

AGENDA

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 1 December 2015
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Burton (Chairman), English,
Mrs Gooch, Mrs Grigg, D Mortimer,
Paine, Springett, de Wiggondene and
Mrs Wilson

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Notification of Visiting Members

Continued Over/:

Issued on Monday 23 November 2015

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Tessa Ware on 01622 602621**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

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5.	Disclosures of Lobbying	
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2015

Present: Councillor Burton (Chairman), and Councillors Chittenden, English, Mrs Gooch, D Mortimer, Paine, Paterson, Mrs Ring and Springett

Also Present: Councillors Perry and Sargeant

127. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors:

- Mrs Grigg
- Mrs F Wilson
- de Wiggondene

Councillor Springett arrived at 6:39pm.

128. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following substitute members were noted:

- Councillor Chittenden for Councillor F Wilson
- Councillor Paterson for Councillor Grigg
- Councillor Ring for Councillor de Wiggondene

129. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Visiting Members were in attendance reserving their right to speak:

- Councillor Perry – on item 17
- Councillor Sargeant

130. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

131. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

It was noted that all Committee Members had been lobbied on item 17, Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan.

It was also noted all Committee Members, with the exception of Councillor Gooch, had been lobbied on item 15 – Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders – point 5.24 – The Mallows.

132. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

133. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

A point of order was raised with regard to whether or not a member of the public or external bodies were allowed to speak at Service Committee meetings and whether it was a matter for the Chairman's discretion.

RESOLVED: That the Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transport Committee make reference to the Democracy Committee to clarify the position on members of the public or external bodies speaking at Service Committee meetings and whether or not the decision to allow this was at the discretion of the Chairman.

134. URGENT ITEMS

There were no Urgent Items.

135. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

136. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr Trevor Puckett, a Maidstone resident, asked the following question of the Chairman regarding the recommendation of the Joint Transport Board to refuse the installation of limited parking restrictions along part of 'The Mallows', Maidstone, under item 15, Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders, paragraph 5.24:

"I note that the agenda for the Strategic, Planning Sustainability and Transportation Committee item 15 is recommending refusal of the proposal to install limited parking restrictions along part of 'The Mallows'. The reason that the parking restrictions are necessary is that the tops of the gully gratings at the bottom of 400m of Highway, forming part of Moncktons Lane and The Mallows, are regularly blocked by silt and leaves and need regular cleaning. Unfortunately these cannot be cleaned on a regular basis when the streets are mechanically cleaned as they are obstructed by cars during the day time preventing access by machine and by hand. As a result we suffer regular flooding

the last occurring last Tuesday 4th October. The proposals for parking restrictions as detailed in the papers will be the simplest resolution of the problem, but if not agreed what urgent action will the chairman take to ensure that this serious on-going problem is resolved by Maidstone Borough Council as quickly as possible?"

The Chairman responded as follows:

"I understand why inadequate clearing of the drains is causing difficulty for local residents, and Members have all received your email and photographs, and some of us have been to have a look. However, I am sure that you will appreciate that parking restrictions should only be considered as a last resort due to the wider negative effect on residents and their visitors and only then to manage vehicle and pedestrian highway safety and/or levels of parking availability. The views of local residents were considered as part of the formal consultation process which identified a significant level of objection to the proposals to introduce parking controls. This led to the recommendation to the Joint Transportation Board on 14 October 2015 to not proceed with the proposal as there remained substantial objections to the scheme. Also, I am aware the next planned deep cleansing of this particular area is on 1 December 2015 and I am also aware that the cleansing officers are actually making a further investigation to see what measures can be taken to address the fundamental problem that you raise via that route."

Mr Puckett asked the following supplementary question:

"Do we have a further timetable for this yet?"

Councillor Burton responded as follows:

"I do not have the timetable for that to hand, during the debate we probably will have and you may hear some more information. I believe that the investigation is probably underway already, but I am not in a position to absolutely confirm that. Thank you for your question"

137. REFERENCES

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Committee note the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to Council 2014/15.
- b) That a report on Active Frontages with a recommendation on revised policy wording for Active Frontages be presented to the Committee at their meeting of 14 December 2015 when the Regulation 18 Consultation results are presented.

- c) That Councillor Paine be confirmed as the Committee's approved representative, to be co-opted onto any of the Task and Finish groups when required for specific tasks relating to the Strategic.

138. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR NOTING

RESOLVED: That the Committee's work programme be noted.

139. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS

The Committee discussed the proposals for savings and growth pressures considered at an informal briefing session held on 15 October with representatives of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee which had been recommended in the report for inclusion in the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 onwards.

RESOLVED: That

The Committee agreed that the saving proposals for the medium term financial strategy 2016-2017 onwards set out in Appendix A of the report be included in the report to Policy and Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting on 16 December 2015.

Voting: For – 9

140. SECOND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2015-16

RESOLVED: That

The Committee noted the details of the Second Quarter Budget Monitoring 2015-16 report set out in Appendix A of the report.

141. OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Joint Transportation Board in relation to Waiting Restrictions Variation No 30 and Designated Parking Places Variation No 11.

It was agreed, for clarity, the paragraph:

"Joint Transportation Board Recommendation: To recommend to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to proceed with the proposal."

Should be entered after paragraph 5.19 of the report at the end of the section titled "Orders not receiving objections to Waiting restrictions variation No 30 and Designated Parking Places Variation No 11."

It was requested that a report be presented to the Committee at a later date investigating the introduction of restrictions on the western side of Farley Lane from Tonbridge Road to Glebe Lane to alleviate some of the problems with bus routes being restricted by cars parking inappropriately.

RESOLVED: That

1. The Committee agreed the Joint Transportation Board's recommendations, in relation to Waiting Restrictions Variation No 30 and Designated Parking Places Variation No 11 and agree to make the Orders, where recommended, save for the restriction at The Mallows, Maidstone (paragraph 5.24 of the report).

Voting: For – 9

2. The Committee agreed the Joint Transportation Board's recommendation in relation to The Mallows. However, should a solution via Maidstone Borough Council's and Kent County Council's Street Cleansing Services not be found, proposals for parking restrictions are to be returned to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee for further consideration.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 0 Abstentions – 1

3. The Committee agreed to recommend to Kent County Council as the Highway Authority that the various Orders be sealed as agreed.

Voting: For – 9

4. That a referral be made to the Joint Transport Board requesting that a recommendation be made to Kent County Council Highways authority investigating the introduction of restrictions on the western side of Farley Lane from Tonbridge Road to Glebe Lane to alleviate some of the problems with bus routes being restricted by cars parking inappropriately.

142. MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORT BOARD - VERBAL UPDATE

Councillor Burton provided the Committee with a verbal update from the Joint Transport Board.

The Board's support had been given to Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Officers to work jointly to provide a report with further detail on the results of the VISUM modelling on DS4, which would give consideration to transport mitigation measures to support development. This should include consultation with bus and rail operators alongside methods to increase multi occupancy car use and the phasing of new developments.

The Board would reconvene on 7 December 2015 to consider the report.

143. STAPLEHURST NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Committee considered Maidstone Borough Council's formal response to the Consultation on the draft Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, which would be passed on to the independent Examiner at the next stage of the Neighbourhood Planning process.

The Committee heard that Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) was required to let the examiner know where the draft Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan was different to the adopted MBC Local Plan policies. The draft Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan was mostly compatible with the MBC policies or silent. Where the plan was not in conformity with these policies the specific areas were outlined in the proposed representations in the report.

The Committee discussed that the supporting text for some of the policies in the draft Neighbourhood Plan were not in conformity with the MBC policies and did not reflect the text of the policy in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The recommended representations reflected this. It was agreed it was the role of Staplehurst Parish Council to make comment to the examiner on the representations made by MBC.

The Committee agreed that an informative would be added to the representations noting that MBC Local Plan policy ED2 was inter-related with policy H6 of the draft Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan and should not be read in isolation of each other.

RESOLVED: That:

1. The Committee approved the formal representations on the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan (July 2015) according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 as set out in the report.

Voting: For – 7 Against – 0 Abstentions – 2

2. The Committee agreed that an informative be added to the representations set out in the report explaining that during its deliberations of its representations to the Examiner on the Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan, the Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transport Committee noted that Local Plan Policy ED2 (Retention of Employment Sites) and Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan Policy H6 (Land for Employment and Housing) were inter-related and should not be read in isolation of each other.

144. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME 2014-2017

The Committee considered the revision of Maidstone Borough Council's Local Development Scheme 2014-2017 as set out in the report with a

view to recommending that the Scheme be adopted by Council at its meeting on 9 December 2015.

RESOLVED: That:

The Committee agreed to recommend that the Local Development Scheme 2014-2017 be adopted by Council at its meeting on 9 December 2015, at which date it will come into effect.

Voting: For – 9

145. DURATION OF MEETING

6:30pm to 8:20pm



Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee Work Programme

Democratic Services Team
E: democraticservices@maidstone.gov.uk

Publication Date: 1 December 2015

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the decisions to be taken by the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee of Maidstone Borough Council on a rolling basis. This document will be published as updated with new decisions required to be made.

DECISIONS WHICH COMMITTEES INTEND TO MAKE IN PRIVATE

The Committee hereby gives notice that it intends to meet in private after its public meeting to consider reports and/or appendices which contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The private meeting of any Committee is open only to Committee Members, other Councillors and Council officers.

- Reports and/or appendices to decisions which Committee will take at their private meetings are indicated in the list below, with the reasons for the decision being made in private. Any person is able to make representations to the Committee if he/she believes the decision should instead be made in the public part of that Committee meeting. If you want to make such representations, please email committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk. You will then be sent a response in reply to your representations. Both your
- representations and the Committee's response will be published on the Council's website at least 5 working days before the Committee meeting.

ACCESS TO COMMITTEE REPORTS

Reports to be considered at any of the Committee's public meetings will be available on the Council's website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) a minimum of 5 working days before the meeting.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

The Council actively encourages people to express their views on decisions it plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or to the relevant Chairman of a Committee.

Alternatively, you can submit a question to the relevant Committee, details are on our website (www.maidstone.gov.uk).

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Position Statement	Sue Whiteside	Public		
9 June 2015	Strategic Housing Market Assessment update – implications of the 2012-based household projections	Sarah Anderton	Public	SHMA Update – Implications of 2012 Based Household Projections	SHMA Update – Implications of 2012 Based Household Projections
9 June 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan: Housing Sites Update	Sarah Anderton	Public		
9 June 2015	Neighbourhood Planning: changes to decision making arrangements	Jillian Barr	Public		
14 July 2015	Retail and mixed use site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		Final Review
14 July 2015	Landscape and Open Space – policies and site allocations	Jillian Barr	Public		
14 July 2015	Affordable Housing policy	Sue Whiteside	Public		
14 July 2015	Recommendations from PTD OSC review of Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car	Tessa Mallett	Public	Final review report	
14 July 2015	Reconsideration of previously rejected MBCLP Reg 18 draft and SHLASS housing sites	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Results of the VISUM transport modelling	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Policies for new land allocations (Older's Field, Hubbards Lane, Bentletts Yard)	Sue Whiteside	Public		
18 August 2015	Gypsy and Traveller site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		
18 August 2015	Employment site allocations	Sarah Anderton	Public		

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
18 August 2015	Future locations for housing growth	Steve Clarke	Public		
18 August 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (supplementary report)	Sue Whiteside	Public		
18 August 2015	Open space allocations	Chris Berry	Public		
18 August 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – mixed use allocations (deferred item)	Sarah Anderton	Public		
8 Sept 2015	Maidstone Borough Local Plan – transport policies				
8 Sept 2015	Landscapes of Local Value (deferred item)				
8 Sept 2015	5 year housing supply position				
6 Oct 2015	North Loose Neighbourhood Plan				2 October 2015 – MBC LP Reg 18 Consultation on key policy and site allocation changes (4 weeks)
10 Nov 2015	Maidstone Local Development Scheme Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan Objections to Traffic Regulation Orders Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 onwards – including Exempt Appendix				
18 Nov 2015	Adjourned date				

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
1 Dec 2015	Draft Integrated Transport Strategy for consultation – for noting Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan Reg 16 consultation proposed response Maidstone Bridges Gyratory Improvement Scheme River Medway Towpath – Maidstone Sustainable Access to Education and Employment LEP Scheme (Cycling Infrastructure) Moat Park Car Park Charges Responses to OSC recommendations from review of transport – from Sustrans – for noting	Abi Lewis Fran Wallis Jeff Kitson			Pre-Regulation 19 Consultation workshops 3 & 15 December – for Parish and Borough Councillors 21 December – Borough Councillors only
7 Dec 2015	Adjourned date				
14 Dec 2015	Active Frontages report Results of the Regulation 18 consultation	Steve Clarke			
12 Jan 2016	Consideration of the Publication version of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for consultation (Reg 19) Agree the draft Integrated Transport Strategy	Sue Whiteside	Public		
18 Jan 2016	Adjourned date				
9 Feb 2016	Brief report - Reformation of the Maidstone Public Transport Operators Group (formerly Maidstone Public Transport Users Group)	Steve Clarke			Feb/Mar 2016 – MBC LP Regulation 19 consultation (6 weeks)
15 Feb 2016	Adjourned date				
8 Mar 2016	CIL Draft Charging Schedule	Andrew Thompson	Public		

Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)	Local Plan timetable
16 Mar 2016	Adjourned date				
5 Apr 2016					May 2016 – Submission of MBC LP 2016 to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination
11 Apr 2016	Adjourned date				

Agenda Item 12

STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

1 December 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

MAIDSTONE BRIDGES GYRATORY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Paul Spooner Director of Regeneration and Communities
Lead Officer and Report Author	Abi Lewis Economic Development Officer
Classification	Non- exempt
Wards affected	Bridge; High Street; Fant

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the draft final designs set out in Appendix I, II, III and IV are approved.
2. That delegated authority is given to the Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation to agree the final designs that go out to tender.
3. That delegated authority is given to the Director of Regeneration and Place and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation to agree and enter into a funding agreement with KCC.
4. That an update on progress be reported at a subsequent meeting of this Committee and the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- *Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough* – The proposals are intended to reduce congestion and travel times in Maidstone Town Centre and enable the regeneration of the western riverside. The scheme also includes measures to protect town centre businesses from flooding.
- *Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all* – This scheme provides the opportunity to make significant improvements to the public realm environment in the vicinity of the Maidstone Bridges Gyratory.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee	1 December 2015

MAIDSTONE BRIDGES GYRATORY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In December 2014 Maidstone Borough Council's Cabinet approved the allocation of £1.14m New Homes Bonus monies for the design and construction of the Maidstone Bridges Gyratory Improvement Scheme. This is in addition to £4.6m from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Single Local Growth Fund. The project is being delivered in partnership with Kent County Council (KCC).
 - 1.2 Detailed design work is nearing completion and it is intended that the project contract will go out to tender in January 2016, with the main body of works starting in May 2016.
 - 1.3 Prior to commencing the tendering process, approval from Strategic Planning & Sustainable Transport Committee is required to progress with the project as outlined in this report.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Maidstone Gyratory is a recognised congestion and air quality hotspot within Maidstone town centre, lying at the point where the A20, A26, A229 and A249 primary routes converge and cross the River Medway.
- 2.2 This scheme involves the construction of two additional northbound lanes on Fairmeadow, alteration of the existing central islands and implementation of revised traffic signals with associated signage (Scheme Plan attached).
- 2.3 The scheme will negate the need for northbound traffic to transverse the two bridges and will deliver a more direct route reducing congestion and improving journey time reliability. The scheme is anticipated to increase the capacity of the overall junction by 15%, resulting in a reduction in delay during peak hour periods of approximately 25%.
- 2.4 The cost of the scheme is £5.74m. £4.6m South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) funding and £1.14m contribution from Maidstone Borough Council's New Homes Bonus.
- 2.5 Detailed design has been progressing in conjunction with KCC through regular Steering Group meetings. The original scheme layout and civil engineering works to the carriageway remains predominantly unchanged; bar an extension to the lane separating the central islands to create increased capacity for queuing on the new north bound lanes at the newly introduced traffic signals.
- 2.6 Opportunities to introduce additional benefits into the scheme have been discussed with KCC officers, and Members of both KCC and MBC. The Lower High Street at the junction with Bishops Way will be redesigned, with the scope of works including the regrading and resurfacing of pedestrian

footways and associated landscaping. Materials used during Phase 2 Town Centre Improvement works will be continued in this area (Appendix II).

- 2.7 Work is being completed to ensure sufficient capacity in the pedestrian waiting 'pens' on the Bishops Way crossing. The pavement levels on the other side of the crossing will be altered to remedy the sloping gradient, improving accessibility for disabled users. The area made redundant following the closure of the subway will be redesigned to create gentle ramping up to the crossing point (Appendix III). The existing Trief kerbing will be replaced to relieve the existing footpath 'pinch point' on the junction of Broadway Bridge and Bishops Way. Following the completion of detailed design the scheme will be subject to a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit which will consider the layout of junctions, position of signs, carriageway marking and lighting provision.
- 2.8 Both the subways on either side of the High Street will be closed and sealed. This facilitates greater improvements to the public realm environment in addition to providing protection to properties against flooding. Modelling work undertaken by the Environment Agency indicates that the flooding of properties in this vicinity in December 2013 was a result of flow through the subways.
- 2.9 Access to the River Medway will be retained through the Medway Street subway, removing the need for shared cycle and pedestrian use across Broadway Bridge. Other access to the river remains from the surface pavements on all axes of the gyratory.
- 2.10 Options to affix a flood gate to the subway entrances are being investigated which will provide flood protection during occasional severe flooding.
- 2.11 An application to the Environment Agency to purchase demountable defences is being developed which, combined with the closure of the two southern subways and the flood gate at the Medway Street subway would create a flood barrier of circa 800m in length, protecting many of the properties that were damaged during the floods of 2013.
- 2.12 Consideration was given to an 'at grade' crossing on the western side of the Broadway Bridge to improve pedestrian and cycle travel from the St Peters Bridge to the High Street. Modelling work indicated that this would negate the benefits achieved through the main scheme works. Proposals for improvements to drainage, lighting and aesthetics in the Broadway subway are therefore being developed and agreement with KCC on the procedure for cleansing following flooding sought.
- 2.13 New signage for pedestrians and cyclists to assist navigation of the Gyratory, particularly the western side of the River Medway, will be installed. This will link to work being undertaken as part of the Destination Management Plan.
- 2.14 A landscaping scheme for the Gyratory area is being developed, and opportunities to introduce tree planting are being investigated. Planting is proposed against the retaining walls following the closure of the subways, on the western side of Bishops Way and outside the Allianz building. It

should be noted that this scheme area is heavily networked with utilities apparatus and Statutory Undertakers may enforce restrictions. Planting schemes are also being developed for the existing green areas within the scope of the project area.

- 2.15 It is also worth noting that as a result of the discussions with KCC officers on the Bridge Gyratory scheme, negotiations are underway between Maidstone Borough Services and KCC to transfer the maintenance of a number of green spaces, verges, planters etc. currently the responsibility of KCC to MBC, thereby introducing an improved maintenance regime in the wider town centre area. KCC would take over responsibility of green spaces currently managed by MBC that are closer to their own depot. This would be cost neutral to both KCC and MBC.
- 2.16 The existing Air Quality Monitoring Station is to be removed from Fairmeadow and new equipment installed at Lower Stone Street, adjacent to Miller House. This has been identified as an air quality hotspot. Existing diffusion tubes in the vicinity of Fairmeadow will continue to monitor air quality levels and it is proposed that DEFRA grant monies be used by Maidstone's Environmental Health team to install additional monitoring equipment on the Town Hall. This, combined with computer modelling, would pick up pollution levels associated with the Bridge Gyratory.
- 2.17 A comprehensive communications plan has been developed jointly by KCC and MBC to give residents and businesses access to clear, timely information about the project, to communicate the long term benefits of the project and to manage expectations around journey times during construction. A business survey will be circulated capturing access needs during the project build period.
- 2.18 An agreement is currently being drawn up between KCC and MBC setting out the terms on which finance will be released.
- 2.19 The scheme is scheduled to go out to the tender process in January 2016 with contract award in March 2016. SELEP monies need to be spent by March 2017.
- 2.20 Pre-works (e.g. site clearance) will commence in January/ February 2016 with the main contract construction starting in spring 2016. In order to minimise disruption the contractor will be required to deliver 12 hour working days, 7 days a week (where possible), operating road closures at night and retaining access to the High Street where possible. The Environmental Health team is being consulted to ensure steps to mitigate noise disruption are included in the works contract. The works have been timed to coincide with the school holidays when there are significantly reduced traffic volumes.
- 2.21 The scheme is progressing through Permitted Development and therefore planning permission is not required.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 – Continue with the project as outlined in this report
This option will ensure that the main Highways Scheme is delivered as required and an improvement to the flow of traffic in the town centre achieved. Additional benefits will also be realised, with significant improvements to the at-grade crossings over Bishops Way, upgrades to drainage, lighting and aesthetics in Broadway subway, an opportunity to enhance existing landscaping within the Gyratory vicinity and wider town centre and the provision of flood protection for businesses and residential premises previously affected by flooding.
- 3.2 Option 2 - Do nothing
MBC could decide not to contribute to this scheme. In this case the Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF) allocation of £4.6m will be lost as the business case to the LEP was predicated on the availability of this funding. It is likely that this would severely damage MBC's reputation with SELEP and the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership and jeopardise further bids for SLGF. This scheme is also fundamental to the delivery of the emerging Integrated Transport Strategy.
- 3.3 Option 3 – Reduce the budget allocated to this scheme
The scheme design has been progressed on the basis of the commitment of MBC funds made at Council in December 2014. A reduction in funding could mean that business case supporting the scheme would have to be revisited and may not be supported by SELEP. A reduced budget would no doubt impact upon the deliverability of additional benefits outlined in this report.
- 3.4 Option 4 – Reduce the scope of the project
A reduction in the scope of the project would result in the aspirations of the Council to improve pedestrian areas and enhance landscaping not being met. The opportunity to protect town centre business and residential premises from flood would also be lost.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 This report recommends Option 1 - MBCs continued commitment of £1.14m to this scheme and the progression of the project as detailed in section 2.
- 4.2 As outlined, the widened scope of the project affords the Council the opportunity to reap far greater benefits than initially outlined in the Highways Scheme. The project provides better value for money in terms of achieving the Council's aspirations to deliver a transport scheme to alleviate congestion in the town centre, as well as improvements to public realm, enhanced landscaping and the chance to protect property from future flood events. These additional elements cannot be delivered retrospectively.
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5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 Feedback from Maidstone Joint Transportation Board indicated a desire to ensure that the project supported the integration of the western side of the

river with the Town. Members also requested tree planting in the scheme area and the consideration of cycle routes across the Gyratory.

- 5.2 At the informal Member briefing held on 28 October 2015 feedback suggested the need to retain access to the River Medway through the northern subway, reiterated the need to introduce tree planting in the scheme area and requested the removal of a shared use route for pedestrians and cyclists across Broadway Bridge.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 A comprehensive communications plan has been developed with KCC, identifying various channels through which to provide ongoing, up-to-date information about the scheme.
- 6.2 A business engagement event will be held with Town Centre Management providing information on the scheme, as well as collating data on access requirements. Engagement with members of the public will also be held in the Town Centre in the lead up to Christmas.
- 6.3 Local media has been initially engaged and subsequent press releases will be issued updating readers of progress. A social media campaign will be launched with regular updates of MBC and KCC website content.
- 6.4 Variable Message Signs will be installed on key access routes from January 2016.
- 6.5 Other channels of engagement include blue pages, ward and parish councillors, and local business organisations.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The project supports both Corporate Objectives and notably "Securing improvements to the transport infrastructure of our Borough" and "Enhancing the appeal of the town centre for everyone".	Director of Communities & Regeneration
Risk Management	Risk management is being carried out as part of the project documentation.	Economic Development Manager
Financial	MBC contribution of £1.14m is approved within the Council's Capital programme.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	Existing staff resources in Economic Development and Planning Policy teams.	Head of Commercial & Economic Development
Legal	A legal agreement setting out the terms under which MBC will pay KCC its contribution to the project will be required. Progress on this point will depend on Kent Legal Services. Where appropriate care must be taken that all necessary public consultations take place, and are properly documented. Funding deadlines must be adhered to if the project is to proceed.	Legal Team
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	An Equalities Assessment has been undertaken by KCC and their agents.	Policy & Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	N/A	
Community Safety	N/A	
Human Rights Act	N/A	
Procurement	KCC will be the procuring authority.	
Asset Management	The Highway and subways assets will be maintained by KCC.	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Maidstone Gyratory Scheme Plan
 - Appendix II: Improvements to pedestrian crossing point, Lower High Street
 - Appendix III: Improvements to pedestrian crossing point, Broadway Bridge
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Notes
1. Road markings and traffic signal head positions are indicative only.

