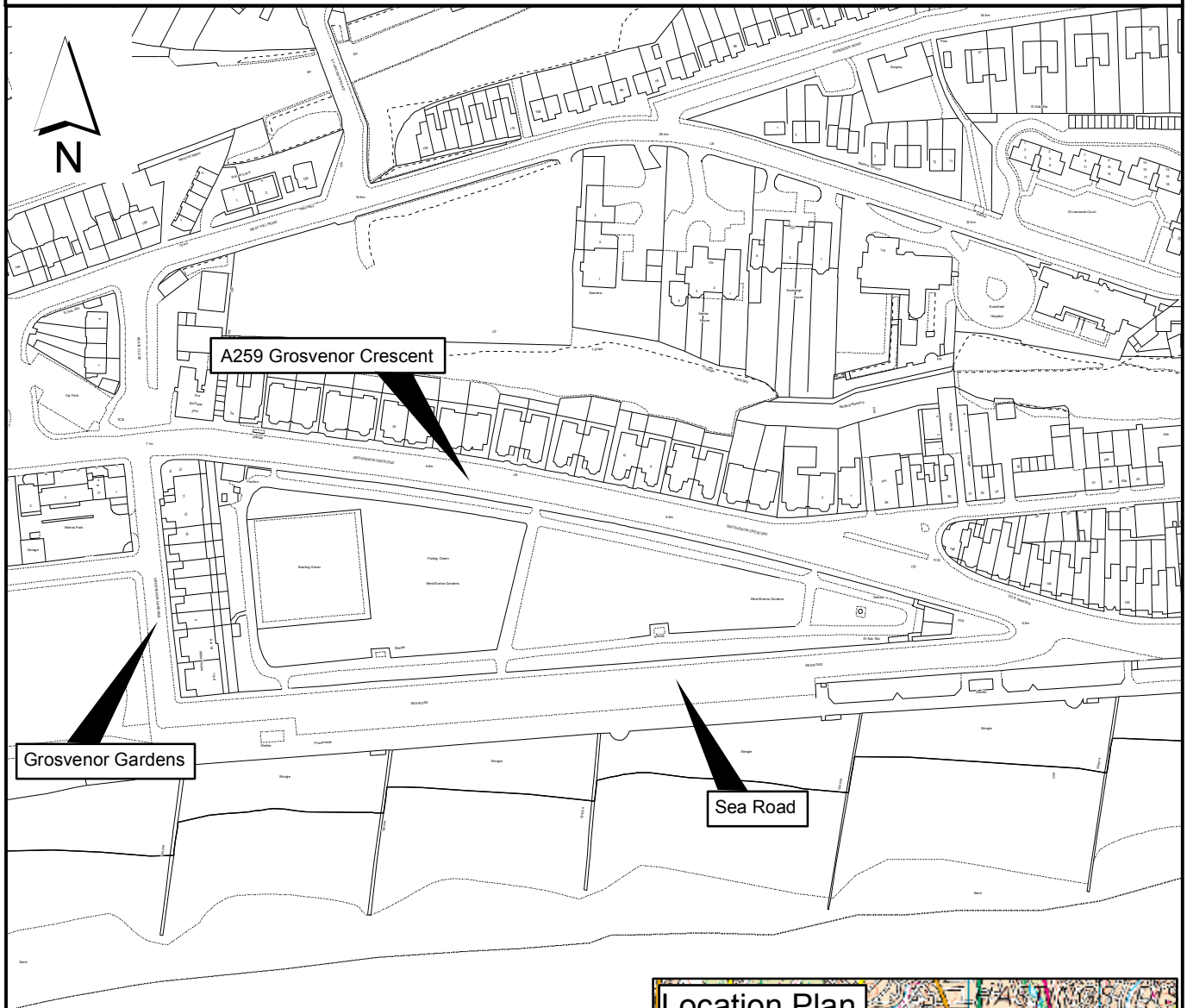


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Destination Stade Transport Improvements scheme, A259 / Sea Road junction



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