

Corfe Castle Parish Council Objection to the proposed Sandbanks to Studland Ferry fare increase

This is an objection to Bournemouth-Swanage Motor Road and Ferry Company's Application to the Secretary of State for Transport for an Order to revise the charges for the use of the ferry between Sandbanks and South Haven Point.

Corfe Castle Parish Council resolved to object to the proposed fare increase at an extraordinary meeting held on the 26th of October.

The basis of the objection is

1. The fare increase is excessive.

The danger of this is that drivers will increasingly cease using the ferry and get to Studland and Swanage by using the A351. This road is already under extremely heavy usage. During the COVID crisis this year when the ferry was shut the A351 was subject to many substantial traffic jams.

This will have a serious effect on the local economy as Purbeck needs to bring in staff often to lower paid work in the tourist industry and many Purbeck people travel for work using the ferry. The increase will have a significant deterrent effect on potential day visitors to Purbeck from the Bournemouth area and affect the tourism industry, the principal economic activity in the peninsula.

2. Effect on Corfe Castle

Increased use of the A351 will cause more congestion on the narrow main road through Corfe Castle, a village of outstanding beauty already attracting over 300,000 visitors a year. The A351 is the only main way onto the Isle of Purbeck other than the ferry. As there is no alternative route increased traffic inevitably has to pass through the village.

Equally a useful amenity for local people to get to work in Poole and Bournemouth and to conduct shopping and recreational activities is likely to be less used, resulting in even further congestion.

3. The fair increase penalises cyclists and foot passengers

We should be encouraging cyclists. The high increase for cyclists and foot passengers will discourage people from using this form of transport, flying in the face of Government measures to get people more active, and use cars less.

4. A green method of Propulsion should be specified

Any replacement ferry should operate using a green method of propulsion diesel propulsion should not be allowed and another method should be specified.

5. Protection of the ferry replacement reserve.

The ferry replacement reserve should be protected to ensure that it is available for the purchase of a new ferry. This should ensure it is not used for routine running and repair costs. Alternatively the company should commit to obtaining a marine mortgage or some other method of funding for the building of the new vessel.

Corfe Castle Parish Council objects for the reasons stated above and fully supports the alternative proposal submitted by Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.