KEY

Carriageway Improvement

Verge / Earthworks / Landscaping

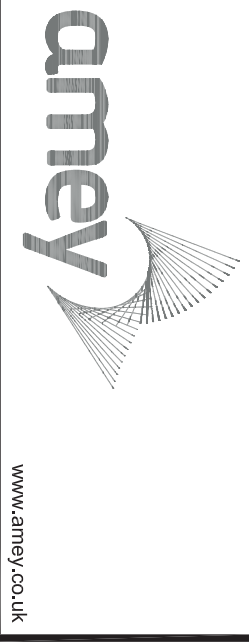
Footway with Enhanced Materials

Footway with Standard Materials

Non Pedestrian Handstanding

Existing Area of Vegetation / Soft Landscaping to remain

5	Fairmeadow Subway/ramp and steps infill and possible tree planting locations added	JAP	JAP	20-11-15
4	Existing Vegetation added for clarity. Subway annotations & Additional Footway areas added	JAP	JAP	13-11-15
3	High St access amended and footway material classification added	JAP	JAP	27-10-15
2	Central Splitter Islands Amended	JAP	JAP	20-08-15
1	Extents of Carriageway Improvement Amended	JAP	JAP	26-05-15
Rev	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
Drawn: TMW				
Design: -		Preliminary		
Chk'd: JAP		For comment		
App'd: API		For tender		
Date: 19 February 2015		For construction		
		As constructed		
		Other		

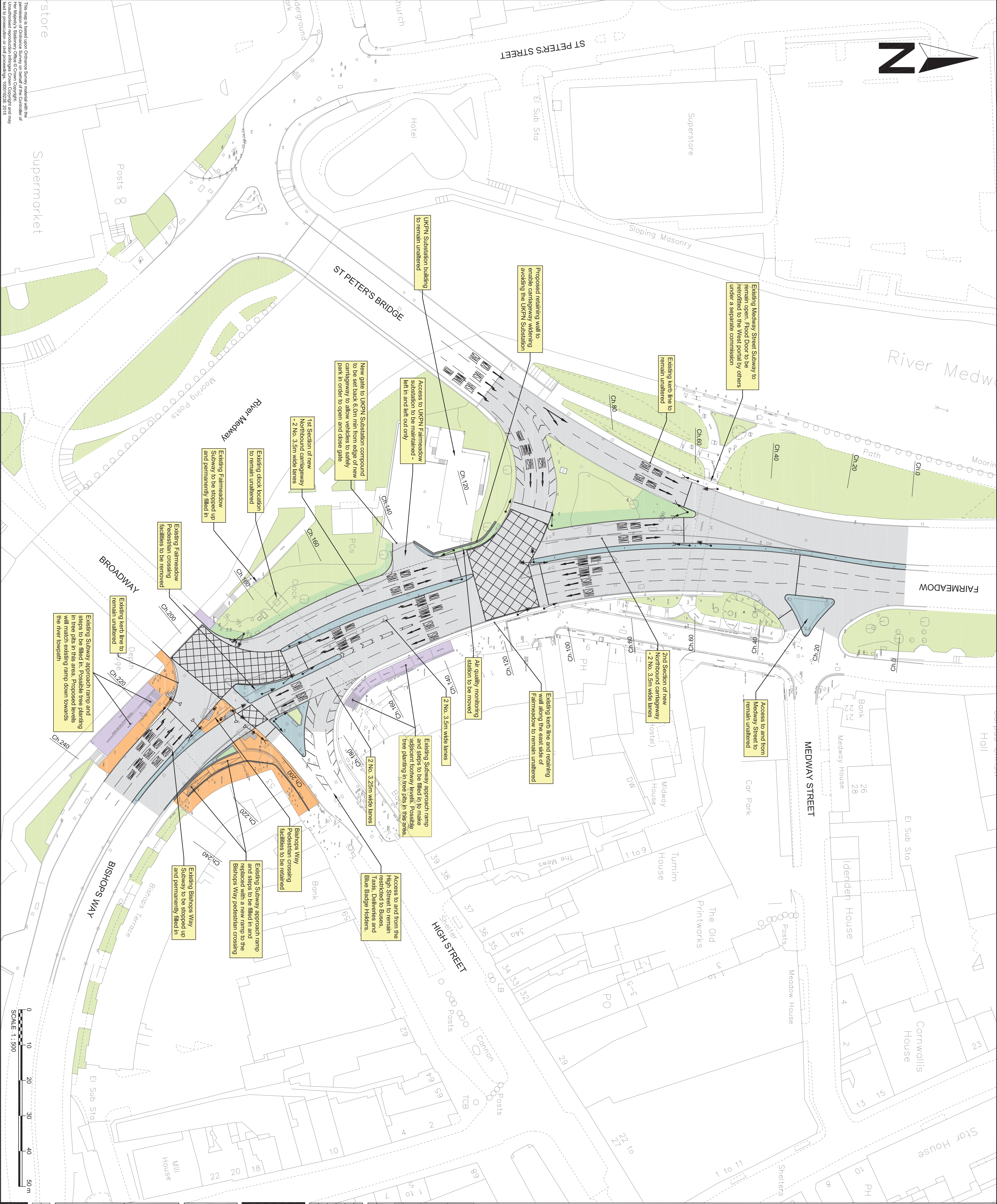


Project Name
MAIDSTONE GYRATORY

Drawing Title
Scheme Plan

Original Drawing Size : A1	Dimensions : -
Scale : 1:500	Copyright © Amey

Drawing No 4300273/000/02	Rev 5
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Appendix II: Improvements to pedestrian crossing point, Lower High Street



Appendix III: Improvements to pedestrian crossing point, Broadway Bridge

23



Agenda Item 13

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee

1st Dec 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

River Medway Towpath – Maidstone Sustainable Access to Education and Employment LEP Scheme

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Fran Wallis, Local Economy Projects Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	High Street, Boxley, North, South, Coxheath & Hunton, Bridge, Fant, Allington, Barming

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That Maidstone Borough Council contribute up to £500,000 to the creation of the River Medway Cycle Towpath project as set in Appendix I to V.
2. That the proposed creation of a “cycling hub” at Lockmeadow is agreed and delegated authority is given to the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services to negotiate and enter into a lease with the operator of Lockmeadow.
3. That delegated authority is given to the Director of Regeneration and Place, and Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to agree and enter into a funding agreement with KCC.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – promoting better use of the River Medway – one of the borough’s key assets.
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough – encouraging commuters out of their cars and improving sustainable access to employment.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
S,P, S&T Committee	1 st Dec 2015

River Medway Towpath – Maidstone Sustainable Access to Employment Project

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the scheme to create a cycle path along the River Medway from Aylesford to Barming Bridge.
 - 1.2 The report provides background information to allow Members to make an informed decision regarding the potential to create a 'Cycling Hub' at Lockmeadow, and to agree to release £500,000 as per the funding agreement.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Sustainable Access to Maidstone Employment Areas Project was submitted by Kent County Council to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) for Single Local Growth Funding in 2014 and received an allocation of £2m. The original bid sought to create a riverside cycle path from East Farleigh to Aylesford.
- 2.2 The project has created a partnership with KCC, MBC and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. In early discussions, MBC indicated they would contribute between £500k to £1m towards the project – bringing the total available to £3m. At that time there was an expectation that a contribution of £500k from each borough council would be spent within their respective boroughs and the LEP funding would be spread across the whole length of the project.
- 2.3 However it has since become apparent that no monies have yet been specifically allocated to this project from T&MBC. At the time that the project was presented at the SELEP T&MBC had assumed incorrectly, that this was entirely a Maidstone Scheme. T&MBC however had stated a desire to be involved with the project if financially possible and a decision will be made by T&MBC at the end of the 15/16 financial year.
- 2.4 If T&MBC are unable to contribute then the scope and funding profile of the project will change. This may require the business case supporting the project to be reassessed by the SELEP. KCC are willing to progress to detailed design stage and tender the works at their risk until funding from T&MBC is known and SELEP confirm their approval of the project. No contracts will be signed for the construction until confirmation has been received. In order to mitigate risk the design and tender contracts will be divided into two, one covering the Maidstone cycle path and one covering the land in T&MBC.
- 2.5 The details of the scheme haven been examined by SELEP's Independent Technical Evaluator who has approved the business case.

- 2.6 The rest of this report relates to the section of the path within Maidstone Borough. Following consultation with the cycle forum, the project was extended from East Farleigh to Barming Bridge. The section of path within Maidstone Borough therefore runs from Allington Lock to Barming Bridge.
- 2.7 The overall purpose of the investment is to encourage cycling and walking by providing attractive, direct routes for cyclists and pedestrians, to access employment, education and other facilities in Maidstone Town Centre, and along the River Medway corridor. This will be achieved through the construction of a new shared use towpath. The total length of the path is 10.5km, of which 8.8km is within Maidstone borough. The total cost is estimated to be £1.6m, of which £1.1 m will be funded from SLGF and £500,000 from MBC. KCC is contributing £100,000 in design and management costs.
- 2.8 It is intended that this project will deliver benefits to transport and enhance the desirability of Maidstone as a location for employment and residence. The path will provide links into residential, employment and educational locations, together with active marketing of the route. There are over 7,126 households, 3,165 businesses and 7 schools within 1km of the route. This scheme provides an important means to reduce growing demand on the road network. The scheme is co-ordinated with road improvements in the area and will help to lock in the benefits of these investments by reducing car travel.
- 2.9 The project will support the objectives within the Kent Environment Strategy, including works to improve habitats and river bank protection. By creating an ecological corridor with an improved river bank, areas for wildlife and relaxation will be created. The project also provides a carbon free transport option within Maidstone Air Quality Management Area.
- 2.10 By enhancing the towpath, an attractive, sustainable alternative route will be provided to commuters and others, to benefit the health and wellbeing of everyone. The path will become a valuable resource in which daily exercise can be taken as part of a daily commute. Similar towpath schemes across the country have proved to add value to the quality of life, health and wellbeing of local residents. The opportunity the SELEP funding provides can realise the potential of the much underutilised asset of the River Medway.
- 2.11 The project is being led by KCC's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and Access Service, working with MBC. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is engaged in relation to the section of path within their borough.
- 2.12 KCC's PRoW and Access Service have been progressing with the required ecological surveys and outline designs to enable construction of the route during the summer of 2016. Amey has been commissioned by KCC to produce an outline design from Allington Lock to Barming Bridge. Amey have also been working on a separate commission in T&MBC.
- 2.13 The section of tow path from Allington Lock to Barming Bridge already exists however it needs to be upgraded. Much of the path is tarmac however in places it needs to be widened, and drainage needs improving.

Short sections of the path will be improved with resin bound gravel. There are also opportunities to improve the habitat along the riverbank, and enhance the biodiversity. Directional signage will also be installed to link to residential areas, tourist destinations and the town.

2.14 The path is already a Public Right of Way and as such the scheme falls within permitted development. Although cyclists already use the route unchallenged, a Cycle Tracks Conversion Order will be sought, for the avoidance of doubt of users, and enable official signage to be installed.

2.15 The project is supported by the Joint Transportation Board.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 Option 1 – Do nothing: if MBC chose not to support this project then the financial contribution of £2m from the SELEP could also be lost. Without improvements to the path to upgrade it for cycling, the opportunity to encourage people not to use their cars will be missed, and the knock on benefits of reduced congestion and air pollution will be reduced and improvements to health and fitness through cycling lost.

3.2 Option 2 – Reduce the scope of the project. Subject to the decision that T&MBC makes, there may be a requirement to reduce the scope of the project to just carry out works within MBC's boundary. If the LEP is still supportive, then the project as set out in this report, within Maidstone Borough, will be delivered. The reduced scope relates to the section of path in T&MBC not being deliverable without T&MBC match funding.

3.3 Option 3 – Agree to the proposed project and spend of £500,000 from MBC Capital Budget. The advantages as already set out in this report, regarding health and wellbeing, sustainability, environmental improvements and reduced impact on traffic will then be realised.

3.4 Option 4 – If T&MBC do not fund the project there are 3 further sub-options:

3.4.1 The amount of LEP funding will be reduced (~£1.1m based on outline costs) to just deliver the Allington Lock to Barming Bridge section, with £500k match from MBC.

3.4.2 The amount of LEP funding remains the same, at £2m, and funds the section from Allington Lock to Barming Bridge, without the need for funding from MBC, subject to agreement from the LEP.

3.4.3 The amount of LEP funding remains the same, at £2m, and match funding to deliver the section within T&MBC is sought elsewhere by KCC.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that this committee agree to Option 3 – to progress with the proposed project and agree to spend up to £500,000 from MBC Capital Budget. This will allow detailed design and tendering to progress up to a stage when a further decision can be made once T&MBC's intentions are known.

- 4.2 This project provides the opportunity to upgrade the existing tow path to a formal cycle path. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the path is already being used by cyclists however MBC and KCC cannot promote it as such as it is below the required standard to be designated as a cycle path.
- 4.3 There is a great deal of interest in the area of Maidstone town centre for housing and jobs – this project provides a sustainable form for people to travel. This project also contributes to the Destination Management Plan and its actions relating to the river – by improving access, and making the River Medway a destination.
- 4.4 The completed project will provide 8.8km of upgraded, formal cycle track from Allington Lock to Barming Bridge. Subject to approval, a Cycling Hub will be created at Lockmeadow – this will include secure cycle parking, a tyre pump, and an interpretation map of the route and local area.
- 4.5 MBC and KCC PRow team will need to liaise and seek further agreement with landowners at the end of Unicomes Lane which is a private road as MBC currently has an agreement with them to allow access to Fant Wildlife Site but this access does not extend down to the riverside path.
- 4.6 In the urban section from Maidstone East Railway Bridge to the Earl Street Subway (please refer to Appendix 3 of 5), it may be necessary to remove some trees due to the existing issues of path failure and trip hazards as a result of the tree roots, and also due to the narrowing of the path, with no barrier along the river in this section. Options will be confirmed in the detailed design, and *may* include: alterations to the surfacing to minimise the ‘bulge’ effect of tree roots, short sections of railing where the path narrows between the tree trunk and the river edge. If a tree does need to be removed, where possible trees will be replaced in suitable locations – this will be subject to the detailed design.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 KCC have already carried out a great deal of consultation with various parties who have an interest in the project. These are outlined below:
- Maidstone Borough Council – has been involved from the start in discussing the project and its links to the economy.
 - Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council – as set out earlier part of this project lies within T&MBC.
 - Environment Agency – has been consulted on due to the project’s location along the river, and have offered ‘in kind’ contribution to the project through the use of their equipment and expertise.
 - Aylesford Parish Council (providing £10k investment), East Farleigh Parish Council, Barming Parish Council, North Loose Residents Association – all supportive.
 - River Medway Users Association
 - Ramblers Association
 - Valley of Visions Partnership
 - Peel Ports

- MP for Chatham and Aylesford
- Local Landowners
- Ward members – a meeting is scheduled with Ward members and County Divisional Members in early December.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 As mentioned above a meeting has been arranged with Ward Members to discuss the detail of the project.
- 6.2 KCC PRoW will progress with the detailed design and costing phase, ready for the construction work to be tendered in April, once confirmation has been received from T&MBC.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	By promoting better access to the River Medway and encouraging commuters out of their cars	Head of Finance & Resources
Risk Management	Project risks will be managed by Kent County Council.	Head of Finance & Resources
Financial	Maidstone Borough's Council's contribution was approved by Council on 25th February 2015. Kent County Council is contributing £100,000. SELEP £2m.	Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	Staff involvement limited to Economic Development and Planning Policy officers including liaison with Kent County Council and support with stakeholder engagement and communication	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Legal	Grant agreement between MBC and Kent County Council will need to be agreed	Head of Legal Partnerships
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	An EQIA is being completed by KCC's PRoW & Access Service	Head of Finance & Resources
Environmental/Sustainable	Biodiversity will be enhanced	Head of

Development	along the river. Commuters will be encouraged with a more sustainable route	Commercial and Economic Development
Community Safety	None identified	
Human Rights Act	None identified	
Procurement	Kent County Council will be the procuring authority but will work closely with MBC in the procurement process.	Head of Finance & Resources
Asset Management	The cycle path will be Highway and be maintained by Kent County Council	Head of Finance & Resources

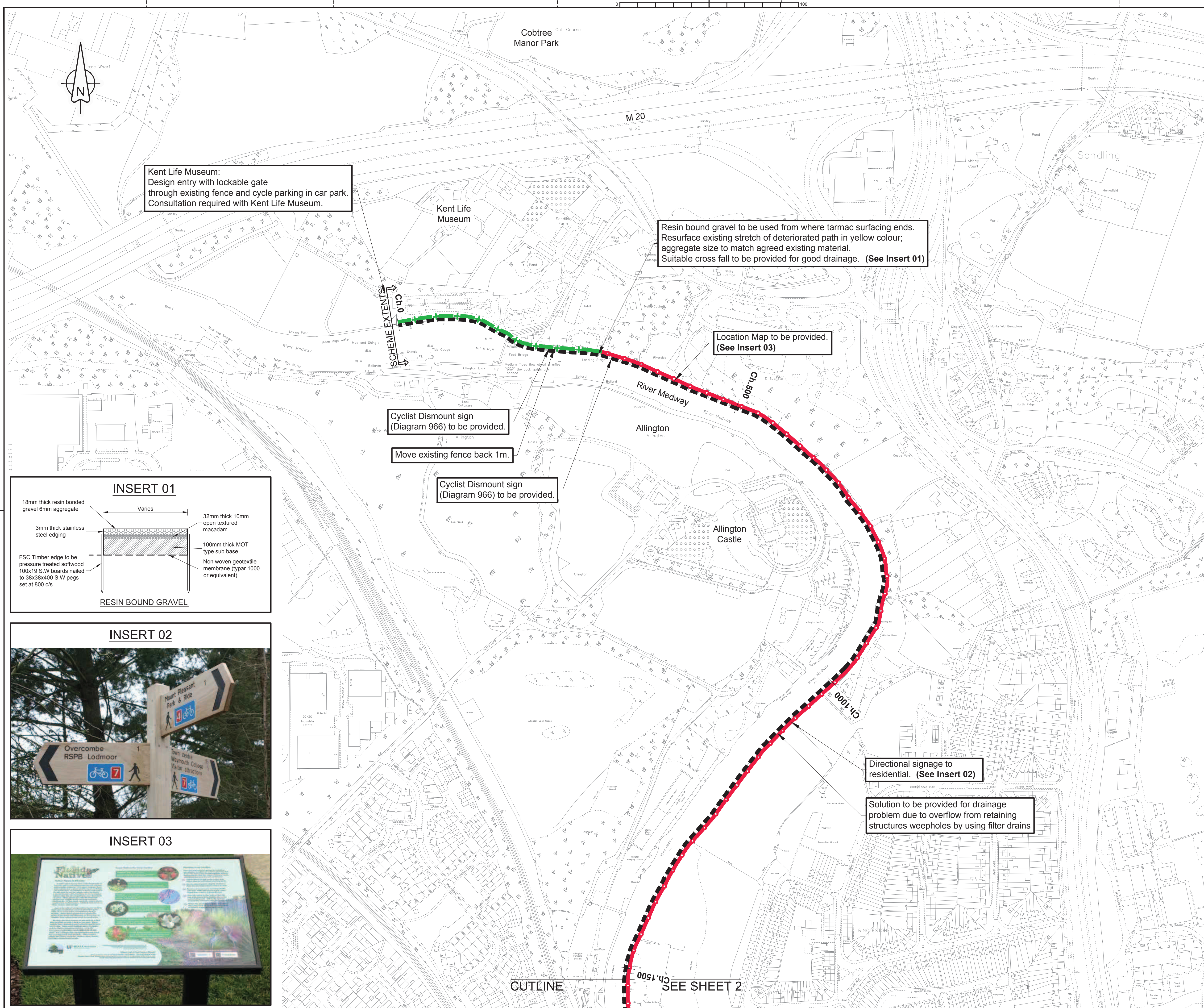
8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Drawing 1 of 5
- Appendix II: Drawing 2 of 5
- Appendix III: Drawing 3 of 5
- Appendix IV: Drawing 4 of 5
- Appendix V: Drawing 5 of 5

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None



RESIDUAL DESIGN HAZARDS

(The following information has been collected from Preconstruction Information and Amey Process PLC-H&S-201 – Hazard Management for Designers.)

- Please enter project specific hazards here.

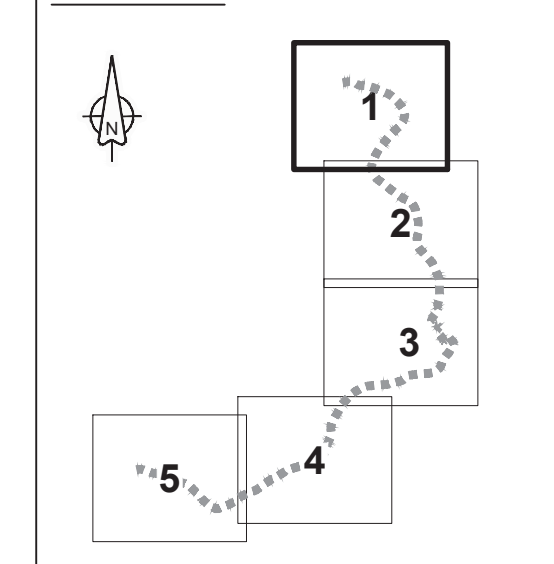
NOTES

- All dimensions are in metres unless stated otherwise.

LEGEND

- Existing Towpath
- Existing tarmac surface to be widened to 2.5m / maintained / provided with 1.5m grass verge on either side where possible
- Provide and lay 2.5m wide Type 1 sub-base course 150mm thick to match existing
- Provide and lay 1.5m wide Type 1 sub-base course 150mm thick to match existing
- New block paving to match existing
- Provide 2.5m wide tarmac surface with 1.5m grass verge on either side where possible
- Provide and lay 2.5m wide resin bound gravel surface with 1.5m grass verge on either side where possible
- Move existing fence by 1m and extend existing concrete surfacing by 1m

Location Plan



0 50 100 150 200 250 m
SCALE 1 : 2500

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Rev	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
Drawn:	JH			Preliminary
Design:	JO			For comment
Chkd:	NF			For tender
Appd:	NF			For construction
Date:	20/07/2015			As constructed
				For comments



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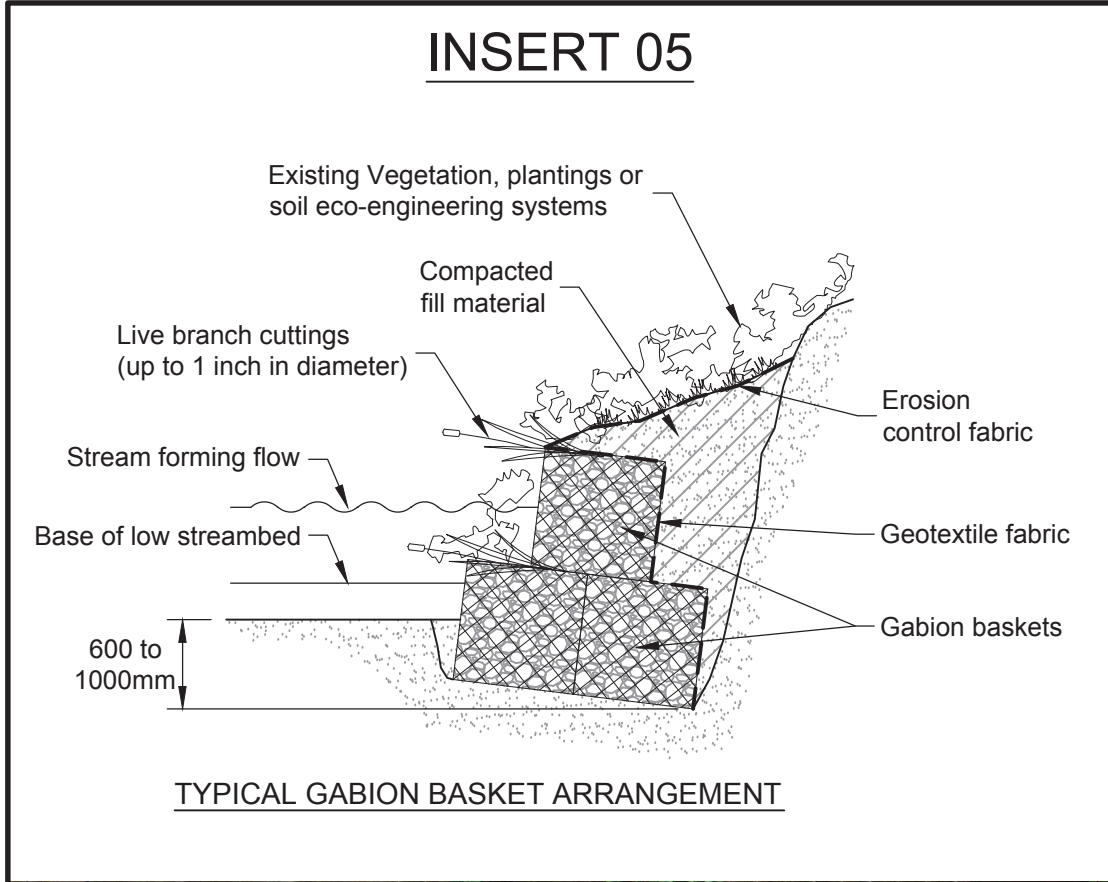
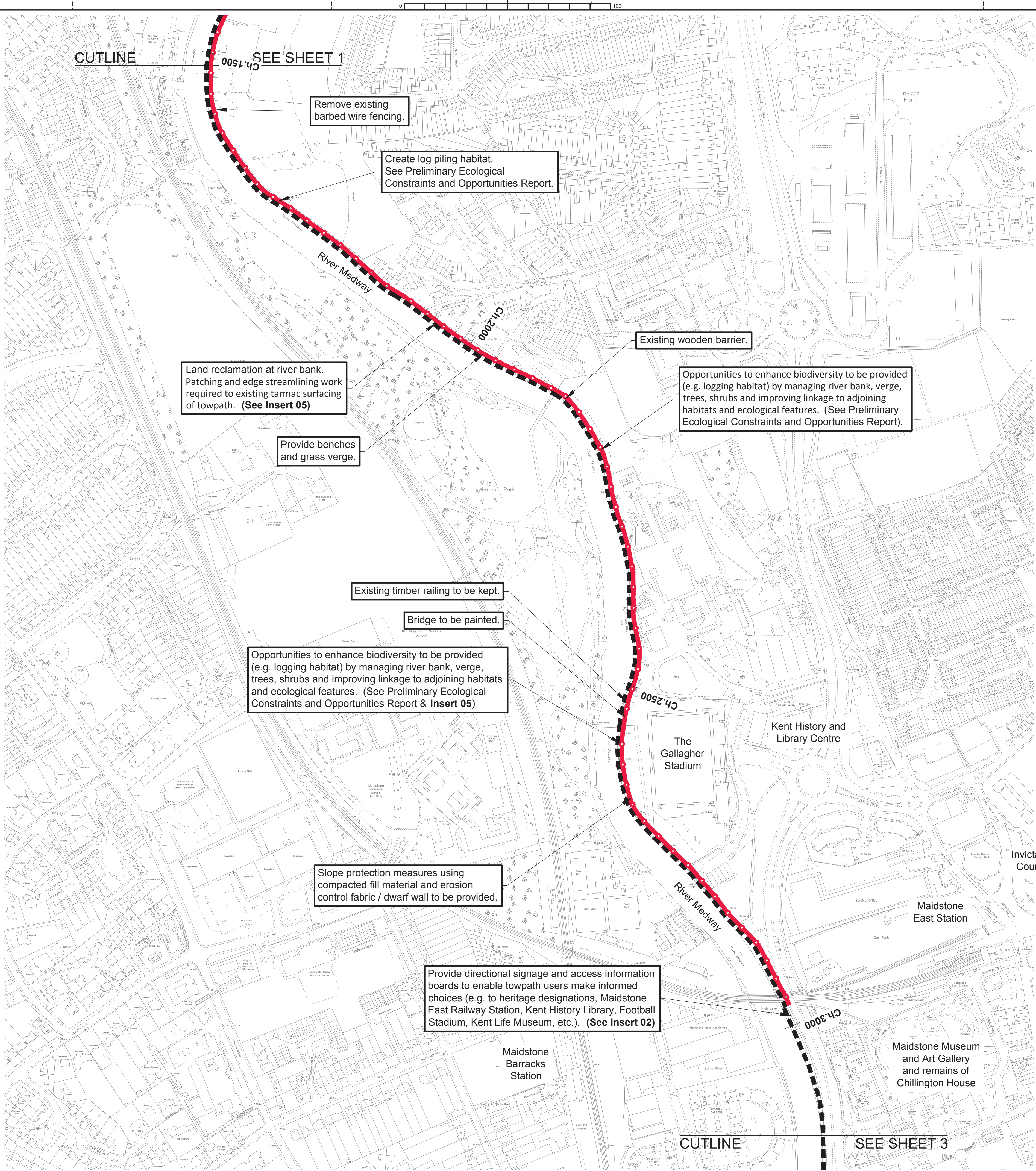


Project Name
**River Medway Towpath,
East Farleigh to Allington Lock**

Drawing Title
**Highways
Proposed Towpath Improvements
Sheet 1 of 5**

Original Drawing Size : A1
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Dimensions : -
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Drawing No
CO04300297/001
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RESIDUAL DESIGN HAZARDS

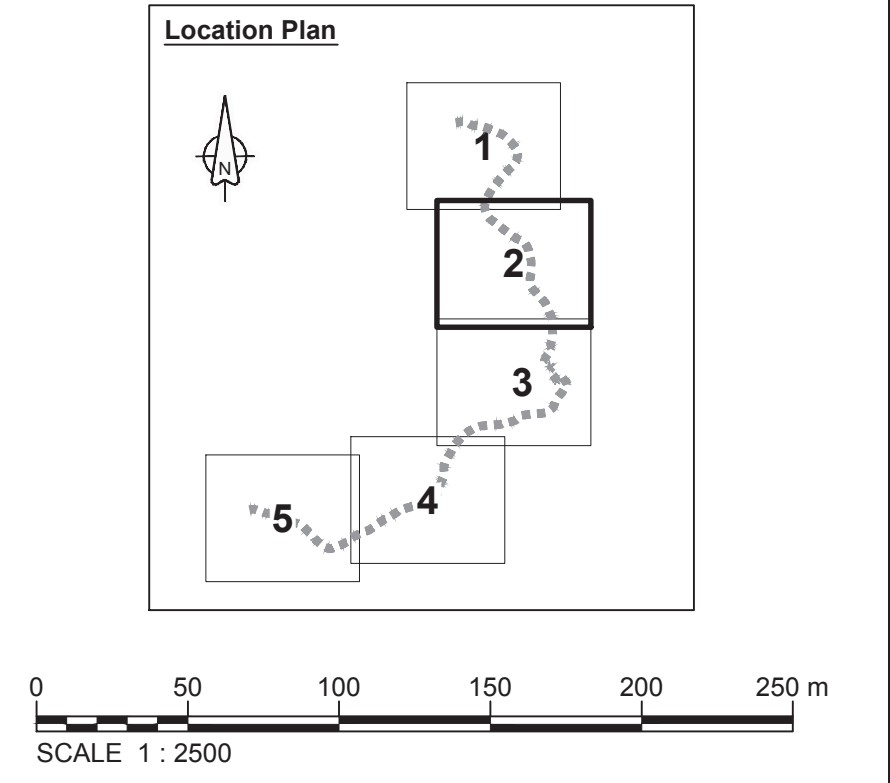
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1. Please enter project specific hazards here.

NOTES

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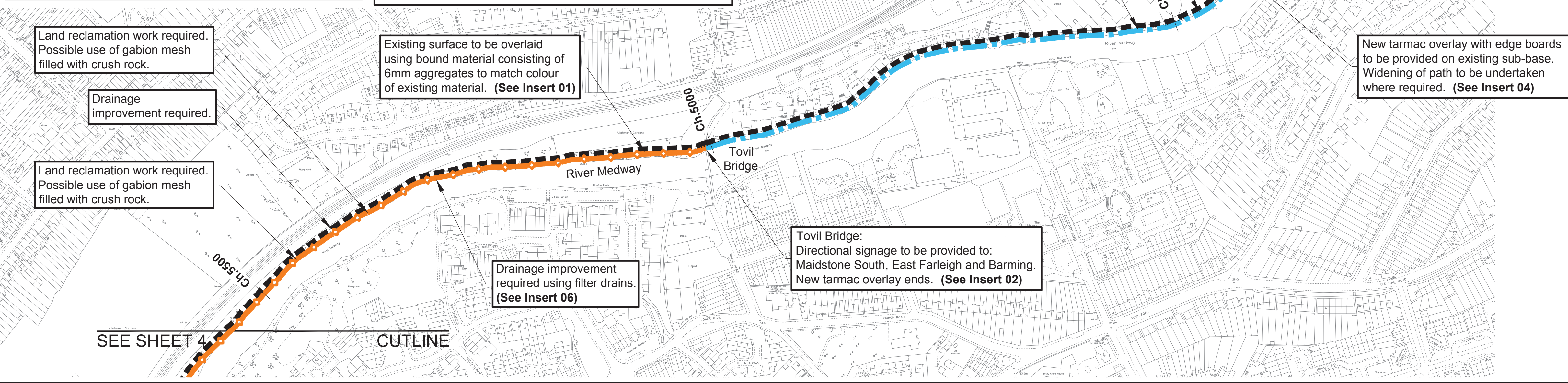
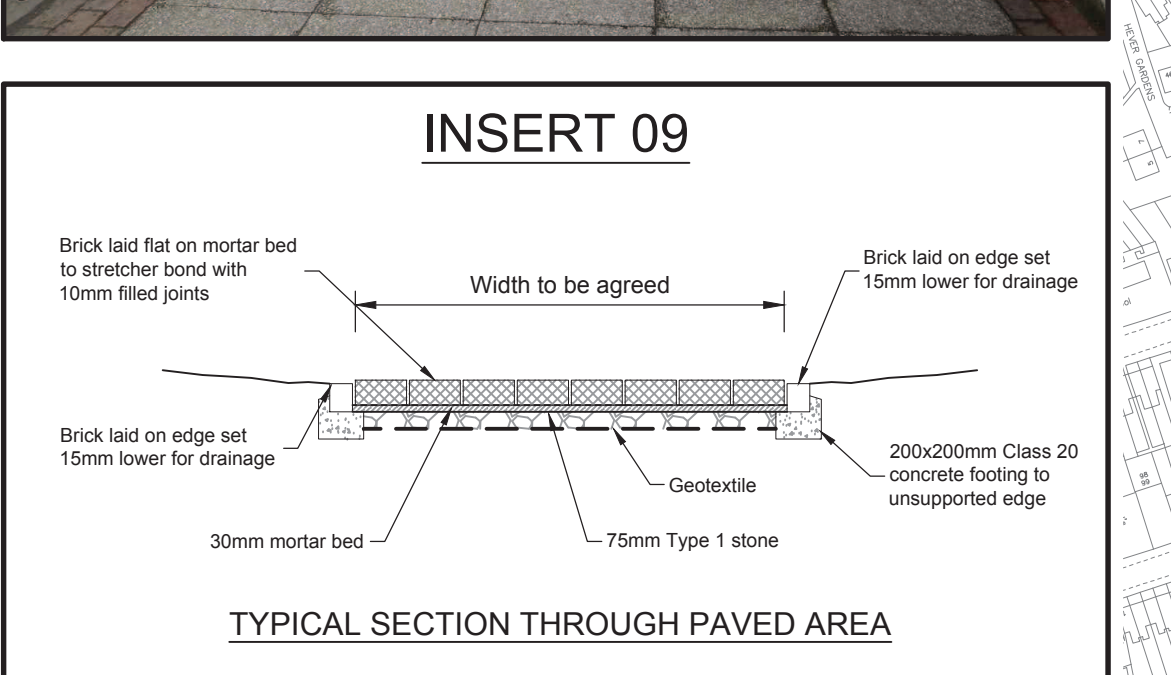
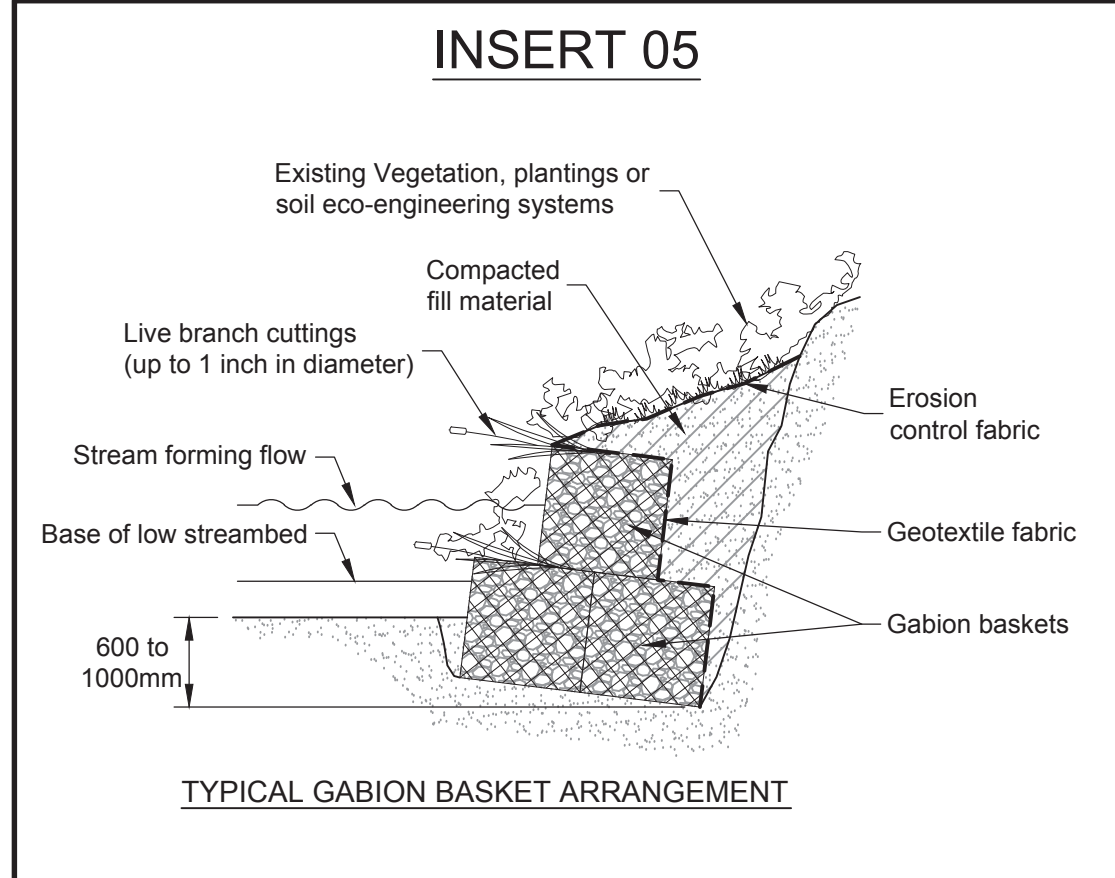
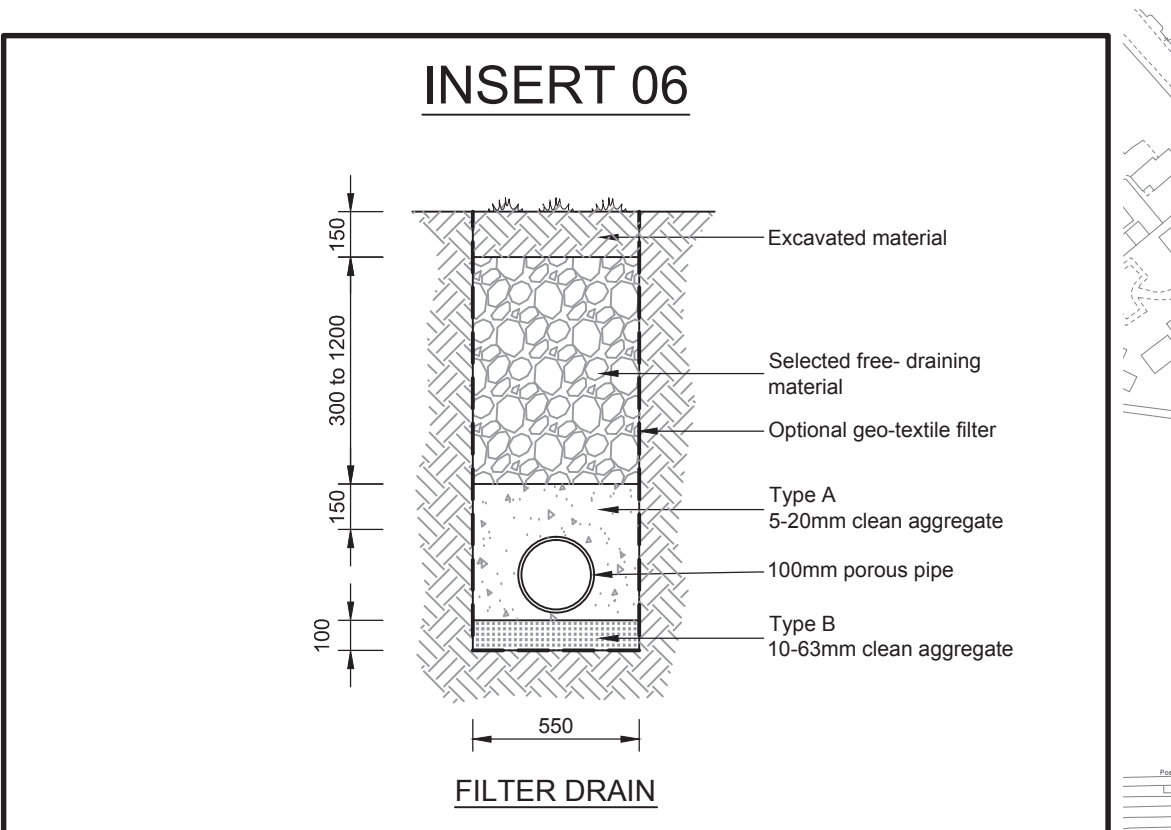
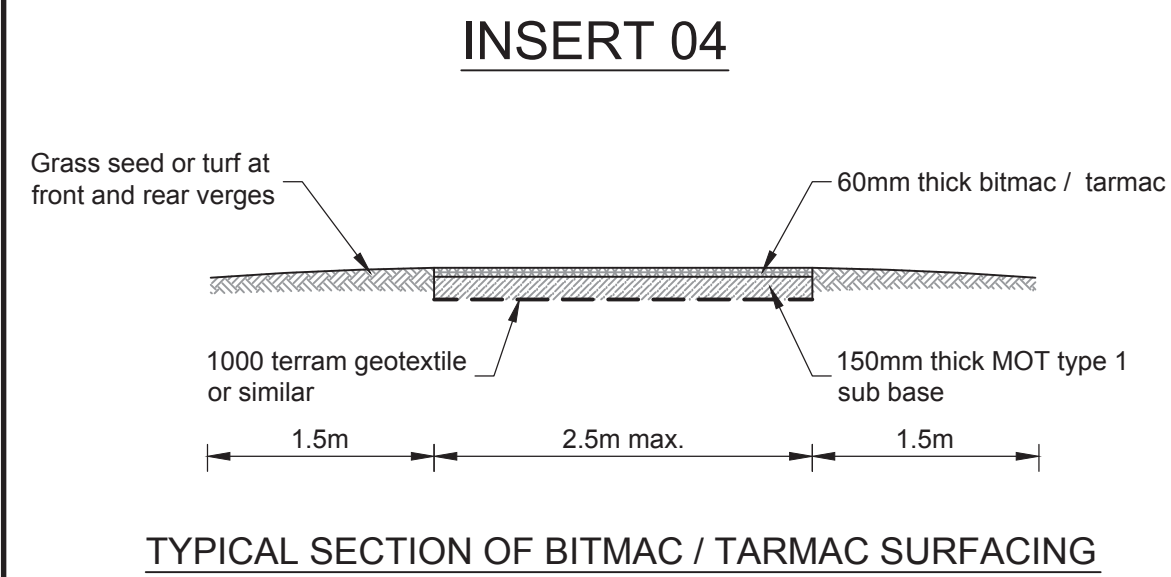
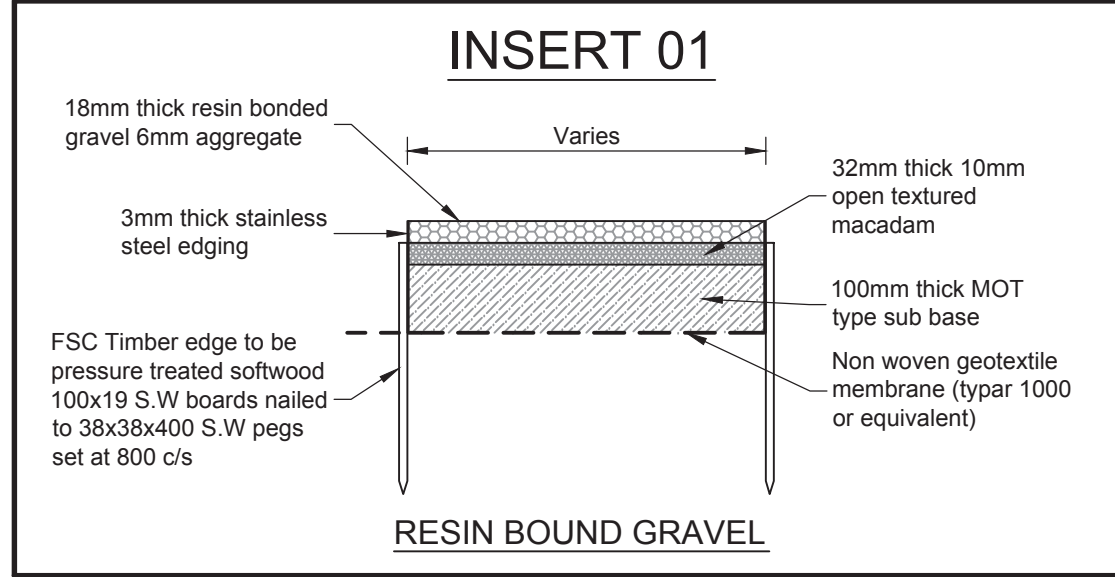
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Design:	JO		For comment	
Chkd:	NF		For tender	
Appd:	NF		For construction	
Date:	20/07/2015		As constructed	
			Other	



Project Name
River Medway Towpath, East Farleigh to Allington Lock

Drawing Title
Highways
Proposed Towpath Improvements
Sheet 2 of 5

Original Drawing Size : A1	Dimensions : -
Scale : 1:2500@A1	Copyright © Amey
Drawing No CO04300297/002	Rev -



NOTES

Location Plan

The map shows a survey area with five numbered points (1-5) connected by a dotted line. A north arrow is located in the top left corner. A scale bar at the bottom indicates distances from 0 to 250 meters. The survey area is outlined by a solid line, and a specific area within it is highlighted with a thicker border.

Rev	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
Drawn:	JH	Preliminary		✓
Design:	JO	For comment		
Chkd:	NF	For tender		
Appd:	NF	For construction		
Date:	20/07/2015	As constructed		
		Other		



Project Name

River Medway Towpath,
East Farleigh to Allington Lock

Drawing Title

Highways

Proposed Towpath Improvements
Sheet 4 of 5

Original Drawing Size : A1	Dimensions : -
Scale : 1:2500@A1	Copyright © Amey

Drawing No CO04300297/004	Rev -
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The diagram illustrates a cross-section of a filter drain system. The layers from top to bottom are:

- Excavated material (top layer, hatched pattern)
- Selected free-draining material (middle layer, stippled pattern)
- Optional geo-textile filter (thin line between free-draining material layers)
- Type A 5-20mm clean aggregate (layer below the optional filter, stippled pattern)
- 100mm porous pipe (circular pipe in the center)
- Type B 10-63mm clean aggregate (bottom layer, stippled pattern)

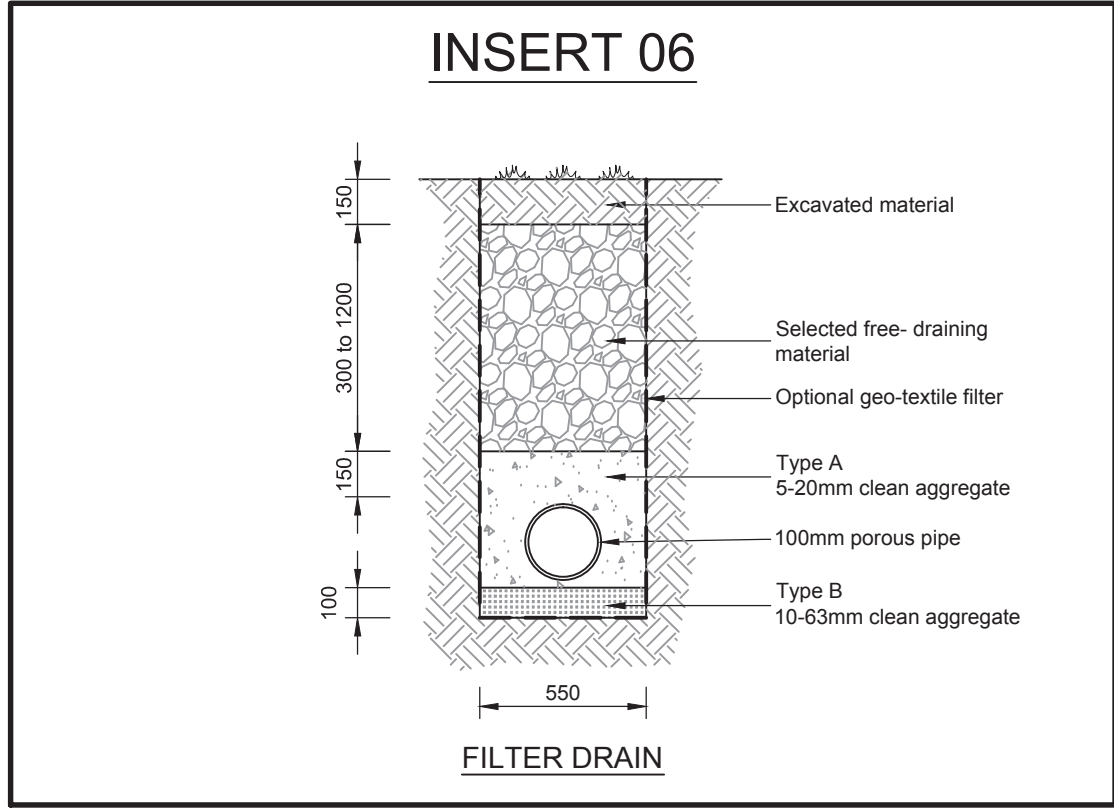
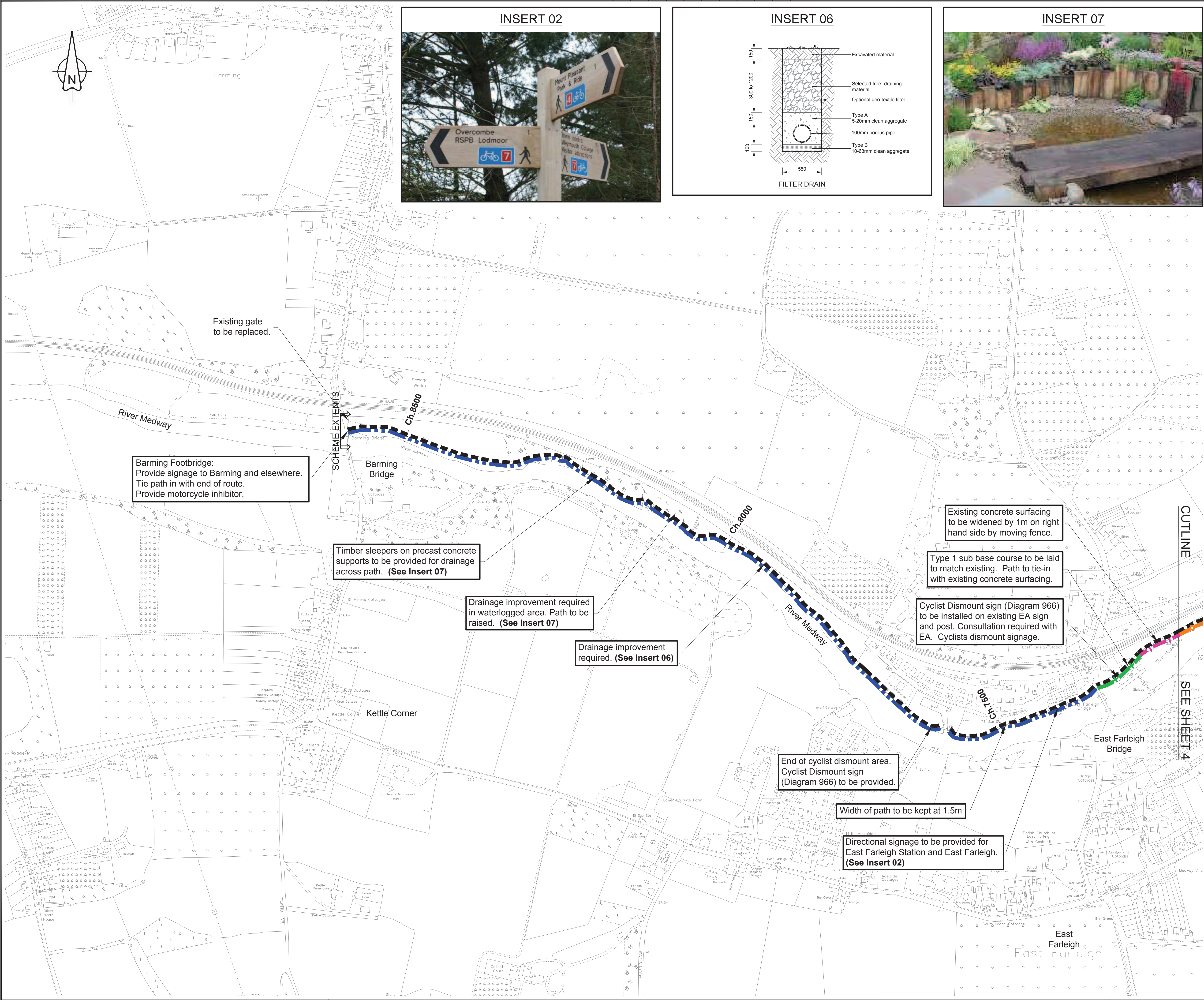
Dimensions are indicated on the left and bottom:

- Vertical dimensions on the left: 150 (top), 300 to 1200 (middle), 150 (bottom of aggregate), and 100 (bottom of pipe).
- Horizontal dimension at the bottom: 550 (width of the drain).

FILTER DRAIN

The diagram illustrates a cross-section of a streambank stabilization structure. At the top, 'Existing Vegetation, plantings or soil eco-engineering systems' are shown on the upper slope. Below this, 'Compacted fill material' is indicated. 'Live branch cuttings (up to 1 inch in diameter)' are shown being placed into the structure. The structure itself consists of 'Gabion baskets' filled with material, held together by 'Geotextile fabric'. An 'Erosion control fabric' is shown on the outer slope. A 'Stream forming flow' is depicted as a wavy line at the base of the structure. The 'Base of low streambed' is also indicated. A vertical dimension line on the left shows a height of '600 to 1000mm' for the gabion structure.

TYPICAL GABION BASKET ARRANGEMENT



RESIDUAL DESIGN HAZARDS

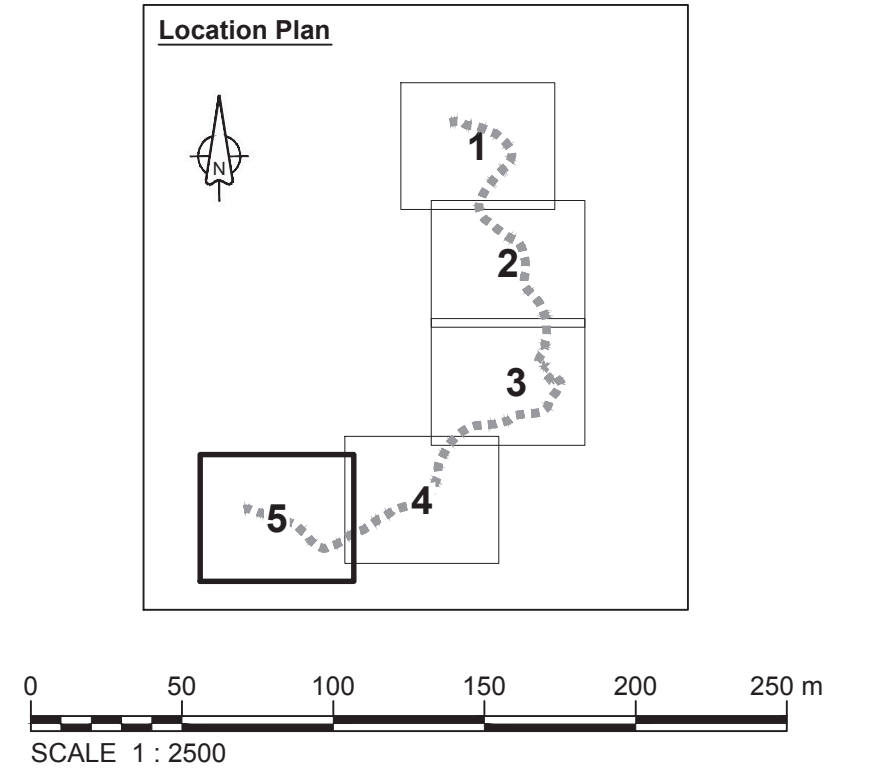
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1. Please enter project specific hazards here.

NOTES

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1	Drawn: JH		Preliminary	✓
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4	Appd: NF		For construction	
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			Other	



Project Name
**River Medway Towpath,
East Farleigh to Allington Lock**

Drawing Title
**Highways
Proposed Towpath Improvements
Sheet 5 of 5**

Original Drawing Size : A1
Scale : 1:2500@A1

Dimensions : -
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Drawing No
CO04300297/005

Rev
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Agenda Item 14

Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee

1 December 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Integrated Transport Strategy

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke, Principal Planning Officer; Chris Berry, Interim Team Leader, Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (attached as Appendix A) be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	1/12/2015

Integrated Transport Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers a draft Integrated Transport Strategy (“ITS”) that will sit alongside and inform the policies of the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The draft ITS promotes sustainable transport policies and interventions to support the development proposed in the Local Plan.
 - 1.2 An initial ITS was prepared for public consultation in 2012 to support the Maidstone Core Strategy but this has been superseded following the preparation for the Maidstone Local Plan. This draft ITS takes account of present conditions and has been prepared in cooperation with Kent County Council as a local highway authority and will guide the provision of transport infrastructure in all modes throughout the Borough area.
 - 1.3 The draft ITS is presented as Appendix 1 for information at this stage.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Section 80 of the Local Transport Act 2008 gives local authorities, acting jointly, the power to review the effectiveness and efficiency of transport within their area and to propose their own arrangements to support more coherent planning and delivery of local transport. Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council cooperated to prepare a document for public consultation for local transport provision in 2012.
- 2.2 The Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy was first published for public consultation in August 2012. It aimed to set out the future for transport in Maidstone until 2026 and described the policy context, the existing transport networks and the challenges they face.
- 2.3 Objectives for transport provision were identified and an action plan proposed to address the requirements for the new development proposed by the Maidstone Core Strategy at that stage.
- 2.4 Following public consultation and as a result of the publication of the NPPF in March 2012, the Borough Council decided to proceed with the preparation of a Local Plan to replace the Core Strategy and this necessitated a major review of supporting documents and policies. This revised draft Integrated Transport Strategy has been prepared to inform and guide transport policies and proposals in the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy

- 2.5 At present, Maidstone Borough faces acute transport challenges, from managing increasing traffic congestion to mitigating the environmental issues associated with transportation, including poor air quality in the urban area. In peak periods, parts of the road network operate at or near capacity and, especially to the south of the Borough, people find it difficult

to access the services they need due to the lack of transport options available to them.

2.6 The draft ITS comprises eleven main sections as follows:

- Transport Vision
- The Wider Picture
- Strategic Priorities
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Policy Context
- Strategic Objectives
- Current Issues
- Achieving the Strategy
- Developing the Modelling Context
- Funding, Delivery and Review
- Action Plans

2.5 This draft ITS is needed to provide a framework for transport planning and decision making in the Borough, which places an emphasis on addressing these issues through long term sustainable development of the transport network. The draft ITS seeks to address these issues through a range of policies and actions for the Borough Council and its partners, including KCC to implement.

2.6 The ITS will provide a policy framework and programme of schemes and interventions to support the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan, taking account of the committed and predicted levels of growth in homes and jobs and detailing the transport infrastructure and services necessary to deliver this growth. It will provide a detailed programme of transport interventions for Maidstone Borough, addressing existing and future challenges and consistent with national and local transport and planning policies.

2.7 The draft ITS is guided by analysis which includes both strategic and more detailed junction modelling which seeks to assess the impacts of new development on the transport network. Initially VISUM strategic modelling was used to provide a high level picture of the implications of major network changes, but increasingly specific junction modelling is providing guidance on where mitigation should take place.

2.8 This draft ITS is subject to further refinement in cooperation with Kent County Council as the highways authority and specific projects and proposals are identified for implementation within the Borough's Infrastructure Development Plan which will form a supporting document to the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan. It recommends actions for all modes of transport in the Borough, and key issues may be summarised as follows

Walking and Cycling

2.9 An agreed strategy with KCC has been developed for new and improved walking and cycling networks and facilities. These are related to development proposed in the Local Plan and for the improvement of existing provision throughout the Borough.

Public Transport

- 2.10 The primary actions recommended are the provision of a new bus route in north-west Maidstone and the major enhancement of the route between Maidstone, M20 Junction 7 and Faversham/Sittingbourne/Sheerness. Local enhancement of existing services, such as to the rural service centres, will aim to improve links to the town centre and its railway stations.
- 2.11 Complementary and appropriate measures will be introduced to improve the quality and reliability of bus services. Recent initiatives with Arriva and KCC are leading to the promotion and introduction of a range of access improvements, including online ticketing and information, and mobile apps. Improvements may also include MBC involvement in the refurbishment or provision of a major new bus facility associated with the regeneration of the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre.

Park and Ride

- 2.12 Park and Ride has made a successful contribution to reducing car trips into Maidstone town centre, and changed conditions necessitate a comprehensive review of the service and its delivery. Recommended actions include the initiation of discussion with land-owners and providers with a view to identifying the potential for new provision. Parking
- 2.13 The key action is to manage parking in the urban area to promote the use of public transport and reduce long stay parking and the effective use of space. This forms part of a coordinated approach to encourage modal shift. Highways
- 2.14 MBC will work with KCC to deliver a package of highway improvements throughout the Borough which will add capacity at key junctions to the benefit of both public transport and car users. Detailed junction modelling is continuing to demonstrate the improvements that can be made to the existing network throughout the Local Plan period, and approximately half of the objectively assessed for housing has already been consented.
- 2.15 Potential strategic highway improvements may form part of the first review of the Local Plan, but would be expected to be delivered post 2031 if required. Such projects may include a Leeds – Langley Relief Road.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The ITS sets the direction for transport in the Borough, in line with the emerging Local Plan period which runs until 2031. It assesses the existing and emerging local policy and networks and outlines transport issues that arise from the development implications of the emerging Maidstone Local Plan and sets out the detail, in objectives and actions plans, of how these issues will be addressed.
- 3.2 The ITS aims to deliver transport infrastructure and wider reaching transport measures in a way that supports new development as well as supporting the residents and stakeholders that already live and work in the

Borough. The ITS aims to introduce sustainable transport measures and policies to reduce congestion, promote a shift to public transport, walking and cycling and improve road safety, air quality and the public realm.

- 3.3 The ITS forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Maidstone Local Plan in that it sets out the main priorities and elements of policies for sustainable transport provision in the Borough, and the requirements for developers and agencies with regard to transport infrastructure to support planned development.

4. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 4.1 Following Members consideration of the draft ITS, further work will be undertaken with KCC to refine the proposals and establish the priorities for interventions and actions.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The adoption of the ITS will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Risk Management	A key risk to the local Plan programme relates to the Council's ability to provide a package of sustainable transport measures alongside the infrastructure necessary to support planned growth	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Financial	The cost of VISUM modelling to-date has been funded jointly by MBC and KCC. The cost has been met from the existing budget.	Section 151 Officer & Head of Finance and Resources
Staffing	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Legal	The draft ITS has been produced as part of the robust evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.	Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal

		Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	An integrated transport strategy that tackles transport challenges through a combination of modes will take into account the needs of all groups including those without access to a car. An alternative strategy reliant on highway improvements will not promote equal access to employment, services and social opportunities and is likely to lead to increased social exclusion amongst lower income groups in particular.	Policy & Information Manager Anna Collier
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The implementation of an integrated transport strategy to promote sustainable travel where possible will encourage a reduction in single occupancy car travel and in turn a reduction in congestion and carbon emissions relative to a 'do minimum' situation. An alternative strategy reliant on highway improvements is likely to generate more traffic than the additional capacity provided. Increasing congestion and carbon emissions.	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Community Safety	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Human Rights Act	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Procurement	Consultants are used to prepare specialist or technical evidence to support the local plan and are appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman

6. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy
 - Appendix 2: Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy
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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Maidstone Borough Council

Integrated Transport Strategy

2011-2031

1. Executive Summary

[to follow]

2. Transport Future for Maidstone

- 2.1 In the future, Maidstone and its surrounding area will be well known for its efficient, sustainable and accessible transport system which will support a thriving and attractive county town, and provide efficient and effective links with the surrounding villages, countryside and beyond. More and more people will walk, cycle and use public transport and this will help reduce car traffic on radial routes from the town and support the continued growth of the area while protecting its distinctive character and environment.
- 2.2 New routes will be developed for walking, cycling and public transport which will link up communities, employment, services and facilities and alternatives to the private car will be promoted. Information about sustainable transport options will be readily available and new technology will make this easy to access.
- 2.3 New high quality bus routes will link Maidstone town centre with community and local transport hubs and these will be supplemented with high speed broadband and local enterprise centres. Enhanced railway services will link the Borough with the capital and surrounding urban areas, offering a wide range of employment, commercial and leisure opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors.

3. Transport: Part of the Wider Picture

- 3.1 At present, Maidstone Borough faces acute transport challenges, from managing increasing traffic congestion to mitigating the environmental issues associated with transportation, including poor air quality in the urban area. In peak periods, parts of the road network operate at or near capacity and, especially to the south of the Borough, people find it difficult to access the services they need due to the lack of transport options available to them.
- 3.2 This Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) is needed to provide a framework for transport planning and decision making in the Borough,

which places an emphasis on addressing these issues through long term sustainable development of our transport network. The strategy seeks to address these issues through a range of policies and actions for the Borough Council and its partners to implement.

- 3.3 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan will meet in full the identified Objectively Assessed Need of 18,560 dwellings in the plan period from 2011 -2031. The ITS will provide a policy framework and programme of schemes and interventions to support the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, taking account of the committed and predicted levels of growth in homes¹ and jobs and detailing the transport infrastructure and services necessary to support and deliver this growth. It will provide a detailed programme of transport interventions for Maidstone Borough, addressing existing and future challenges and is consistent with national and local transport and planning policies.
- 3.4 The ITS provides the overview and justification for the detailed transport infrastructure requirements for the Local Plan which are identified in the MBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The strategy also draws on national, regional and local policy to promote sustainable transport policies and programmes, in-line with best practice elsewhere and should ensure that future development can be accommodated without detriment to existing conditions and seeking to enhance economic social and environmental well-being.
- 3.5 Many of the measures in this strategy are intended to facilitate and support new development and these will be financed through a variety of public and other funding sources. Also, developers will be expected to contribute to the delivery of the strategy by way of contributions through the appropriate channels and these include Section 106 agreements and eventually the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Scope of the ITS

- 3.6 The ITS covers the area of Maidstone Borough Council which includes the urban area of the county town and neighbouring villages. It considers all modes of transport used for local trips, on main roads and the motorway network, and the rail network. It identifies interventions to address current problems on the network, takes account of jobs and housing growth, and recognises that the populations of the urban area and dispersed villages bring different challenges and solutions.

4. Strategic Priorities

¹ As of 30 September 2015 some 8,941 dwellings have already been completed or permitted since 1 April 2011.

- 4.1 This strategy adopts an integrated approach which recognises that transport issues are inherently linked to one another, but that they are also part of the wider planning challenge. In doing so the ITS seeks to achieve its vision of “realising Maidstone’s sustainable future; connecting communities and supporting a growing economy”.
- 4.2 The ITS promotes a number of key priorities which will lead to specific interventions in all modes of transport and these may be identified as the overall aims of the strategy.

Reduce demand for travel

- 4.3 A key priority for the strategy is to reduce the demand for travel, especially by private vehicle. The creation of sustainable communities, where people can live, work and access facilities without needing to travel long distances, is an overarching aim of the strategy and this will be pursued through the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and land use planning policies.
- 4.4 Significant advances in technology mean that the opportunities to work from home are increasing so that people may not need to travel to a workplace on a regular basis in the future with benefits in reducing congestion.
- 4.5 Home working on a regular basis may be encouraged by the provision of superfast broadband, especially to rural communities and this should be a priority for partnerships between public agencies, providers and local businesses. This provision may be supplemented by the establishment of local enterprise hubs which offer the opportunity for local small businesses to support each other and provide complementary activities and services.

Changing behaviour

- 4.6 The inexorable increase in car usage leading to congestion and the further deterioration in environmental conditions are not sustainable and require changes in behaviour by individuals and institutions. An holistic approach is needed to promote alternatives to private car usage and the encouragement of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- 4.7 Experience elsewhere has demonstrated that significant changes to behaviour can be achieved where bus and rail services are enhanced by additional routes, real time information and new and improved interchange facilities.

In **Poole**, the number of journeys by bus has almost doubled from 5.3 million in 2004/2005 to 10.2 million in 2014/2015². The key to this success has been the Quality Bus Partnership comprising the major operators and the authorities of Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset. The authorities have, with Department for Transport funding, invested in infrastructure (high quality shelters, real-time passenger information and bus priority) whilst the bus operators have increased frequencies and invested £2.7 million in new low floor buses with luxury seating, CCTV and smartcard ticketing. These improvements have attracted new passengers for whom the bus is a mode of choice, and has led to a flourishing commercial bus network.

Similar changes to travel behaviour have been seen in **Brighton & Hove**, where a package of measures including flexible multi-trip ticketing, network simplification/branding, extensive bus priority, increased frequencies on busy routes and improvements to passenger facilities saw bus patronage increase from 30.2 million journeys in 2001 to 41.1million in 2009/10.

Darlington, Peterborough and **Worcester** were designated by the Department for Transport as **Sustainable Travel Towns** where a programme of measures was implemented between 2004 and 2009, intended to reduce car use. These are medium-sized (all with populations of 140,000 or smaller), free-standing towns, comparable with Maidstone. Detailed before/after travel surveys of over 4,000 residents in each town gave the following key results³:

- Car driver trips fell by 9% per person, and car driver distance by 5-7%, compared with a fall of about 1% in medium-sized urban areas nationally during the same period;
- Bus trips per person grew by 10% to 22%, compared with a national fall of 0.5% in medium-sized towns;
- Cycling trips per person grew by 26% to 30% in the three towns, compared to a decline elsewhere; and
- Walking trips per person grew by 10% to 13% compared to a national decline.

During the same period, six **Cycling Demonstration Towns** were also designated (Aylesbury, Brighton & Hove, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and

² Eurotransport Magazine, Volume 13, Issue 5 (2015), *Increasing bus patronage through partnership working and RTPI*

³ Sloman, L. et al (2010), The Effects of Smarter Choice Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns: Summary Report for Department for Transport.

Lancaster with Morecambe). Evaluation indicated a 27% increase in cycling across all six towns between 2005 and 2009. The proportion of adults doing any cycling increased by 14%. In schools involved in the Bike It programme, the proportion of pupils cycling to school on a regular basis increased by 126%⁴.

Promote modal shift

- 4.8 The implications of changing behaviour are that people shift from using the private car for the majority of towards using more sustainable modes of transport where possible and appropriate. The private car continues to be the primary means of transport in the rural areas but relatively minor shifts in mode can make a significant difference in terms of congestion particularly with regard to trips to the urban area for work and leisure.

Improve network efficiency

- 4.9 As part of the holistic approach promoted by the ITS, improvements should also be made to the existing road network, including major new investment on links where appropriate. The strategy incorporates a programme of road and junction improvements.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is the Local Planning Authority for the borough and also has delegated responsibility for Civil Parking Enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004, Park and Ride services, street cleaning, the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles, the provision of bus shelters and the monitoring of air quality.
- 5.2 Kent County Council (KCC) is the local highway authority for Kent and is responsible for the management and maintenance of all adopted roads in the county other than motorways and trunk roads. KCC is also the local transport authority for Kent and actively promotes alternatives to car-based travel to improve the accessibility, sustainability and efficiency of the highway network. Motorways and trunk roads in England are the responsibility of the Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency).
- 5.3 Approximately 80% of bus services in Kent are operated on a wholly commercial basis by local operators and neither the Borough nor the County Council plays a direct role in their provision. However, MBC and

⁴ Department for Transport/Cycling England (2010). Lift Off for Cycling: Headline Results.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110407094607/http://www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland/cycling-cities-towns/results/>

KCC have signed a Quality Bus Partnership Agreement with the borough's principal commercial bus operator, Arriva, which commits all parties to invest jointly in local bus services and supporting infrastructure. The remaining 20% of services are classified as 'socially necessary' and are procured by KCC to provide access to essential services.

- 5.4 Maidstone's rail services are operated as part of the Integrated Kent Franchise, which is specified and led by the Department for Transport (DfT). The franchise is currently held by Southeastern, and this was recently extended until 2018.

6. Policy Context

National and local policy context

- 6.1 This section briefly outlines the current policy context within which the ITS has been developed and identifies how it can contribute to the delivery of their key objectives.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012⁵ and National Planning Practice Guidance 2014⁶

- 6.2 The Department for Transport (DfT)'s stated vision is for:

*"A transport system that is an engine for economic growth, but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life in our communities."*⁷

- 6.3 The Department is working towards delivering a number of priorities in line with this vision, which includes the following;

"Encourage sustainable local travel. Encourage sustainable local travel and economic growth by making public transport (including light rail) and cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion."

- 6.4 This vision has been carried forward into the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012, which replaced the previous suite of Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance notes and certain Circular Guidance. The NPPF emphasises the importance of rebalancing the transport system in favour of sustainable

⁵ Department for Communities and Local Government (2012), *National Planning Policy Framework*

⁶ Department for Communities and Local Government (2014), *National Planning Practice Guidance*

⁷ <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/ges/assistant/what-we-do/dft> (accessed 16th Oct 2015)

transport modes, whilst encouraging local authorities to plan proactively for the transport infrastructure necessary to support the growth of ports, airports and other major generators of travel demand.

- 6.5 The NPPF recommends that Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should accompany applications for developments that generate significant amounts of movement, although it recognises that the opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.
- 6.6 This advice is reinforced in the National Planning Practice Guidance published in 2014, which gives more detailed guidance on how to approach the assessment of the transport implications in the preparation of new local plans.

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to rebalance the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes
- Clear transport requirements to be considered to support growth

Vision for Kent 2012-2022 (2012)⁸

- 6.7 The Vision for Kent is a countywide strategy for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Kent's communities. It has been written around three major ambitions, which are to:-

1) Grow the economy by supporting businesses to be successful, including improvements to the transport network and the provision of high-speed broadband;

2) Tackle disadvantage by fostering aspiration rather than dependency, including the provision of comprehensive, reliable and affordable public transport services providing access to education and employment opportunities; and

3) Put the citizen in control by involving people in making decisions and working with them to design services that meet their needs and suit them, including the continued provision of KCC's Member Highway Fund and support for community bus and rail schemes.

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to rebalance the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes
- Clear transport requirements to be considered to support growth

⁸ Kent Forum (2012), *Vision for Kent 2012-2022*

Maidstone Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 (2013)⁹

6.8 MBC's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) sets the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for Maidstone in a way which respects the need for sustainable development. The SCS acknowledges that congestion in the borough has become an increasing problem and that the overriding aim of an integrated transport strategy must be to provide genuine transport choice to the area's residents, businesses and visitors. These driving principles are reflected in the three priorities for Maidstone outlined in the SCS:-

- a) For Maidstone to have a growing economy;
- b) For Maidstone to be a decent place to live; and
- c) Corporate and customer excellence.

These are supported by the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan:

PRIORITY 1 - Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all

PRIORITY 2 - Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

How the ITS contributes:

- All the actions of the ITS support the priorities outlined above through improvements to the transport network

Kent County Council

Growth without Gridlock: a Transport Delivery Plan for Kent 2010¹⁰

6.9 *Growth without Gridlock* outlines KCC's high level vision for the transport network needed in Kent to support planned growth in housing and employment over the next 20 years. It responds to the economic and regeneration pressures outlined in the County Council's Framework for Regeneration and identifies how transport interventions can contribute to their alleviation. The strategy requests greater transport funding and delivery powers for local transport authorities and calls upon the Government to progress those schemes of regional and national importance, including a Lower Thames Crossing, a long-term solution to Operation Stack and a scheme of Foreign Lorry Road User Charging.

How the ITS contributes:

⁹ MBC (2009; Refreshed July 2013), *The Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough 2009-2020*

¹⁰ KCC (2010), *Growth without Gridlock – A Transport Delivery Plan for Kent*

- Implementing strategies to address congestion on the network
- Supporting the need for to find a long term solution to Operation Stack

Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-2016 (2011)¹¹

6.10 KCC's strategic approach for Kent's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3), covering the period 2011 to 2016, was to develop five LTP3 themes aligned to the previous government's national transport goals. These themes are:-

- a) Growth Without Gridlock
- b) A Safer and Healthier County
- c) Supporting Independence
- d) Tackling a Changing Climate
- e) Enjoying Life in Kent

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to address congestion on the network, improve safety, improve air quality and encourage sustainable transport; all of which can contribute to a better, healthier lifestyles for the Borough's population

Other Plans and Policies

6.11 The ITS is also aligned to a number of other local plans and policies including:

Neighbourhood Plans; developed by the parish councils in working partnership with MBC. These set out planning policies for development and the use of land in a local area. Once adopted, a neighbourhood plan becomes part of the development plan for the area. This means that the plan has weight when decisions are made on planning applications. Transport usually forms a feature of these plans.

- KCC's Countryside Access Improvement Plan¹²;
- Rail Action Plan for Kent¹³;
- MBC's Air Quality Action Plan¹⁴.

¹¹ KCC (2011), *Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16*

¹² KCC (2007), *Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2007-2017*

¹³ KCC (2011), *Rail Action Plan for Kent*

¹⁴ MBC (2010), *Maidstone Town Air Quality Action Plan*

- 6.12 The Council is also currently preparing a Low Emissions Strategy (LES) which is currently subject to initial public consultation¹⁵ on the areas which it will address. The ITS will contribute towards this document in terms of the promotion of sustainable transport intervention measures. Similarly the future LES, is likely to link to the ITS in areas such as the possible introduction of emission control standards for public transport vehicles and taxis and the promotion of low emission vehicles and infrastructure.
- 6.13 The ITS will also contribute to the future preparation of an Active Travel Plan for the Borough. The Active Travel Plan will seek to promote active travel (walking, cycling and the use of Public Transport) as a means of increasing physical activity across the life-course and to achieve the positive health benefits that will accrue. KCC is coordinating and promoting Active Travel initiatives across the County as part of its work-stream.

¹⁵ MBC (2015) *Low Emissions Strategy* <http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/current-consultations/draft-low-emission-strategy-2015>

7. Strategic Objectives

- 7.1 The key priorities and policy context described above provide the basis for five objectives which seek to deliver in line with a vision which may be summarised as:

'Realising Maidstone's sustainable future; connecting communities and supporting a growing economy'

Objective 1: Enhancing and Encouraging sustainable travel choices including:

A: The development, maintenance and enhancement of walking and cycling provision, through network improvements and encouraging uptake amongst the population;

B: The development, maintenance and enhancement of public transport provision, including Park and Ride, encouraging uptake amongst the population;

C: Promotion and education regarding walking, cycling and public transport travel options;

D: Ensuring that the provision of parking is fair and proportionate, considering the needs of all users, whilst also encouraging sustainable travel choices; and

E: Place sustainable travel options at the heart of all new developments within Maidstone, to ensure a fully integrated network that puts pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the centre of any transport proposals.

Objective 2: The enhancement of strategic transport links to, from and within Maidstone.

Objective 3: Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan.

Objective 4: Reducing the air quality impacts of transport.

Objective 5: Ensure the transport network considers the needs of all users, providing equal accessibility by removing barriers to use.

8. Current Issues

Challenges to be addressed by the ITS

- 8.1 Maidstone is a dynamic borough, set within both an urban and a rural context, which has a vital role to play in the significant growth expected in the South East over the next two decades. The borough currently has a population of 155,143¹⁶, which is evenly split between the County Town and its rural hinterland, including the five Rural Service Centres (RSCs) of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst. Whilst the town's main function is as a centre for business, retail and administration; the rural economy is characterised by pockets of manufacturing, horticulture and farming.
- 8.2 Maidstone has been identified as a regionally important transport hub; however its transport network has come under increasing strain in recent years, principally on account of the configuration of its road and rail networks and the growing demand for travel generally. In order for the borough to have an emphasis on sustainable transport access in line with national priorities and to accommodate the level of housing and employment growth envisaged by the Local Plan, a comprehensive and deliverable transport strategy must be in place to address these challenges.
- 8.3 As noted above, the transport challenges faced by Maidstone are not uncommon across the UK and include:

Increasing congestion as a result of population growth and an over reliance on the private car present a cost to the economy in terms of lost time, environmental degradation and associated health costs resulting from poor air quality and inactivity. Congestion is a problem of road traffic outgrowing capacity. However it is widely acknowledged across the industry that this problem cannot be solved by simply providing more road capacity as in the absence of demand restricting measures, traffic is expected to always outgrow capacity.¹⁷ Hence the need for an **integrated** transport strategy that tackles the transport challenge through a combination of modes, placing emphasis on sustainable alternatives to single occupancy car use.

The geography of the borough means that sustainable modes are a more feasible option in some locations and for some journeys than for others. The benefits of shifting trips from single occupancy car use to

¹⁶ Usual resident population as per 2011 Census

¹⁷ Goodwin, P (2004) *The Economic Costs of Road Traffic Congestion*. A Discussion Paper Published by the Rail Freight Group. ESRC Transport Studies Unit, University College London

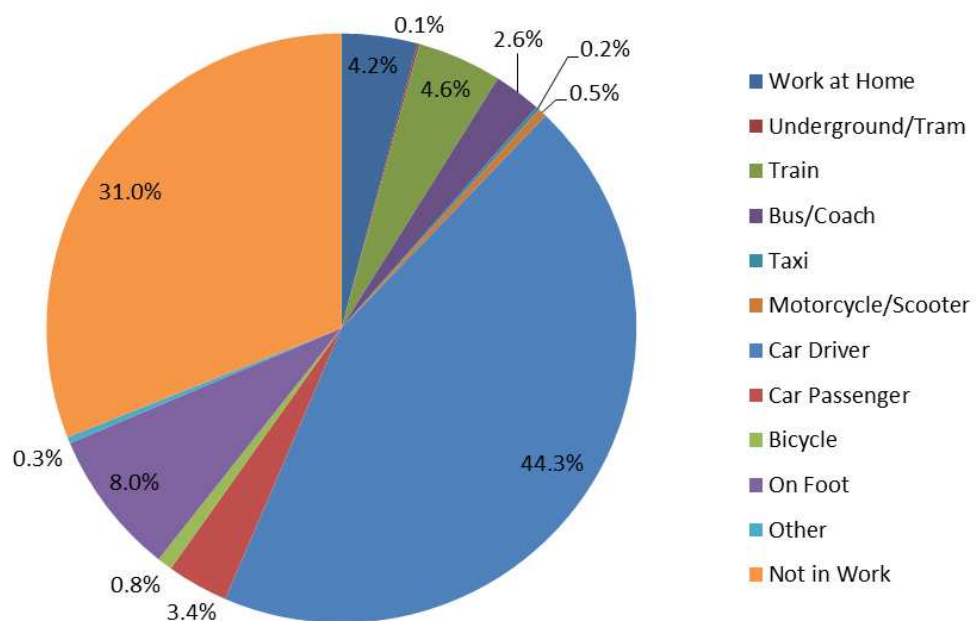
sustainable modes are manifold and recognised and promoted by Central Government. Examples of these include improved air quality; a healthier population and attractive, safe and secure public spaces.

Maidstone's proposed Local Plan provides for 18,560 new homes together with employment growth within the Borough by 2031. The impact on the transport network of these developments needs careful and considered management ensuring the transport systems in place are appropriate, and additional mitigation measures are implemented where required.

Current travel patterns in Maidstone

- 8.4 The latest Census (2011) asked the people of Maidstone how they travelled to work. This information provides a valuable data set from which to understanding the background position, and from which to develop the Borough's targets and objectives going forward. A summary of **Journey to Work Census** data is shown below.

MODE	COUNT	%
Work at Home	4,705	4.2%
Underground/Tram	120	0.1%
Train	5,257	4.6%
Bus/Coach	2,945	2.6%
Taxi	222	0.2%
Motorcycle/Scooter	538	0.5%
Car Driver	50,131	44.3%
Car Passenger	3,819	3.4%
Bicycle	935	0.8%
On Foot	9,023	8.0%
Other	395	0.3%
Not in Work	35,141	31.0%



8.5 Specific issues for action may be identified for each mode and topic.

Highways

8.6 Maidstone has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west 'A' roads pass through the town centre and numerous 'B' roads run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the Borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20, (junctions 5, 6, 7 & 8).

8.7 The Issues:

- Maidstone has very high levels of car ownership and usage. 84% of households in the borough have at least 1 car, compared with 80% across Kent and 74% in England
- Heavy reliance on a small number of key junctions; in particular the singular river crossing point in Maidstone's town centre where the A20, A26 and A229 all meet
- Congestion on the network
- The vulnerability of the M20 Motorway during cross-Channel disruption ("Operation Stack")
- Low average vehicle occupancy figures
- High-demand schools with very large catchment areas resulting in high car use for the 'school-run'

Walking

8.8 The benefits of walking are numerous, but often under-appreciated – increased physical activity, improved health, livelier town centres, a more vibrant economy are just some of the varied benefits active lifestyles can bring. Above all a shift to walking has the potential of addressing (peak hour) congestion in the borough. The 2011 Census shows that 15% of trips to work in Maidstone are 2km or less in distance, and yet walking as a mode share is less than 8%, which offers great potential for increasing walking, provided the environment is right.

8.9 The Issues:

- Relatively low levels of walking trips with 8% of travel to work trips on foot

- Busy roads act as barriers around the town centre, segregating the residential areas from the core (known as severance). The current gyratory system to cross the River Medway is complicated for pedestrians to navigate, acting as a barrier for walking trips. Furthermore, the subways provided are unpleasant and poorly maintained.
- Provision of safe pedestrian routes given the dominance of the car in most of the Borough.

Cycling

8.10 Undertaking a four mile commute to and from work by bicycle rather than by car reduces congestion, brings numerous health benefits and saves half a tonne of Carbon Dioxide a year. The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas including National Cycle Network Route (NCR17) which provides an 11 mile commuter link between Maidstone and the Medway towns; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations.

8.11 The Issues:

- Low cycle mode share - 0.8% of Maidstone residents cycle to work according to the Office for National Statistics
- Limited and disjointed cycle routes into the town centre, with very few off-road options.
- Limited cycle parking at key locations
- Provision of safe cycle routes to schools, colleges, employment and retail areas.

Public Transport

8.12 Experience across the UK has shown that bus services of sufficient quality and frequency have the potential to capture a significant proportion of short- and medium-distance trips and to make a strong contribution to the alleviation of peak-time congestion in urban areas. Maidstone has a well-established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban estates and longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns.

8.13 Three railway lines cross Maidstone Borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is

the South Eastern Franchise holder, Southeastern. The franchise was let by the Department for Transport in 2006 for an initial six year period, which has subsequently been extended to 2018. The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham, with an average journey time to London of an hour.

8.14 The Issues:

- Maidstone has three town centre rail stations, but poor inter-urban connections, especially compared with nearby towns in Kent.
- The town's rail stations and bus station are not generally well connected to each other, making for a poor interchange experience.
- Very few priority measures – such as bus lanes – exist within the Borough, providing no advantage for bus journeys.
- Lack of payment options. Most buses only accept cash payment, and in some cases it is not possible to buy a return before 9am.
- Lack of live departure board information at most bus stops, and limited use of effective smartphone applications including ticket purchasing.
- Service frequencies beyond the urban core are not convenient for most users.
- The town's main bus interchange located at the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre is neither fit-for purpose nor user-friendly. It is not well lit or ventilated and is threatening in character being essentially a tunnel under the Centre linking King Street and Romney Place.

Park and Ride

8.15 Park and Ride can form a successful component of an integrated transport strategy, and provide an important measure for tackling congestion. The most important characteristic is a shortage of town centre or workplace parking – or more generally a shortage of parking at the final trip destination. Other characteristics include a limited amount of capacity on the radial routes to the town centre, good quality public transport provision for the 'ride' part of the journey, and an integration of Park and Ride into a wider programme of demand management.

8.16 MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and these have met with varying levels of success to date. Three

sites are currently in operation at London Road (500 spaces), Sittingbourne Road (600 spaces) and Willington Street (400 spaces). However, the Sittingbourne Road site will close in February 2016. A fourth site, Coombe Quarry, was closed in 2007 due to falling patronage.

- 8.17 At present there are 3 park and ride sites all located within 2 miles of the town centre. Research to understand the key markets for these sites, who is using them and why, is needed to consider if these sites are in the correct location. This is all the more important with the likely closure of the Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road, Park & Ride site in early 2016.

Key requirements

- 8.18 Park and Ride is accessible from all key radial routes into town
- 8.19 Park and Ride ticket prices must be better value for money than town centre parking
- Pricing Strategy: At present passengers pay on-board the service, with the parking element of the journey being free. This means that passengers travelling in groups will have to pay multiple times. In other locations where P&R users pay to park their cars, groups benefit from just one payment. In Maidstone, for a group of 2 or more it will likely be cheaper to park in the town centre than use the P&R service. Consideration should be given to the merits of a pay per car pricing strategy, examples of which are successful in Canterbury, Chelmsford, Oxford and elsewhere.
- 8.20 Passengers must be provided with an option for returning to their vehicles after 6pm
- Enhanced timetabling – At present the park and ride services finish at around 6pm with car parks being locked shortly after. This can be prohibitive for commuters requiring more flexibility regarding their journey home, and is not conducive to encouraging leisure usage in the evenings, particularly on Thursdays when many shops offer extended opening hours.
- 8.21 Bus Priority measures on park and ride routes will be implemented where possible
- Bus Priority Measures – At present park and ride services have none or limited priorities on their route into and out of town. Reducing the journey time in comparison to private car times will act as an incentive for Park and Ride use.

8.22 Park and Ride routes must be the fastest route into the town centre, serving the High Street as a minimum

- Routing – The bus routes from the allocated park and ride sites to the town centre should be the fastest route possible, taking into account the location of key destinations in the town centre that passengers wish to be dropped off / picked up at.

Parking

8.23 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to provide a means of access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

8.24 The Issues:

- Only a very small portion of parking available in Maidstone is under direct Council control. As a consequence, it is difficult to apply a uniform parking policy when the vast majority of spaces are under private ownership.
- Parking is relatively cheap and plentiful compared with similar sized towns elsewhere.
- Lots of the town's parking consists of small allocations of spaces (50 or less), meaning that they fill up quickly and create additional circulatory traffic of vehicles searching for alternative spaces.

9. Achieving the Strategy

- 9.1 Key to improving transport conditions in Maidstone Borough is the full involvement of all the stakeholders in providing and utilising transport modes and services. As well as the highway authority (KCC) and the Borough Council, key players are the bus operators, the rail company, interest groups promoting walking and cycling, Parish Councils and community groups.
- 9.2 Discussions with the significant bus operators in Maidstone are identifying future service enhancements, new routes and operating improvements which will increase the attractiveness of bus travel in both the urban and rural areas. The strategy anticipates the rail service improvements which are planned for Maidstone, including Thameslink, and the introduction of policies in the Local Plan to promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the use of the private car.
- 9.3 Necessary improvements to the road network will include town centre and other junction projects to accommodate future development and provision within the road network to assist public transport provision. Major road network projects may be considered at the first review of the Local Plan for implementation post 2031, which may include village relief and other road works taking account of the implementation of sustainable transport policies.
- 9.4 9.4 The County Council who would be charged with establishing the justification for and delivery of such projects, but are not yet in a position to take projects forward. The Borough Council will therefore review the position when the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is first reviewed and determine then whether the project should move forward as a specific Local Plan policy including potential timescales for delivery post 2031.
- 9.5 The Council will also need to assess at the first review of the Local Plan whether there are any implications for the Borough arising from the potential Lower Thames Crossing project. This is still at a relatively early stage. Highways England is, however, currently evaluating two potential route corridors (the area adjacent to the existing Dartford crossings and to the east of Gravesend). Formal public consultation on the potential route options will take place in early 2016. If accepted as a scheme, subject to funding and the necessary consents (as a significant piece of National Infrastructure), works may commence in 2020/2021 with a potential opening in 2025.

The Action Plan

- 9.6 The strategy leads to an action plan for all modes of transport which will be reviewed and rolled forward on a regular basis. It is important that the interventions are aligned with the sequence of development proposed in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.
- 9.7 The Action Plan is presented in Section 12.

10. Developing the Modelling Context

- 10.1 The implications of the ITS on the Borough's highway network have been tested by using the Maidstone VISUM strategic highway network model to assess alternative transport infrastructure scenarios and their impacts in terms of travel time and distance.
- 10.2 However, the VISUM model is a strategic highways model in which increases in walking and cycling can only be reflected in an estimation of the number of car trips which may be removed from the road network due to changes in modal share across these areas. Although VISUM can model bus service changes, in assessing the attractiveness of these services it does not take into account bus capacity issues, nor can it model bus priority measures. Furthermore, as a strategic model it is unsuited to assessing individual junction capacity, or to assess the impacts of proposed infrastructure improvements at those junctions.

Modelling scenarios

- 10.3 The VISUM model was first developed in 2007/8 to help assess the impact of the Kent International Gateway proposal and the a previous Core Strategy preferred option for new development. It was updated in 2012 and again in 2014 to take account of revised proposals for the Local Plan and to update baseline conditions. .
- 10.4 ITS actions were then tested in various Do Something (DS) scenarios which identified the changes in impact on the highway network which may be achieved if the Actions are implemented during the plan-period. The final DS scenario may be divided into two variants (DSa) and (DSb) to reflect the inclusion of a potential Leeds-Langley By-pass and the impacts tested with and without this additional provision.
- 10.5 Both scenarios incorporate the provision of the housing, commercial and retail activity proposed in the local plan for the plan-period to 2031 as follows:
- 18,560 residential units
 - 151,000 m² of employment space
 - 12,100 m² of retail space

2031 Do Minimum (DM)

- 10.6 This base case provides the benchmark for understanding the predicted impact of the ITS on travel demand and network conditions in Maidstone in the future without any significant highways interventions except the proposed bridge gyratory scheme in Maidstone town centre or other transport interventions.

2031 Do Something (DS)

- 10.7 The DS alternatives model a range of highway improvements and the sustainable transport initiatives in the ITS, although it was not possible to model all of these initiatives in VISUM. The key modelling assumptions were:
- typical 10 minute bus frequency on radial corridors;
 - discounting of walk/cycle trips to be based on a distance threshold of 5km within the town centre; and
 - 50% increase in long-stay parking charges.
- 10.8 The results of modelling identify the implications of the actions promoted in the ITS, ensuring that the Borough's aspirations for sustainable transport are achieved and that the impact of demand growth on the future transport network can be mitigated.

Strategic modelling results

- 10.9 KCC has provided a summary of the VISUM model results based on two network performance indicators for the AM peak period:
- Travel distance (vehicle km)
 - Travel time (vehicle hours)
- 10.10 However, it must be stressed that these indicators are insufficient to obtain a full understanding of the modelling results for the DS alternatives. Other indicators, including the number of person trips and vehicle trips as well as traffic flows and travel times on individual links, must be considered also. It is understood that further details on the model outputs will be forthcoming, but the following paragraphs summarise the information made available to date.
- 10.11 The results for the DM scenario indicate an increase in network travel time during the AM peak of 38% in 2031 relative to the 2014 baseline, from 8,300 to 11,400 hours. However, the DM scenario was based on the original housing allocation of 17,381 units. With an allocation of 18,560 housing units, a slightly larger increase than 38% could be expected.
- 10.12 For scenario DSa (with the Leeds - Langley By-pass), the network travel time during the AM peak is increased to 9,300 hours in 2031. This represents an increase of 6% relative to the 2014 baseline, but a reduction of 18% relative to the 2031 DS scenario.
- 10.13 For scenario DSb (without the Leeds-Langley By-pass), the network travel time during the AM peak is increased to 9,800 hours in 2031, a reduction of 14% relative to the 2031 DS scenario.

Localised junction modelling

- 10.14 As noted above, VISUM is a strategic highway model and as such is unsuited to the assessment of individual junction capacity. Accordingly, additional junction capacity assessments have been undertaken using the Linsig, ARCADY and PICADY modelling software packages for specific locations around the Borough which have been identified as being potentially sensitive to future traffic flow changes.

A274 Sutton Road

- 10.15 The A274 Sutton Road and A229 Loose Road already experience traffic congestion, particularly at peak times, largely due to the capacity of the signalised junctions. Linsig models have been built for the four signalised junctions on the A274/A229 corridor, namely:
- A229/Armstrong Road/Park Way;
 - A229/A274/Cranborne Avenue;
 - A274/St Saviour's Road; and
 - A274/Wallis Avenue/Willington Street.
- 10.16 With no changes to the existing highway infrastructure, background growth in traffic flows combined with additional traffic associated with new developments on the corridor will make congestion worse, both in duration and intensity (i.e. longer periods of queuing and much longer queues).
- 10.17 A package of highway capacity improvements has therefore been developed to mitigate the impacts of increased traffic flows. To complement these capacity improvements for general traffic, bus priority proposals have been developed (described in paragraph 11.25) which will protect buses from residual queues and delays, contributing to quick and reliable bus services toward Maidstone town centre, with largely continuous bus priority between Wallis Avenue and Armstrong Road.
- 10.18 The impacts of the highway capacity improvements, together with the bus priority proposals, have been tested using the Linsig models. The model outputs confirm that the bus priority proposals will not affect capacity for general traffic, nor increase queues or delays for other road users.

RSC junction modelling

[to follow...]

11. Funding, Delivery and Review

Funding Sources

11.1 A key challenge for the ITS will be to ensure that its actions are achievable within the funding that is likely to be available over time. Anticipated funding sources include:

- **Funding from development** – the ITS supports committed and planned growth (paragraphs 11.2 and 11.3) and so funding from development will be critically important to help deliver the strategy. Section 106 funding will be used to deliver site specific infrastructure and to improve and mitigate the impacts of growth proposals. In the medium to longer term, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be used to fund more generally the key infrastructure related to growth.
- **Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)** – established in 2015/16, transport funding for the SLGF has been top sliced from central government Local Transport Plan funding for small schemes and from local major scheme funding. Local Enterprise Partnerships are required to submit bids for SLGF funding for schemes across all areas related to growth, including education and skills, community infrastructure and drainage, in addition to transport.
- **Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding** – KCC receives LTP funding for small scale transport improvements. However, the level of funding has reduced as money has been top sliced into the SLGF. For 2015/16 to 2017/18, the available Integrated Transport block funding will total £6.8 million per annum for the entire county.

Prioritisation and Delivery

11.2 The Local Plan seeks to deliver 18,560 homes. Transport interventions should be scheduled in line with the anticipated development of the Local Plan. Current work on junction improvements serves to evidence that with some 9000 homes delivered or in the pipeline, the impacts can and will be mitigated, and that MBC and KCC are already working together and delivering schemes.

11.3 Coupled with some 3000 units planned for broad locations in the Borough at the end of the plan period, and potentially 1000 units as 'windfalls', this leaves a total of approximately 5000 remaining units to serve with infrastructure in the early part of the plan period.

Monitoring and Review

- 11.4 The purpose of any strategy is to have a means of achieving desired results. However, given the complexities and scale of the issues this strategy deals with it is often difficult to identify if the desired results are being achieved. The table identifies targets to monitor the progress of the ITS in achieving its objective. In setting these targets, every effort has been made to ensure they are both realistic but also ambitious, ensuring the best possible level of service is provided to those living within the borough with the indicative funding levels.

Target	Description
1	To increase walking mode share in Maidstone from 8% of all work trips to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and 12% by 2031.
2	To increase cycling mode share in Maidstone from 0.8% to more than 2% of all work trips by 2021 and 3% by 2031.
3	To increase public transport mode share in Maidstone from 7.3% to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and 12% by 2031.
4	To decrease car driver mode share in Maidstone from 44.3% of all work trips to below 40% by 2021 and below 37% by 2031.
5	To undertake a full and independent review of Maidstone's Park and Ride Provision, issue and act upon recommendations by 2017.
6	To double the number of electric charging points in Maidstone by 2021 and to double again by 2031.

Data to monitor the above will be sourced from traffic management updates; school and workplace travel plans; future census data; and bus patronage data from bus operators. Future footfall and traffic surveys conducted by KCC will also provide important interim data to monitor how progress is being made towards the general aims and objectives of the ITS.

12. Action Plans

- 12.1 The chart below outlines the actions to be taken in order to deliver the objectives of this strategy. These actions have been categorised by mode, but an integrated approach is required to tackle Maidstone's transport issues with success reliant on the actions being implemented in conjunction with each other.
- 12.2 Actions will be phased so that they will be implemented either over the short, medium or long term. These actions will be crucial to ensuring that Maidstone functions effectively both as the County Town of Kent and as a regionally important transport hub.
- 12.3 The ITS actions are summarised below, followed by full details of each action:

No.	Area	Action description
W1	Walking	Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users.
W2	Walking	Improve pedestrian accessibility across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre.
W3	Walking	Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone.
W4	Walking	Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce road traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.
W5	Walking	Actively encourage and promote walk-to-school initiatives.
W6	Walking	Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter.
C1	Cycling	Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas.
C2	Cycling	Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing.
C3	Cycling	MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.
C4	Cycling	(a) All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Year 6 will have access to Level 3 training. (b) Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including workplace travel planning.
C5	Cycling	Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.
C6	Cycling	Improve cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail

		locations).
C7	Cycling	Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel Plans.
C8	Cycling	Promote cycling in schools through School Travel Plans.
C9	Cycling	Ensure all cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within the Borough.
C10	Cycling	Revise and update the "Explore Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map" to extend coverage to the wider Borough and indicate destinations in neighbouring local authorities. Map to be available both electronically and in paper format.
C11	Cycling	Standardise and clarify the requirements of planning applications with respect to the provision of walking and cycling facilities, to promote the use of these active travel modes.
C12	Cycling	MBC, KCC and the Maidstone Cycle Forum to identify opportunities to establish local cycling events.
C13	Cycling	MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.
PT1	Public Transport	Provide bus priority measures on strategic routes linking the town centre to residential developments and key local amenities.
PT2	Public Transport	Facilitate an improvement of bus services to ensure a good frequency of service is provided on all radial routes to the town centre within the Maidstone Urban Area.
PT3	Public Transport	Increase the proportion of schoolchildren using the bus to get to school.
PT4	Public Transport	Continue to engage with and facilitate Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Schemes in Maidstone.
PT5	Public Transport	Improve rail station access for pedestrians and cyclists.
PT6	Public Transport	Improve the frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone town centre, M20 Junction 7 and Sittingbourne/Faversham
PT7	Public Transport	Provision of a North West Maidstone Bus Loop
PT8	Public Transport	Promote the provision of high quality bus services from the rural service centres
PT9	Public Transport	Lobby Government and train operating companies (TOCs) for improved rail services to Maidstone.
PT10	Public Transport	Improve bus facilities at Maidstone East and Maidstone West train stations to maximise interchange capabilities.
PT11	Public Transport	Work towards an improved bus station in Maidstone town centre.

PT12	Public Transport	Better Public Transport Information/Marketing including on-line/mobile ticketing and journey planning apps.
PR1	Park & Ride	Comprehensive review of Park and Ride in Maidstone.
PR2	Park & Ride	Initiate discussions with land-owners for park and ride facilities and coordinate with provision of high quality long distance bus services to maximise customer usage
P1	Parking	Introduce and adhere to Parking Standards.
P2	Parking	Optimise long stay parking charges to extract maximum value from parking charges, whilst controlling demand.
P3	Parking	Maintain the current level of parking space provision in the town centre.
H1	Highways	Targeted implementation of highway improvements at key strategic locations to relieve congestion and to aid public transport.
H2	Highways	Maintain and develop Maidstone's Intelligent Transport Systems and the proactive sharing of real time traffic and transport information with road users to manage congestion.
H3	Highways	Facilitate and promote the expansion of the County Hall CarClub service to meet any identified increase in demand on an annual basis.
H4	Highways	Actively promote and encourage car sharing initiatives
H5	Highways	Ensure road safety education continues to be provided for across the borough.
H6	Highways	Installation of additional electric charging points to promote electric car use.
H7	Highways	Working with Kent County Council in assessing the need and justification for a Leeds-Langley Bypass with a view to identifying the potential and possible timescales for such a scheme at the first review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Walking

The Actions:

More detailed treatment of the walking and cycling actions are presented in the Walking and Cycling Strategy at Appendix 1.

Action W1: Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users

- 12.4 The pedestrian network should provide equal access for all users. Achieving this outcome will require the removal of physical obstacles and the introduction of more accessible elements to the pedestrian environment including dropped kerbs, tactile paving and wide footways. Step free access should be provided for all key routes, making use of ramps and lifts as appropriate.

Action W2: Improve pedestrian access across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre

- 12.5 The provision of better pedestrian routes across the Medway would encourage walking between the different areas of the town centre and local housing developments. Enhancing the ability for pedestrians to easily traverse the river improves the connectivity of the town centre, not only encouraging walking but contributing to economic benefits through better accessibility between businesses and retail outlets on either side of the river. The Council is working with KCC on the Bridges Gyratory scheme to ensure that pedestrian (and cycle) access across the river is not compromised.
- 12.6 The pedestrian bridge connecting Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks Station has recently undergone refurbishment to improve the pedestrian environment. Further areas for improvement include:
- continuing to develop the River Medway towpath to improve both the pedestrian and cyclist experience; and
 - investigation of the benefits of building a pedestrian bridge to improve connectivity over the River Medway between Earl Street and St Peter's Street.

Action W3: Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone

- 12.7 One of the most important ways of making streets more attractive is to reduce the dominance of vehicles. This can be achieved by restricting traffic, slowing it down and making drivers more aware of other road users by changing the carriageway/pavement distinction to a 'shared space', where no user has priority. Ideally, people should be able to

walk wherever they want to, by the most direct route, with as little conflict with traffic as possible.

- 12.8 Accessible and attractive town centre streets not only enhance the pedestrian experience, but through encouraging pedestrian movement, public realm improvements can make a vital contribution to the regeneration of the commercial centre. MBC has recently successfully completed its High Street Public Realm Scheme, which has revitalised the High Street and now supports future growth in nearby businesses. Building on this success, MBC also has aspirations to upgrade the upper half of Week Street (further towards Maidstone East Station) and Gabriel's Hill.

Action W4: Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists

- 12.9 Personal injury collision data will be reviewed to identify significant clusters of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists and to analyse the main causes of these collisions. This review will be used to develop a priority list of locations (e.g. road junctions, pedestrian crossing locations) where the upgrading of pedestrian facilities is required.

Action W5: Actively encourage and promote walk to school initiatives

- 12.10 MBC is a sponsor of the KM Charity Group 'Walk to School' which seeks to encourage more parents and children to walk to school. Across the County since its inception, the Charity has resulted in:

- 40,000 children and families being involved;
- 600,000 green journeys annually; and
- 250,000 school run car journeys removed.

- 12.11 As school induced traffic has a significant impact on the road network during peak times, schemes such as these contribute greatly to managing traffic congestion.

- 12.12 MBC will appoint a school travel plan champion to work with schools in reducing car trips undertaking the "school run".

Action W6: Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter

- 12.13 Numerous columns for street signs and street furniture can prevent the free flow of pedestrian movement and create hazards and unnecessary barriers. There is scope to rationalise street signage and street

furniture to reduce the number of columns and general street clutter to provide more footway space.

- 12.14 Efficient wayfinding can encourage walking and cycling through providing people with the information they need to navigate the town successfully, and understand the journey times between locations. Having clearly branded, consistent, wayfinding throughout the town not only provides information and reassurance to those less familiar with the area, but also adds to the overall experience of the public realm.

Cycling

The Actions:

- 12.15 More detailed treatment of the walking and cycling actions are presented in the Walking and Cycling Strategy at Appendix 1.

Action C1: Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas

- 12.16 Maidstone should have a comprehensive, safe, cycle network in order to facilitate and encourage cycle journeys. At present the borough has a number of cycle routes focused on the urban area, however these are often disjointed with limited off road options. Delivering a strong strategic cycle network requires:
- Maintenance and enhancement of existing cycle infrastructure. Reviewing cycle routes and links already in place ensuring:
 - Existing gaps in the network are addressed, providing safe and continuous linkages to known destinations e.g. The Oakwood Park Education Campus.
 - Routes are unimpeded by street furniture, pavement parking and other obstructions
 - Routes are maintained clearing cycle ways of hazardous defects and overgrown vegetation
 - Appropriate signage is in place to clearly identify cycle routes
 - Development of new strategic cycle routes to and from the town centre from key residential and employment sites encouraging cycling as a commuting option. Key strategic links required to further enhance Maidstone's cycle network include:
 - The South East Cycle Link, developing a route into Maidstone from Langley along the Loose valley to connect with the Loose Greenway Scheme that is being progressed.

- The River Medway Towpath Scheme from Barming Bridge to Allington (together with links at key points along this route form either side of the River Medway)
- B2246 Hermitage Lane Cycle Lane.
- A route linking Kings Hill to Maidstone Town Centre along North Pole Road, North Street, South Street Barming, through to Rectory Lane and Fant Farm to Upper Fant Road Maidstone.
- Reviewing Traffic Regulation Orders to examine whether cycles can be better accommodated on parts of the existing highway network; e.g. across Barming and Tovil footbridges and along Week Street (out of shopping hours).
- Enhancement of leisure cycle facilities and routes, to further encourage cycling as a leisure pursuit. Providing appropriate cycle facilities at key recreation areas, including Mote Park, with a specific focus on improving the riverside paths and routes along the Medway. Longer term possibilities include;
 - extension of the Medway Towpath Scheme from Barming Bridge to Yalding;
 - a signposted route from Lenham to Headcorn, Staplehurst, Marden, Laddingford and Yalding across the southern part of the Borough;
 - a signposted route across the North Downs from the Stockbury valley/Hucking to Wichling/Otterden with connections to Swale and Lenham.

Action C2: Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing

- 12.17 The borough has a number of rural service centres, and cycling facilities within these are variable. Local communities should have the following facilities in place to encourage cycling for short localised trips;
- Cycle routes to schools
 - Cycle routes to railway stations
 - Cycle parking provision at schools, railway stations and bus stops (where frequent interurban services are available/planned)
 - Cycle parking provision at key local amenities (eg. Health care, retail and recreation sites)

12.18 The following specific local cycle improvements have been identified to be addressed:

- Harrietsham: implementation of a cycle route between the primary school and rail station;
- Staplehurst: implementation of a cycle route connecting the rail station to the residential area to the south of the Lodge Road Industrial Estate;
- Staplehurst: provision of cycle parking at the village shops;
- Headcorn: shelter for cycle parking provided at the railway station;
- Hollingbourne: provision of cycle parking at the station;
- Marden: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station;
- Bearsted: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station;
- Maidstone Hospital: additional cycle parking; and
- Maidstone West: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station.

Action C3: MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.

Action C4: (a) All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Year 6 will have access to Level 3 training. (b) Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including workplace travel planning.

Action C5: Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.

12.19 In January 2015 the Maidstone Cycling Forum was re-launched providing an arena to discuss local cycling issues. Continued support and involvement in the forum provides valuable insight into local cyclist's perspectives and issues, which can feed into making informed decisions regarding the development of Maidstone's cycle infrastructure.

12.20 The forum also actively promotes cycling through building a strong cycling community hosting regular events that encourage cycling across the borough, and raising awareness of the existing and emerging cycle facilities.

Action C6: Improved cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail locations)

- 12.21 Sufficient secure cycle parking is essential if people are to be motivated to cycle. The type of parking provided should be considered in relation to the user profiles; in short stay locations simple Sheffield stands can provide a convenient means for cyclist to park up, however in locations where it is likely cycles will be left for long time periods more sheltered parking or lockers can be more appropriate.

Action C7: Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel Plans

- 12.22 Currently 0.8% of Maidstone residents cycle to work according to the Office for National Statistics. Travel plans provide an opportunity to improve levels of cycling by improving cycling facilities at employment locations. KCC currently offers advice and support to business, schools and other organisations on travel planning advocating, not just the wider transportation, but also the business benefits of implementing travel plans. Such plans are encouraged as they can include commitment to improving cycling facilities including secure parking, bike lockers and shower facilities; all of which help make cycling a realistic commuting option for employees.

Action C8: Promote Cycling in Schools through School Travel Plans.

- 12.23 Getting children involved in cycling and providing education on safe cycling is important in developing a longer term cycling culture within the borough.

- 12.24 The council will look to encourage and promote cycle education in schools including, Bikeability, a national cycle training course provided at a local level by KCC at primary and secondary schools across Kent. Aimed at children in year 6 and above, the courses give children the skills to make safer choices when cycling and to enjoy the freedom of riding a bike. Bikeability courses are also available for adults. Nationally, over 1.7million people have benefited from the training.

Action C9: Ensure all cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within the Borough.

Action C10: Revise and update the "Explore Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map" to extend coverage to the wider Borough and indicate destinations in neighbouring local authorities. Map to be available both electronically and in paper format.

Action C11: Standardise and clarify the requirements of planning applications with respect to the provision of walking and cycling facilities, to promote the use of these active travel modes

Action C12: MBC, KCC and the Maidstone Cycle Forum to identify opportunities to establish local cycling events

Action C13: MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

Public Transport

The Actions:

Action PT1: Provide bus priority measures on strategic routes linking the town centre to residential developments and key local amenities

12.25 Bus priority measures are vital to delivering a network that encourages public transport use, through ensuring journey times can compete with private car use. Allowing buses to bypass key areas of congestion through the use of bus lanes and/or junction priority measures, provides passengers with a clear advantage, while also contributing to improved air quality through less congested bus journey times. Key areas identified for bus priorities measure include:

- **Sutton Road, Northbound, between Willington Street and Wheatsheaf Junction:** This would make a significant contribution to improving the speed and reliability of buses operating on this busy corridor and would directly serve the South East Maidstone strategic housing allocation proposed in the Local Plan. Proposals include:
 - The incorporation of bus priority measures into the capacity improvement schemes for the junction of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and the A274 Sutton Road
 - Limited widening at the St Saviours Road junction by lengthening the left turn flare lane and a relocation of the bus stop and making it left turn only with an exception for buses going straight ahead
 - The addition of a length of bus lane (or widened road) between Wallis Avenue and St Saviours Road
 - Provision of a bus lane (or widened road) from St Saviours Road to Mangravet Avenue.

- Relocation of the bus stops at the end of Mangravet Avenue as these are not well related to pedestrian crossing movements or the existing population at Grove/Road Mangravet Avenue.
- Provision of a bus lane from Mangravet Avenue to the end of the existing bus lane on Sutton Road, which would be widened and a pinch-point removed outside Maidstone Cemetery
- Bus pre-signal on the in-bound approach to the Wheatsheaf junction on Sutton Road.
- **Loose Road between Wheatsheaf and Sheals Crescent:** The provision of northbound and southbound bus-lanes where possible. This would make a significant contribution to improving the speed and reliability of buses operating on this busy corridor.
- **Romney Place bus lane:** Romney Place is not designed as a major through route and its heavy use during peak periods causes significant congestion on Lower Stone Street delaying buses seeking to access The Mall Chequers Bus Station. It also causes hazards to pedestrians seeking to cross Romney Place at its junction with Lower Stone Street. The implementation of an eastbound bus lane, in place of the existing carriageway lane, will ease congestion and improve access times for buses routing along this road to the bus station, while also positively impacting on air quality.

Action PT2: Facilitate an improvement of bus services to ensure a good frequency of service provided by high quality buses is provided on all radial routes to the town centre within the Maidstone Urban Area

12.26 Ensuring a frequent bus service encourages public transport use, improving passenger perceptions of the convenience and robustness of using buses, through essentially allowing more flexibility in their use of the service. The frequency needs to be regular enough to prevent the timetabling acting as a deterrent to passenger use. The improvements in passenger numbers driven through frequency improvements has been seen on existing bus routes in Maidstone which have seen patronage increase with frequency enhancements. The following routes and frequencies should be provided (at a minimum in the peak hours):

- A20 London Road – 7-8 minute frequency (Currently at this frequency).
- A274 Sutton Road – 6-7 minute frequency; Currently 8 minutes on part; to be expanded when housing schemes progress and to be combined with the bus priority measures outlined in PT1.

- A229 Royal Engineers Way (to and from the Medway Towns) - 10 minute frequency (currently Service 101 (Sapphire standard) is on a 12 minute frequency).
- A26 Tonbridge Road – 7-8 minute frequency (currently 10 minutes. Work with service providers to upgrade service to Sapphire standard (or equivalent).
- A229 Loose Road – 10 minute frequency Potential to increase frequency of 89 service from Coxheath from every 20 to every 15 mins. Potential to increase service 5 from Staplehurst to a half-hour frequency.
- A249 Sittingbourne Road (to and from Sittingbourne/Faversham) – 15 minute frequency coupled with the promotion and an increase in frequency of services 333 and 334 from Sittingbourne and Faversham. Work with the service providers to upgrade service to Sapphire standard (or equivalent).
- A20 Ashford Road – 20 minute frequency

Action PT3: Increase the proportion of schoolchildren using the bus to get to school

12.27 Travel to and from schools creates significant pressure on the highway network, which requires intervention to encourage alternative travel arrangements to car drop-off and pick-up. KCC currently provides the following bus passes, to encourage and promote bus travel among young people:

- Young Persons Travel Pass - provides travel on almost all public bus services in Kent for an annual fee of up to £250 for young people living in the county who are in academic years 7 to 11.
- 16+ Travel Card - provides subsidised bus travel for 16-19 year olds continuing with education or vocational training. The card costs up to £400 per annum.

These need to remain in place to continue to manage school travel patterns, reducing the congestion caused by travel to and from schools.

Action PT4: Continue to engage with and facilitate Statutory Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) schemes in Maidstone

12.28 The QBP was set up to improve and facilitate communication and decision making regarding bus service provision in the Maidstone area. Attendance by representatives from KCC, HE, MBC and Bus operators

allows collaborative discussion of any bus related matters and MBC will continue to engage with this group.

Action PT5: Improve rail station access for pedestrians and cyclists

12.29 Rail stations need to be accessible by all modes of transport, including suitable walking and cycling routes between local housing and local stations. The stations themselves require sufficient parking to meet demand without actively encouraging car access over more sustainable modes. Basic cycle parking should be provided as a minimum, with significant secure provision at key strategic rail stations. The following locations have been identified as priorities for station access improvements:

- Barming Station – Enhanced Pedestrian and Cycle access required to inter link with station with existing and proposed development in the local area and hospital. In particular the provision of the pedestrian crossing near the station is required to ensure a safe pedestrian route across the busy Hermitage Lane to the station.
- Staplehurst - A new pedestrian and cycling link between the railway station and the residential area to the south of the Lodge Road Industrial Estate, with improvements to the ease and quality of bus/rail interchange within the vicinity of the railway station.
- Harrietsham Station - New pedestrian and cycling link between Harrietsham Primary School and Harrietsham railway station.

Action PT6: Improve the frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone town centre, M20 Junction 7 and Sittingbourne/Faversham

12.30 The Council will seek through appropriate s106 obligations to secure improved frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone Town Centre and M20 Junction 7 area and to Sittingbourne/Faversham and vice versa. This will require the provision of three additional buses/drivers to ensure a minimum 15 minute service frequency between the M20 junction 7 area and the Town Centre thus increasing frequency of service to Faversham and Sittingbourne to every 30min respectively.

12.31 Funding for the enhancement should be provided for five years. The Council will work with and encourage the bus operator to upgrade the service between Sittingbourne and Faversham to a 'Sapphire' standard of service or equivalent (which should include dedicated drivers, upgraded seating, the availability of free wi-fi and at-seat charging

facilities). Improvement to the existing signalised junctions at New Cut Road/A20 Ashford Road and A20 Ashford Road/Square Hill by upgrading signals and/or their control systems will also be secured.

Action PT7: Provision of a North West Maidstone Bus Loop

- 12.32 The Council will seek through appropriate s106 obligations to secure funding for 5 years for the operation of a 'bus-loop' service in north west Maidstone connecting Maidstone Hospital and the new housing sites on or adjacent to Hermitage Lane and London Road to Maidstone Town Centre along London Road via a bus gate on Howard Drive Allington. This is likely to be achieved by the extension of existing service 79 from London Road/Allington westwards and/or service 85 northwards beyond Maidstone Hospital where it currently terminates or the re-routing of service 60 which currently runs along London Road to Hermitage Lane via Coldharbour.

Action PT8: Promote the provision of high quality bus services from the rural service centres

- 12.33 A key objective for the strategy is the promotion of alternatives to private vehicle commuting into Maidstone through the provision of high quality fast bus services from the rural service centres and major villages. Opportunities for bus facilities should be provided at village railway stations to increase interchange capability.

Action PT9: Lobby Government and train operating companies (TOCs) for improved rail services to Maidstone

- 12.34 South-eastern operates train services in the Kent region including Maidstone. At the end of 2014 South-eastern had their existing rail franchise extended to June 2018. This extension included the provision of better services to Maidstone by the addition of direct Maidstone East to London Blackfriars services. Whilst a small improvement, previous connections to Cannon Street and London Bridge have still been lost, and the frequency of service to Blackfriars is poor.
- 12.35 High Speed 1, where Southeastern serves many Kent towns into and out of St Pancras via Ebbsfleet in most cases does not benefit Maidstone. It is now possible to travel from Ashford to London in less than 40 minutes, whereas MDE to Victoria still takes more than 50 – even though Ashford is many miles further from London than Maidstone. To correct this imbalance, in the run up to the refranchising MBC will review rail services and lobby the government for enhancements to Maidstone services in the new franchise timetable. The extensive upgrade work, as part of the Thameslink programme, also provides an opportunity to

lobby for improved connections to the capital via Blackfriars and St Pancras.

Action PT10: Improve bus facilities at Maidstone East and Maidstone West train stations to maximise interchange capabilities.

- 12.36 Improvements are necessary to improve the bus interchange capabilities at both Maidstone East and Maidstone West stations to provide for new or enhanced bus services from outside the Maidstone urban area can terminate. Bus facilities should be incorporated into redevelopment plans for these major town centre locations.

Action PT11: Work towards an improved bus station in Maidstone town centre

- 12.37 In the short term (1-2years), the Council will work with the landowners of the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and service providers to secure significant improvements to the existing bus station to improve its attractiveness and ease of use.

- 12.38 In the medium term, the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and adjoining land, where the current bus interchange facility is located is earmarked for potential redevelopment towards the latter end of the Local Plan period. As part of the regeneration of the site and area, the Council will work with the Centre's owners (and other land owners that may be affected) together with the public transport operators to secure the provision of a new bus interchange facility that is more accessible, user-friendly and fit-for purpose in the light of the desire for improved bus service provision and patronage across the Borough.

Action PT12: Better information and marketing of public transport options

- 12.39 Work with KCC, neighbouring authorities and bus operators to implement an integrated, cohesive approach to the provision of information and mobile ticketing, including:

- Real time bus information
- Journey planning apps
- Maintaining informative, up to date websites

Improving the availability and ease of use of on-line/mobile app ticket purchasing.

Park and Ride

The Actions

Action PR1: Comprehensive review of Park and Ride in Maidstone

- 12.40 Maidstone is committed to making Park and Ride a successful part of the towns transport network and in order to do this a full review of the existing service is required to understand the reasons behind the current limited patronage, and decide upon the optimum measures that will be implemented to enhance the service. The review will include the following possible interventions.

Action PR2: Initiate discussions with land-owners for park and ride facilities and coordinate with provision of high quality long distance bus services to maximise customer usage

- 12.41 Discussions should be initiated with appropriate land-owners for the provision of park and rail facilities as part of major commercial and other developments in the Maidstone urban area. This could include potential provision at M20 Junction 7 which would be served by a high quality bus service between Maidstone and Sittingbourne/Faversham.

Parking

The Actions:

Action P1: Introduce Parking Standards to ensure a means by which development can ensure an appropriate amount of parking is provided and reduce the overall demand for car parking

- 12.42 The new Parking Standards will ensure that the needs of car users are adequately met but also that the agreed level of provision does not undermine more sustainable modes of travel where these are readily available. However, where there is no alternative to use of the private car, the Standards will enable a fair and appropriate amount of parking to be provided. The Standards will also provide for developments' cycle parking requirements, as well as ensuring that they incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure where appropriate. Interim parking standards (the KCC produced SPG4 2006 and the Kent Design Guide Review Interim Guidance Note 3) were adopted in 2015 pending a review of the standards following adoption of the Local Plan.

Action P2: Optimise long stay parking charges to extract maximum value from parking charges, whilst controlling demand

- 12.43 This action will look to increase long stay parking tariffs (4+ hours) and season ticket tariffs for Council owned car parks by 50% (excluding inflation) by 2031. This will contribute towards the management of demand for private vehicle trips into the town centre and is directed at

encouraging car commuters to consider walking, cycling or using public transport as an alternative. This will have the effect of better managing traffic congestion and related problems in the town centre during peak periods.

Action P3: Maintain the current level of parking space provision in the town centre.

- 12.44 There is currently a very high level of parking provision within Maidstone. It is proposed that there should be no net increase in the quantum of parking available in the town over the period of this strategy as a means of discouraging car use from current and new developments.

Highways

The Actions:

Action H1: Targeted implementation of highway improvements at key strategic locations to relieve congestion

- 12.45 Through the identification and enhancement of key strategic junctions, congestion on the road network can be reduced. Regardless of development a number of the town's junctions are subject to high levels of congestion in the morning and evening peaks.
- 12.46 The key junctions and proposed interventions are set out in the table below. The funding sources are also referenced in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will work together to secure the early delivery of these improvements within the next three years, primarily through S106 agreements and potential Growth Fund applications.

Junction	Aim	Intervention	IDP ref:
Maidstone Town Centre			
Town Centre Bridges Gyratory A229/A20/A26	Capacity improvements.	New northbound link to bypass the gyratory.	LEP Growth and Contribution (New Homes Bonus) Local Fund and MBC
Maidstone Urban Area – M20 Junction 7 Strategic Area			
A249 Bearsted Road roundabout and Bearsted Road/New Cut Junction	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation of New Cut roundabout. Provision of a new signal pedestrian crossing and combined foot/cycle way between New Cut & Bearsted roundabouts.	Provided under 13/1163.
Dual carriageway between A249 and New Cut Junctions	Capacity improvements.	Additional carriageway/revised junction arrangements.	Provided in connection with Newnham Court.
M20/Junction7	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation of roundabout, widening of coast bound off-slip and creation of new signal controlled pedestrian route through junction.	Provided under 13/1163.
M2 Junction 5 Improvement	Capacity improvements.		13/1163 - £44.7k

Maidstone Urban Area – South East Maidstone Strategic Area			
A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction	Capacity improvements.	Close exit to Cranbourne Avenue and potential widening to two lanes of northbound approach on A229 Loose Road.	14/503167 - Proportion of £108k also split between Loose Rd/Boughton Lane & approaches to TC.
A229/Armstrong Road	Capacity improvements.	Works on the approaches to the Town Centre between the Wheatsheaf junction and the bridge gyratory traffic signal junctions.	14/503167 - Proportion of £108k also split between Loose Rd/Boughton Lane & approaches to TC.
A274 Willington Street junction	Junction capacity improvements.		13/1149 - £180k
A274 Wallis Avenue junction	Junction capacity improvements.		13/1523 - £30k
A274 Corridor	Bus journey time reliability.	Bus priority measures: Widening of the inbound carriageway of the A274 Sutton Road between the junctions of Wallis Avenue and Loose Road, incorporating bus prioritisation measures from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements	13/0951 - £55.8k 13/1149 - £1.8m 13/1523 - £300k 13/0951 - £558k
Maidstone Urban Area – North West Strategic Area			
A20/Coldharbour Lane junction	Capacity improvements.	Junction capacity and signals/left hand turn lane off A20 to M20 junction 5 link road.	13/1702 - £338K split between A20/Coldharbour & A26/Fountain Lane. 13/1749 - £676K. 14/501209 - £189k 14/500412 - £29.4k split between A26/Fountain Lane &

			Coldharbour
A20/M20 Junction 5	Junction capacity and signals		14/501209 £12k (Towards J5 improvements on the M20)
A20/M20 Junction 5	Capacity improvements.	Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme	13/1702 - £21.5k 13/1749 - £43K
A20/B2246 Hermitage Lane junction	Junction capacity improvements		
A26/Fountain Lane /Hermitage Lane junctions	Capacity improvements.	Changes to accommodate right turn vehicles within the junction introduction of MOVA and pedestrian sensing.	13/1702 - £338K split between A20/Coldharbour & A26/Fountain Lane. 13/1702 - £96.2k 13/1749 - £200k 14/500412 - £29.4k split between A26/Fountain Lane & Coldharbour
Rural Areas			
A229 Linton Crossroads	Capacity improvements.	Works on junction approaches.	14/0566 - £108k
A20 Harrietsham	Works to improve safety and pedestrian/cycle access		14/0828 - £399k
A274 North Street/Kings Road Headcorn	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation	
Junction of Oak Lane and Wheeler Street Headcorn	Safety improvements.		S278 under 13/1943
Highway schemes associated with Lenham area	Capacity/safety improvements.	TBC	
A229 Station Road/High St/Headcorn Rd and Marden Rd Staplehurst	Junction capacity improvements.		
Hampstead Lane/Maidstone Rd Junction	Capacity improvements.	Provision of right turn lane on Hampstead Lane.	

Action H2: Maintain and develop Maidstone's Intelligent Transport Systems and the proactive sharing of real time traffic and transport information with road users to manage congestion

- 12.47 KCC is committed to building on the success of the Maidstone Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system to continue enabling the County and Borough Councils to maximise the capacity of the existing road network and to respond proactively to incidents. In doing so, both Councils will seek to make use of new and emerging technology to share real-time traffic and travel information with road users and facilitate informed journey choices. KCC will also continue to work closely with Highways England to ensure that the management of the strategic and local road networks is fully integrated.

Action H3: Facilitate and promote the expansion of the County Hall Car Club service to encourage an increase in demand on an annual basis

- 12.48 MBC currently includes two pool cars and two pool bikes – which can be reserved for use by any member of staff. Usage of these vehicles is low relative to similar schemes elsewhere in the UK. However, utilisation of Zipcar amongst KCC staff is encouraging, and recent acquisition of electric vehicles has proven popular. KCC are looking to procure additional contract services to enhance this scheme in due course.

Action H4: Actively promote and encourage car sharing initiatives

- 12.49 Maidstone has one of the highest rates of single occupancy car use in the county with 52% of vehicle trips having only single occupants. In order to lower this rate and to incentivise higher car occupancy KCC manages 'kentjourneyshare'; a free web-based service which links drivers, passengers, walkers, cyclists and taxi users who make similar journeys and encourages them to share their trip.

- 12.50 Additionally, KCC manages the 'New Ways 2 Work' scheme (of which MBC is a founding member) which is a collaborative partnership of Kent businesses, local authorities, transport providers and other organisations for encouraging sustainable travel choices. This scheme essentially promotes sensible and efficient use of vehicles and road space to enable traffic to keep moving. This will be maintained indefinitely and can be accessed at <http://newways2work.org.uk>

Action H5: Ensure road safety education continues to be provided for across the borough

- 12.51 Improving road user behaviour continues to be the main priority within KCC's approach to further reducing road accident casualties. The priority concerns and challenges that have been identified through the analysis

of crash and casualty data and wider research findings are: speed, road user impairment, and anti-social values.

- 12.52 For the period 2010-2020, KCC has therefore committed to preparing a three-year rolling programme of activities that uses the individual and combined effects of education, training and publicity in an intelligence-led manner. Accident data and research findings will be used to guide priorities, to identify key target groups and to determine the most effective ways of communicating with them.
- 12.53 Kent County Council will lead collective partnership working through the Kent and Medway Casualty Reduction Group (CaRe Group) to improve road user behaviour through public education activities including publicity campaigns, public engagement projects and public relations strategies.

Action H6: Installation of additional electric charging points to promote electronic car use

- 12.54 There are 2 units currently installed outside Sessions House (one is serving the car club, one is available for public use), 2 units in Invicta House car park available to the public at weekends, one unit at Maidstone Leisure Centre and two units have been installed in the MBC car park. In addition, there is also one charging point installed at the KCC Aylesford Highway Depot, although this is mainly for use by KCC employees.
- 12.55 There are also several additional points on or close to the motorway network (including a model specific fast-charge facility at Eclipse Park close to M20 Junction 7) and at some local hotels, but KCC/MBC have not been involved in these installations. MBC will work closely with KCC to expand the number of electric charging points across the Borough through the life of this Strategy.

Action H7: Leeds Langley By-pass

- 12.56 With regard to a potential Leeds-Langley Bypass road scheme, Kent County Council will establish the justification for and delivery of such a project and it is considered, that although further assessment is required, delivery of such a project may be feasible post 2031. The Borough Council will work with the County Council in identifying the potential as well as possible timescales for such a scheme at the first review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and determine then whether the project should move forward as a specific Local Plan policy.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Walking and Cycling Strategy



DRAFT WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY

November 2015

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NB Photos/illustrations to be added to report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Walking and Cycling Strategy provides the evidence base for walking actions W1 to W6 and cycling actions C1 to C12 in the Transport Action Plan set out in the Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 – 2031 (hereafter referred to as the ITS). It brings together policies and related actions to promote walking and cycling and the delivery of related infrastructure in Maidstone Borough, with the aim of increasing the proportion of journeys made by these active travel modes. Furthermore, the Strategy provides a basis for making bids for improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in Maidstone through the Local Enterprise Partnership (Local Sustainable Transport Fund) and other transport funding awarded to Kent County Council (KCC) by the Department for Transport.

1.2 The emphasis of the Strategy has been on identifying the improvements required to deliver a comprehensive and well-connected cycle network (rather than focusing in detail on pedestrian-only facilities), which will help to make both cycling and walking more attractive alternatives for journeys within the Borough. The Strategy has been drafted by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) with support from the Maidstone Cycle Forum and KCC. The document will act as a tool to assist in the delivery of the Transport Vision for Maidstone and the following ITS objectives in particular:

- **Objective 1:** Enhancing and encouraging sustainable travel choices including:
 - A: The development, maintenance and enhancement of walking and cycling provision, through network improvements and encouraging uptake amongst the population;
 - C: Promotion and education regarding walking, cycling and public transport travel options;
 - E: Place sustainable travel options at the heart of all new developments within Maidstone, to ensure a fully integrated network that puts pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the centre of any transport proposals.
- **Objective 3:** Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan.
- **Objective 4:** Reducing the air quality impacts of transport.
- **Objective 5:** Ensure the transport network considers the needs of all users, providing equal accessibility by removing barriers to use.

1.3 The overarching aim of the Walking and Cycling Strategy is, in addition to supporting the Transport Vision for Maidstone, to provide a framework for delivery of the Department for

Transport's Cycling Delivery Plan¹ (draft published October 2014) at the local level. Our local vision supports the national vision, i.e. that:

Walking and cycling become the natural choices for shorter journeys in Maidstone Borough – or as part of a longer journey – regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

- 1.4 The Strategy is aligned with the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan and is supported by the Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which promotes the use of urban green space and Public Rights of Way for active travel. In facilitating the use of non-motorised transport it also contributes to the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Draft Neighbourhood Plans and KCC Environmental Strategy.
- 1.5 The Walking and Cycling Strategy encourages active travel and identifies the shared commitment of MBC and KCC to provide an enhanced network for these modes. It acknowledges that, in particular, levels of cycling in Maidstone are low at present and that whilst the Borough has some cycle routes which link Maidstone town centre with the surrounding suburban areas; these are often incomplete or require upgrading. In the rural areas of the Borough there are very few designated safer routes for cyclists. There is a lack of cycle parking facilities at some key destinations.
- 1.6 The benefits which can be derived from promoting walking and cycling as low cost, efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of transport for people of a variety of ages and abilities are wide ranging. These include not just their contribution towards improved mental and physical wellbeing amongst local residents, but also their positive impact on the efficient and reliable operation of the local highway network, and helping to realise a better environment for everyone through reduced air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions. The Strategy identifies a range of measures and interventions to make cycling a more attractive proposition in all areas of the Borough, and especially for shorter journeys.
- 1.7 It is recognised that the Strategy's focus is on the Maidstone area. This is where most people live, where most new development will take place in the coming years and where the infilling of gaps in cycle facilities will make the greatest contribution towards achieving modal shift from private car journeys. However, there is also merit in developing longer distance cycle routes to encourage inter-urban travel and cycle tourism and so the identification of opportunities for improving cycle linkages into neighbouring authorities has been another focus of this Strategy. It is intended to complement the measures and interventions identified in the cycle strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities in conjunction with KCC.

¹ Department for Transport, Draft Cycling Delivery Plan, October 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-delivery-plan-informal-consultation>

2.0 National and Local Policy Overview

2.1 This Strategy is informed by a range of national and local policies and strategies. This chapter briefly outlines the current policy context within which the Strategy has been prepared.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The NPPF² sets out in broad terms the approach that local authorities should follow in preparing land use and transport plans, to which this Walking and Cycling Strategy is aligned. In particular, para 17 of the NPPF states that a core principle is that planning should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. Developments should be located where the need to travel will be minimised (para 34) and designed so that ‘priority is given to pedestrian and cycle movements’, with ‘safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians’.

National Walking and Cycling Policy Overview

2.3 The All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group published the Get Britain Cycling³ report in 2013. This marked the outcome of an inquiry which was informed by Members from both Houses of Parliament. The report aims to enable more people across the UK to take up cycling, to cycle more often and to cycle more safely. It seeks to identify the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve these objectives and suggests measures to be undertaken by central and local government, as well as the wider business and third sectors. Recommendations are numerous and divided into five broad topics:-

- A new priority for investing public funds - including the creation of a cycling budget of at least £10 per person per year, increasing to £20.
- Redesigning our roads, streets and communities - including a statutory requirement for developments to be designed for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Safe driving and safe speed limits - including the extension of locally determined speed limits.
- Training and education - including the provision of cycle training for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Political leadership - including the provision of a cross-departmental Cycling Action Plan.

² Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³ All Parliamentary Cycling Group, Get Britain Cycling, April 2013, <http://allpartycycling.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/get-britain-cycling1.pdf>

- 2.4 The DfT published a draft Cycling Delivery Plan in 2014. The document identifies the ambition of Government to do more to encourage people across England to cycle. The Government wants to see hundreds of thousands more people taking advantage of the benefits of cycling and walking. The Cycling Delivery Plan is a 10 year plan for England and recognises that a step change in cycling cannot be achieved overnight; this requires strong leadership, commitment and long term planning for incremental change that develops an environment in which cycling is the norm. A subsequent commitment has been set in the Infrastructure Act (2015) which requires Government to prepare a national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.
- 2.5 The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidance in November 2012 (PHG41)⁴; on Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation which has been taken into account within this strategy.

Local Walking and Cycling Policy Overview

- 2.4 The third Local Transport Plan for Kent (2011-16) sets out Kent County Council (KCC)'s policies and delivery plans for the management and improvement of the local transport network. It has five principal themes, all of which include walking and cycling as an aspect; 'Growth Without Gridlock', 'A Safer and Healthier County', 'Supporting Independence', 'Tackling a Changing Climate' and 'Enjoying Life in Kent'. The Plan seeks to support housing and employment growth whilst managing the County's highways and Public Rights of Way, many of which include cycle routes. The Plan supports active travel and the development of cycling as a transport mode.
- 2.5 The Countryside and Coastal Access Improvement Plan (2013-2017) is KCC's strategy to increase usage and enjoyment of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and improve access to green spaces in Kent. The County's extensive network of paths is a great asset which can be developed further to provide infrastructure for cyclists as well as pedestrians in both urban and rural areas.
- 2.6 The Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), for which this Walking and Cycling Strategy provides the evidence base for measures supporting active travel modes, sets out the vision for transport in the Borough between 2011 and 2031. The ITS seeks to achieve this vision through addressing existing transport problems in a holistic manner, encouraging a modal shift from the private car and identifying the transport solutions necessary to support the development aspirations of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan over the same period. The enhancement of cycling and walking provision is one of the key ITS priorities.

⁴ National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, Walking and Cycling: Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation, November 2012, <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph41>

2.7 This Strategy is also supported by the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (December 2013) which promotes the use of urban green space and Public Rights of Way for active travel. In facilitating the use of non-motorised transport it also contributes to the objectives of the following strategies/action plans:

- Maidstone Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 (July 2013)
- Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan (2010)
- Climate Change Framework 2011-2016 (year???)
- Draft Neighbourhood Plans for Boughton Monchelsea, Boxley, Broomfield and Kingswood, Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Loose Parish, Marden, North Loose, Staplehurst and Sutton Valence
- Kent Environment Strategy – A Strategy for Environment, Health & Economy: Consultation Draft (July 2015)

3.0 The Benefits of Walking and Cycling

- 3.1 Walking and cycling are low cost, efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of travel. The benefits which can be derived from promoting these modes for people of a variety of ages and abilities are wide ranging. These can be broadly grouped into economic, health and social benefits. This chapter discusses each of these in turn.

Economic Benefits

- 3.2 Active travel modes benefit the economy through encouraging local trade, due to the increasing number of people travelling on local streets and routes. In urban areas they can improve the efficiency of the transport network through reducing congestion, and in turn the air pollution that is generated by vehicular traffic. In short active travel modes have the potential to make a major contribution to supporting the Borough's high streets, making them quieter, cleaner, more liveable and more prosperous.
- 3.3 Kent's visitor economy is reported to be worth £3.4bn according to research commissioned by Visit Kent, with 57 million visitors per year. Over 5 million of these visitors are estimated to be attracted to the County's cycling offer. Maidstone Borough itself attracts over 4 million visitors per year, spending more than £250 million in the local economy. A Destination Management Plan was produced for the Borough Council in 2015⁵. One of its priorities is to make the River Medway an attraction in its own right and promote its use as a green corridor for cyclists and walkers, alongside the development of other themed cycling/walking trails in Maidstone Borough.
- 3.4 Existing leisure cycling opportunities in the Borough include Mote Park, which is a short distance from Maidstone town centre via National Cycle Route 17 (NCR17). NCR17 provides a signed cycle route between Rochester and Ashford via Maidstone along a mixture of quiet lanes and traffic-free sections. From Mote Park, cyclists can cycle northeast to meet the Pilgrims Cycle Trail which connects Rochester Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral through the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. North of Maidstone town centre, NCR17 climbs Blue Bell Hill before cutting across the countryside to arrive in Rochester by the River Medway and Cathedral. Further information about these opportunities is available from the Explore Kent website.
- 3.5 There are a number of local cycling clubs, including the San Fairy Ann Cycling Club (with more than 500 members) and MCC Offroad which organise and participate in numerous cycling events in the Maidstone area and further afield.

⁵ Maidstone Destination Management Plan, July 2015.
<http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s43200/Destination%20Management%20Plan%20-%20Appendix%20I%20-%20Draft%20Destination%20Management%20Plan.pdf>

- 3.6 Cycling is reported to be worth £2.9bn per annum to the UK economy, with the average cyclist contributing £230 per annum through activities including bicycle retail and related employment⁶.

Health Benefits

- 3.7 The role of active travel modes in helping to create liveable towns and cities and promoting improved health/social inclusion is now becoming widely recognised by all tiers of government and health authorities. The link between transport, physical activity and health has been highlighted by the British Medical Association (BMA)⁷ and warnings about the health consequences of an increasingly sedentary society are widely reported. It has been estimated that the cost of transport-related physical inactivity in England totals £9.8 billion per year. This is in addition to the estimated £2.5 billion annual healthcare cost of treating obesity⁵.
- 3.8 The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) identifies that the health benefits associated with active travel, include:-
- improved mental health and wellbeing;
 - improved physical fitness; and
 - the prevention of chronic diseases and health conditions, which include coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer and obesity.
- 3.9 Both cycling and walking are effective ways of increasing and integrating levels of physical activity into everyday life. Many people have yet to experience the benefits of regular cycling, especially for local journeys. In the UK 67% of trips by all modes are less than five miles (well within an hour's cycle ride in an urban area), and 38% are less than two miles⁸, or within 40 minutes on foot. Therefore cycling is a potential mode for many of these trips.
- [Walking and cycling isochrones from PTDOSC "alternatives to using a car" report to be inserted.]
- 3.10 A recent study by the DfT into the value for money of the Cycle City Ambition Grant and the Cycling in National Parks Grant found that the combined Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of each of these funding streams was 5.5:1, which was considered to represent very high value for

⁶ London School of Economics, The British Cycling Economy: 'Gross Cycling Product' Report, August 2011, <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/38063/1/BritishCyclingEconomy.pdf>

⁷ British Medical Association, Healthy Transport = Healthy Lives, July 2012, <http://bma.org.uk/transport>

⁸ Department for Transport, National Travel Survey 2013, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2013>

money. Around 60% of these benefits were accounted for by improved physical fitness, with much of the remainder being associated with journey quality and congestion relief⁹.

3.11 Walking and cycling in urban areas can improve air quality through reducing congestion, and the air pollution that is generated by motor traffic, which represents the majority of air pollutants in Maidstone Borough. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was designated in 2001 which covers the entire urban conurbation of Maidstone. Within the AQMA, the automatic air quality monitoring station at the A229 Bridge Gyratory recorded a mean concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) of 43.2µg/m³ in the year 2012¹⁰, above the maximum annual mean of 40µg/m³ as required by national air quality regulations. Of the 65 other (non-automatic) monitoring sites across the Borough, nine sites exceeded the maximum annual mean in the year 2012, including Pilgrims Way, Detling which is outside the AQMA.

3.12 The above results highlight air quality concerns in the vicinity of main roads in the Borough. Poor air quality affects health, contributing towards cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness, adding further to NHS costs. It has been reported that air pollution reduces life expectancy by 7-8 months, which has the equivalent UK economic impact of £20 billion per year.¹¹ The potential for walking and cycling in Maidstone Borough to help increase life expectancy and decrease the economic impact of air pollution generated by vehicular traffic is therefore evident.

Social Benefits

3.13 Both walking and cycling are activities which can be fun and provide an opportunity for social interaction, unlike single occupancy car journeys. They enable a better appreciation of the Borough's urban and rural environment. Cycling provides access to routes and locations which are often too far for many to walk. Bicycles can coexist well with other users in residential streets and town centres, unlike the severance effect which can be caused by busy motor traffic routes.

3.14 As well as enabling exercise and recreation, cycling can also be a faster option for short journeys in congested urban environments. It is also a low cost transport option and therefore accessible to most people, promoting social inclusion. By reducing or removing

⁹ Department for Transport, Value for Money Assessment for Cycling Grants, August 2014, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348943/vfm-assessment-ofcycling-grants.pdf

¹⁰ Bureau Veritas, Maidstone Borough Council LAQM Progress Report, October 2013, http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/9661/Maidstone-Town-Air-Quality-Action-Plan-April-2013.pdf

¹¹ Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs, Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, July 2007, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69336/pb12654-air-quality-strategy-vol1-070712.pdf

the costs of car ownership, cycling has the potential to be an attractive option for young people in particular, giving them independence and increasing their ability to access education, employment, shopping, healthcare and (longer distance) public transport opportunities.

4.0 Walking and Cycling in Maidstone Borough Today

Existing Cycle Network

- 4.1 The Borough's existing cycle network links the town centre to most suburban areas and community facilities, including several schools, Maidstone East railway station and Mote Park. National Cycle Network Route 17 (NCR17) provides an 11 mile leisure/commuter link (approximately half off-carriageway) between Maidstone and Rochester. Via Mote Park, Weaving Street and Hockers Lane, NCR17 connects to the Pilgrims Cycle Trail at Detling in the North Downs. At present, NCR17 connects with NCR1 (Inverness to Dover) in Rochester and ends in Ashford, but KCC has plans to extend the network by connecting to NCR2 (Dover to St Austell) on the South Coast.
- 4.2 Maidstone also has a Regional Route 12 (RR12) which originates in the town centre and extends along the A20 London Road into Tonbridge and Malling. A section of the route within Maidstone Borough is traffic free and provides good linkages to local schools in the residential area of Allington.
- 4.3 Limited cycle parking facilities are provided at locations within the Maidstone town centre shopping area, as well as cycle stands at Maidstone East and West railway stations and at KCC Sessions House and Invicta House. In addition, cycle lockers are available at Maidstone East railway station. Outside the town centre, some neighbourhood shopping areas are provided with cycle stands and Bearsted, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst railway stations have well-used cycle parking facilities.
- 4.4 Existing walking and cycling routes and facilities within the Maidstone urban area are illustrated in the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map published by Explore Kent in 2012. This map is not available electronically although hard copies are available.
- 4.5 There are a number of issues which currently constrain the attractiveness of walking and cycling within Maidstone Borough:
- **Accessibility** – in many areas the pedestrian network does not currently provide equal access for all users. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving to assist the mobility and visually impaired may be unavailable, and the width of footways may in some cases be too narrow (whether in terms of their actual width, or their usable width due to the presence of sign columns or street furniture) to enable their use by wheelchairs and mobility scooters for example. Some routes are stepped without having a ramped alternative.
 - **Connectivity** – Linkages from west to east Maidstone via the town centre are limited, although the situation has recently improved with the refurbishment of the pedestrian

bridge connecting Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks railway stations. Subways are often flooded due to inadequate drainage systems and maintenance. There are currently no designated cycle routes in Tovil and Loose, to the south of the town centre, and to the west in Fant. Safer routes for cyclists to Maidstone West railway station and from the east to the schools and college at Oakwood Park are currently absent.

- **Safety** – safety concerns are frequently a barrier to people choosing to walk or cycle for some journeys. There are few traffic free cycle paths in the Borough and new cyclists may lack the confidence to share road space with motor traffic. Where walking and cycling routes lack lighting and natural surveillance, this may be another deterrent to the use of these modes. In winter, walking and cycling routes outside of the main shopping and pedestrian areas may not be gritted and this is another deterrent to the habitual use of active modes.
- **Secure cycle parking** – although considerable progress has been made in recent years, the availability of secure cycle parking at key locations such as shopping areas and railway stations can be limited.

Existing Cycling Activity

4.6 KCC provides year on year monitoring of cycling trips across Kent from inner urban cordons and automatic traffic counts. There are currently only two fixed cycle counters for Maidstone, one on the A20 outside the Kent Police traffic headquarters, and the other in Mote Park, on NCR17. More counters are needed at strategic locations in the urban area to monitor trip data. This will help gauge the success of future improvements to the cycling network.

4.7 In Maidstone, the monitoring of inner cordon cycle counters reveals the rate of cycling....[data awaited from KCC.]

[DfT Annual Average Daily Flow data for key radial routes to be analysed and appended.]

5.0 Improving the Walking and Cycling Network

5.1 As outlined in chapter xx of the ITS, the Council's targets for active modes are to:

- Increase the cycling mode share of all work trips made by Borough residents from 0.8% in 2011 to more than 2% of all work trips by 2021 and more than 3% by 2031.
- Increase the walking mode share of all work trips made by Borough residents from 8% in 2011 to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and more than 12% by 2031.

5.2 This Walking and Cycling Strategy identifies four main objectives to achieve these targets:

1. *Creating new links* – seeking new opportunities to extend routes to more people;
2. *Maintenance of the cycle route network* – looking after what we already have, and improving it;
3. *Creating a safer environment for walkers and cyclists* – designing safer routes and providing road safety education for motorists and non-motorised users alike; and
4. *Spreading the word* – raising awareness of existing and emerging facilities available to walkers and cyclists.

5.3 In terms of creating new cycling links within the Borough, which will also benefit walkers, proposals will be developed with the following strategic long-term aims in mind:

- “Filling in of the gaps” to create a **fully integrated urban cycle network**, with radial routes joined across the town centre. Key destinations (e.g. schools, colleges, hospitals, shopping centres, visitor attractions) and new housing and employment sites will be integrated into the cycle network.
- The creation of an **orbital walking and cycling route** around the Maidstone urban area, linking to the town centre via radial routes. This would be delivered through the upgrading of existing footpath networks where possible to provide cycle linkages, or alternatively along quiet lanes, within the following areas in particular:
 - To the southeast of the town, between Langley and Loose, incorporating Boughton Monchelsea;
 - To the south, within the Loose Valley Conservation Area and Hayle Park;
 - To the west, within the Medway Valley and on Hermitage Lane (linking with Barming railway station);
 - To the north, from Hermitage Lane to Sandling via Allington Lock; and
 - To the east, via the Len Valley north of Otham.

- The creation of **cycle routes from rural service centres and smaller settlements to transport hubs** (where new/improved cycle parking will be provided), along a mixture of quiet lanes and segregated shared use footways, such as:
 - To rural railway stations (Headcorn, Staplehurst, Marden, Yalding, East Farleigh, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham, Lenham); and
 - To bus stops on corridors where frequent interurban services are available or are planned as part of the ITS (e.g. A26 Tonbridge Road, A249 Sittingbourne Road).
- The creation of a **themed rural circular cycle route** (perhaps “Maidstone Ring” or similar) to encourage leisure cycling and exploration of the Borough’s rural attractions. This would complement the existing NCR17/Pilgrims Cycle Trail and improve connectivity between rural service centres by cycle.

5.4 The above principles, and the guidance gratefully received from the Maidstone Cycle Forum, have informed the development of the detailed Action Plan presented in section 10. These detailed actions feed into the high level Transport Action Plan presented in chapter XX of the ITS. In respect of the cycle network the ITS actions are:

- Action W1: Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users.**
- Action W2: Improve pedestrian accessibility across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre.**
- Action W3: Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone.**
- Action C1: Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas.**
- Action C2: Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing.**

5.5 The objectives of network maintenance, creating a safer cycling environment and spreading the word are explored further in Sections 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

6.0 Maintenance of the Walking and Cycling Network

- 6.1 Unless new and existing walking and cycling facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard they will quickly fall into disrepair and will not be used. In residential areas, regular street cleaning may keep footways running parallel to motor traffic routes clear of debris, and surface defects may be promptly identified and repaired. However, the maintenance regime for off-carriageway routes is likely to be more limited.
- 6.2 Cycle routes require specific maintenance, including the regular cleansing of gullies and kerb lines as well as the cutting back of vegetation to preserve available width and sight lines. Surface defects should be repaired before they become a hazard. Road accident debris such as glass and overgrown vegetation can present hazards to cyclists, resulting in punctured tyres, compromised route alignments or obstacles, all of which could risk the safety of a cyclist and put them in conflict with other road users.
- 6.3 KCC has primary responsibility for the co-ordination of highways and Public Rights of Way maintenance. It works with third party landowners including MBC, where required, to achieve maintenance objectives. KCC's maintenance programme is determined on the basis of information from regular inspections, annual surveys using specialist equipment, and reports from councillors, parish councils, community groups and residents. Road surfaces are surveyed by KCC Highway Inspectors in a manner which takes into account the needs of cyclists; for example, by giving appropriate attention to the two metre strip alongside the kerb line where most cyclists ride. In constructing and maintaining cycle routes, the County Council refers to guidance outlined in TRL Application Guide AG26 (Version 2)¹².
- 6.4 It is KCC's intention to produce a cycle route maintenance schedule for off road cycle routes, subject to funding. This will include the use of volunteers, such as Sustrans Rangers, as well as dedicated contractors. Sustrans Rangers help to maintain the cycle network in a number of ways, including placing temporary signs, reporting faults, undertaking small-scale vegetation clearance and organising work days for more ambitious maintenance projects.

Action C3: MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.

¹² TRL, Footways and Cycle Route Design: Construction and Maintenance Guide, 2003, <http://trl.co.uk/reportspublications/trl-reports/report/?reportid=6180>

7.0 Safer Walking and Cycling

Cycle Training

- 7.1 National Standard Cycle Training (Bikeability) is provided across Kent by KCC and local School Games Partnerships. The training courses are structured for primary and secondary age school children in Years 4 to 9. The courses give children the skills to make safer choices when cycling and to enjoy the freedom of riding a bike. Bikeability courses are booked directly by schools.
- 7.2 Bikeability comprises three levels of competency-based cycle training. Level 1 is aimed at the basic bicycle control skills that are required to cycle safely in any environment. Level 2 is delivered on quiet roads and teaches participants the skills necessary to take a basic on-road journey and includes a variety of junctions. Level 3 tackles busy traffic situations and complex junctions. Importantly, participants must demonstrate competence at each level before they progress to the next.
- 7.3 Adult cycle training courses are also available. Corporate, group and individual training courses can be arranged and further information is available on KCC's website¹³.

Action C4(a): All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Years 7 to 9 will have access to Level 3 training.

Action C4(b): Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including work place travel planning.

Road Safety

- 7.4 A key barrier to the use of active travel modes are people's concerns about road safety. Traffic free, segregated cycle routes are not available in all parts of the Borough. Footways can be narrow or absent and lighting is not always available which can make walking an intimidating experience after dark.
- 7.5 KCC undertake regular road safety campaigns targeted at different road user groups...[recent examples to be cited.]
- 7.6 Plots of Personal Injury Collisions (PICs) involving pedestrians and cyclists are included.
- 7.7 These data plots will be reviewed in detail to identify significant clusters of PICs involving non-motorised users and to analyse the main causes of these collisions. This review will be

¹³ <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/road-safety-training/cycle-training>

used to develop a priority list of locations (e.g. road junctions, pedestrian crossing locations) where the upgrading of pedestrian and cycle facilities is required.

Action W4: Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce road traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.

8.0 Promoting Walking and Cycling in Maidstone Borough

- 8.1 The Council recognises that providing new walking and cycling routes alone will not dramatically increase the use of active travel modes in the Borough. Action to create a pro-active travel culture is needed in a range of areas which include land use and transport planning, regeneration, leisure, health and education. Promotion of walking and cycling will not only involve improved engineering measures and safety but also training, publicity and raising awareness amongst a range of different audiences.
- 8.2 First and foremost, KCC and MBC's websites need to be kept updated to enable local residents and visitors to access the latest information on walking and cycling routes and facilities. The Maidstone walking and cycling map should be updated and made available both electronically and in paper format, with copies distributed to the visitor information centre, tourist attractions, hotels, large employers and schools.
- 8.3 Efficient wayfinding can encourage walking and cycling through providing people with the information they need to navigate the town successfully, and understand the journey times between locations. Having clearly branded, consistent, wayfinding throughout the Maidstone central area not only provides information and reassurance to those less familiar with the area, but also adds to the overall experience of the public realm. All cycle routes throughout the Borough should be fully signposted for the benefit of new cyclists and those who are unfamiliar with the area.
- 8.4 As well as walking, cycling should form a key component of school and workplace Travel Plans and local clubs and cycle shops could help to promote cycling within the borough through active promotion and use of the local network. Travel Plans will be encouraged as they can include commitment to improving cycling facilities like secure parking, bicycle lockers or the provision of shower facilities for large employers. In 2011 Kent County Council produced new best practice guidance on travel plans.¹⁴ Link is broken, KCC (Tay Arnold) to confirm.
- 8.5 With respect to school travel planning specifically, MBC is a sponsor of the KM Charity Group 'Walk to School' which seeks to encourage more parents and children to walk to school. Across the County since its inception, the Charity has resulted in:
- 40,000 children and families being involved;
 - 600,000 green journeys annually; and
 - 250,000 school run car journeys removed.

¹⁴ New Ways to Work – Best practice guide for preparing travel plans in Kent 2011
<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/roads-and-transport/getting-around/Travel%20Plan%202010.pdf>

- 8.6 Schemes such as the above contribute greatly to reducing traffic congestion and these achievements will be built on through the appointment of a “school travel plan champion” within MBC to work with schools and KCC to further reduce car trips undertaking the “school run”.
- 8.7 KCC will continue to develop and maintain a range of publications that will cover both the local and county cycle network and successful recent initiatives, such as Sky Ride Local. during National Bike Week, will be repeated wherever possible.
- 8.8 It is important that the requirements of planning applications are standardised and clarified so that cycling can be promoted through the development control process. In particular it is essential that new residential properties and other developments (such as employment, retail, healthcare and educational uses) provide secure cycle parking/storage areas close to the building entrance/exit. In respect of residential properties, for example, although a cycle locked in a shed at the end of a garden is stored within the curtilage of the property as required by the *Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006: SPG4 Vehicle Parking Standards*¹⁵, it is less likely to be used than one stored close to the front door. The provision of secure cycle storage should be managed via the development control process in the same way as car parking is managed. Equally important is the provision of attractive pedestrian and cycle routes within new developments, with good natural surveillance and crossing facilities to integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 8.9 With the support of KCC’s Cycling Officer, the Maidstone Cycling Forum was re-established in 2015. The Forum brings together Members and officers from the Council, representatives of organisations with an interest in cycling and interested members of the public. Its goal is to *“help create a cycle-friendly culture in Maidstone, where residents and visitors of all ages and abilities choose to cycle regularly for those shorter journeys they do not make on foot.”*
- 8.10 The Forum has completed a number of cycle related research tasks since its original establishment, and has recently provided assistance with the assessment of existing cycling routes in the Borough, highlighting missing links, as well as identifying potential new strategic routes.

Action W5: Actively encourage and promote walk to school initiatives.

Action W6: Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter.

¹⁵ [http://www.kent.gov.uk/SPG4](#)

Action C5: Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.

Action C6: Improve cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail locations).

Action C7: Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel

9.0 Monitoring the Cycling Strategy

- 9.1 This Strategy will be regularly monitored alongside the ITS.
- 9.2 Monitoring should take several forms including continuous automatic counters on cycle tracks and detailed route user surveys. This will enable a detailed database to be established which in turn can inform economic appraisals and health impact assessments in the borough.
- 9.3 Details of the walking and cycling modal share targets are presented in Chapter XX of the ITS. Progress against the ITS targets will be monitored using future census data, but cycle usage will be analysed on a more regular basis using the above data sources. It is envisaged that the Walking and Cycling Strategy itself will be updated every five years, with the first update scheduled in 2021.

Action C13: MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

10.0 Proposed Development of the Walking and Cycling Network

10.1 If we are to achieve the aims set out in this strategy then the schemes chosen must create a network that appeals to both existing and potential pedestrians and cyclists.

10.2 Planning and prioritisation of the development of the walking and cycling network in Maidstone Borough has been undertaken with input from the Maidstone Cycle Forum. Proposals have been sifted on the grounds of likely technical and political deliverability. Recommendations have been prepared and are split into the following geographical areas:

- Maidstone Town Centre
- North West Maidstone
- South West Maidstone
- North East Maidstone
- South East Maidstone
- Rural

For each of the above areas a map is provided which illustrates the recommended interventions. These are described in the accompanying table, together with an indicative timetable for their implementation, potential funding sources and delivery partners. [Maps to be completed]

10.3 As this is a strategy, it should be noted that the proposals are indicative only and that their implementation will be dependent upon securing the necessary funding and the completion of satisfactory feasibility design, detailed design and public consultation exercises at the appropriate stage.

Maidstone Town Centre

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
MTC1	Widening of existing Wat Tyler Way shared use footway.	Footway widening on east side of Wat Tyler Way between Ashford Road and Chancery Lane, amended carriageway markings (reduced lane widths).				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
MTC2	Upgraded crossing facilities on A249 Sittingbourne Road at Union Street/Vintners Road junction.	Signage, upgrading of controlled crossing to toucan standard, widening of footway alongside Sittingbourne Road, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
MTC3	Improved cycle connectivity between High Street and Lockmeadow.	Package of measures to improve cycle facilities between High Street and Barker Road. Signage, upgrading of Bishops Way controlled crossing to toucan standard, expansion of cycle/pedestrian waiting areas, relocation of lamp columns/street furniture, cycle facilities on Barker Road, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
MTC4	Enable cycling between College Road and Brunswick Street.	Upgrade existing footpath link between A229 Hayle Road and Brunswick Street. Install toucan crossing on A229 Hayle Road to facilitate cycle access to and from College Road. Amended Right of Way Order required, signage, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
MTC5	Package of measures to improve pedestrian environment and public realm along Week Street, incorporating appropriate access for cyclists.	Allow cycle access to Week Street: 1) at all times between Station Road and Union Street (contraflow required); 2) from 8pm to 8am between Union Street and High Street. Cycle parking facilities to be provided within improved public realm. Amended Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) required, signage on entries to pedestrian priority zone, contraflow road markings, surfacing (to indicate cycle route).				CIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC Town Centre Partnership
MTC6	Package of measures to improve linkages between River Medway and Week Street, including pedestrianisation of Earl Street.	Pedestrianisation of Earl Street between Pudding Lane and Week Street to ensure cycle access is maintained. Cycle parking facilities to be provided within improved public realm.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC Town Centre Partnership
MTC7	New cycle route between Week Street (NCN17) and Medway Valley towpath, serving Kent History & Library Centre.	Signage, footway widening Stacey Street and Fairmeadow, new direct shared use footway from James Whatman Way to Fairmeadow, upgrade existing crossing facilities to south of A229/James Whatman Way roundabout to toucan standard.				CIL S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
MTC8	Upgrade existing footway across River Medway between Maidstone Barracks (Buckland Hill) and Maidstone East (Station Road) for shared pedestrian/cycle use.	Signage (shared use, priority to pedestrians).				CIL S106 Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
MTC8	Medway Valley Towpath	Towpath improvements and making of Cycle Tracks Order to create a cycle route between Allington Lock and East Farleigh.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF) MBC (New Homes Bonus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC
MTC9	Scotney Gardens – Whatman Park Towpath	On west side of River Medway, new section of towpath and improvements to existing towpath.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC
MTC10	Wayfinding Strategy – package of measures to introduce themed trails and quarters in the town centre to improve legibility.	Additional signage to benefit pedestrians and cyclists within town centre. Monoliths and finger posts at key locations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barracks, East, West rail stations • Outside shopping centres/main shopping streets • Outside major attractions (e.g. museum, theatre) 				CIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Town Centre Partnership • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • Network Rail • Bus Operators
MTC11	Public realm improvements on King Street between Wyke Manor Road and existing bus station access.	Footpath improvements, cycle facilities. Upgraded crossing facilities at junction with Church Street.				CIL S106 (Church Street crossing improvements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
MTC12	New River Medway pedestrian/cycle crossing	Provision of shared use pedestrian/cycle footbridge linking St Peter's Street and Earl Street.				CIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC
MTC13	New cycle parking facilities at Maidstone West railway station.	Install five cycle stands with shelter.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBC • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC

North West Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
NWM1	Footway widening on north side of A20 London Road between Castle Road and Grace Avenue to create two-way cycle path.	Signage, surfacing, reconfiguration of Grace Avenue eastbound bus stop layby.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
NWM2	Upgraded crossing facilities at Castle Road/London Road junction.	Install controlled crossing facilities on all arms. Dropped kerbs, tactile paving, signage.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
NWM3	Create new cycle route between Newbury Avenue and Sandling via Allington Lock, providing low traffic route to Museum of Kent Life.	Signage, footway improvements (widening, dropped kerbs, tactile paving) between Forstal Road and Sandling.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC

South West Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
SWM1	Cycle route on east side of Hermitage Lane, linking Barming rail station (TMBC) with traffic free cycle path to Queen's Road (Cherry Orchard).	Footway widening, signage, dropped kerbs, tactile paving.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC TMBC MBC South Eastern Rail Franchisee
SWM2	Cycle route between Giddyhorn Lane and Hermitage Lane (1.0km).	Surface existing footpath and upgrade to bridleway status, signage, lighting (?)				S106 CIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
SWM3	Closure of North Pole Road to through motor traffic to facilitate creation of cycle route from Barming to Kingshill.	Stopping Up Order, bollards, signage.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TMBC KCC MBC
SWM4	Creation of cycle route from Medway Valley towpath (Unicomes Lane) to Hackney Road and westwards to South Street. This would provide an alternative cycle route during floods at East Farleigh.	Signage, upgrade existing footpaths to bridleway status, vegetation clearance (e.g. east of Farleigh Lane).				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC

North East Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
NEM1	Package of highway improvements between Bearsted and New Cut Roundabouts.	Provision of new toucan crossing and combined foot/cycle way between the roundabouts as part of dual carriageway works.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
NEM2	Package of highway improvements at M20 Junction 7.	As part of Junction 7 signalisation, creation of a new signal controlled pedestrian route through the gyratory.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highways England KCC MBC
NEM3	Cycle friendly traffic management measures on Sandling Lane/ Penenden Heath Road	Feasibility study required but potential measures include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in speed limit from 40mph to 30mph Vertical/horizontal traffic calming Footway widening to facilitate shared pedestrian/cycle use 				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
NEM4	New cycle parking facilities at Bearsted railway station	Installation of four cycle stands accommodating eight cycles.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MBC South Eastern Rail Franchisee KCC
NEM5	Package of improvement measures on the A20 Ashford Road between Bearsted and Woodcut Farm	In conjunction with pedestrian refuges and bus stops outside site EMP1(5), improvements to north side footway to facilitate shared use by pedestrians and cyclists, to connect with existing advisory cycle routes in Bearsted				S106/S278 CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MBC KCC

South East Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
SEM1	Creation of a cycle route from Sutton Road to The Quarries (3.0km), south of Local Plan site H1(10) and Langley Loch. This would connect with an existing advisory cycle route to Loose and the proposed Loose “Greenway”.	Signage, surfacing, existing footpaths upgraded to bridleway status.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers • KCC • MBC
SEM2	Loose “Greenway” – cycle route from Kirkdale to Old Drive and northwards to Cripple Street TBC	Signage, surfacing, widening, existing footpaths upgraded to bridleway status.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Loose Parish Council
SEM3	Eastwards extension of Sutton Road cycle routes to provide sustainable transport access to housing sites H1(7), (8), (9) and (10).	Signage, surfacing, lighting, toucan crossing(s) on A274 to connect housing sites to north and south of road and to connect with existing cycle routes through Shepway/Park Wood.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 • KCC • MBC
SEM4	Crossing facilities on A274 near Horseshoes Lane junction to provide sustainable transport access to amenities on housing site H1(10) for residents of Langley/Langley Heath.	Dropped kerbs, tactile paving. Pedestrian refuge or controlled puffin/toucan crossing – details TBC.				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S106 • KCC • MBC

Rural Maidstone Borough

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
RMB1	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Headcorn (and beyond to Biddenden)	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track (A274).				CIL S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Wealden DC • Sustrans
RMB2	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Staplehurst (and beyond to Cranbrook)	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track (A229).				CIL S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Wealden DC • Sustrans
RMB3	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Marden via Coxheath	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track.				CIL S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Sustrans

Walking and Cycling	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
RMB4	Creation of cycle route from Medway Valley towpath to Paddock Wood via Laddingford	Signage, quiet unclassified roads.				CIL S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • TWDC • Sustrans
RMB5	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Sittingbourne via A249 and quiet lanes	Signage, segregated shared use footways, possible toucan crossings.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • Highways England • MBC • Swale BC • Sustrans
RMB6	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Harrietsham/Lenham via A20.	Signage, segregated shared use footways, possible toucan crossings.				CIL S106 Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Sustrans
RMB7	Creation of Maidstone – Tonbridge cycle route via Medway Valley	From Allington Lock northwards. Signage, anticipated mixture of riverside towpath, segregated cycle track and quiet unclassified roads.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • TMBC • Medway Council • Sustrans • Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
RMB8	Creation of “Maidstone Ring” cycle route linking Rural Service Centres and other smaller settlements, e.g. Bredhurst, Wichling, Lenham (via Swale), Headcorn, Staplehurst (via TWDC), Marden, Yalding and via River Medway to Maidstone	Signage, some segregated cycle track, on-street cycle lanes.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • TWDC • Sustrans
RMB9	Coxheath Sustainable Transport Package	TBC – check Neighbourhood Plan New footway link from site H1 (45) to Mill Lane, Coxheath				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC • MBC • Coxheath Parish Council
RMB10	New cycle parking facilities at Marden railway station.	TBC				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC • MBC

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5 – 10 years	Long term > 10 years		
RMB11	Marden Sustainable Transport Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrading of Goudhurst Road zebra crossing to pelican crossing New pedestrian crossing on Church Green Traffic calming measures 				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S106 KCC MBC
RMB12	Harrietsham Sustainable Transport Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pedestrian crossing improvements/traffic calming on A20 Cycle route between railway station and primary school Additional cycle parking at railway station Footway enhancements 				S106 Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC South Eastern Rail Franchisee Harrietsham Parish Council
RMB13	Cycle parking Hollingbourne	Five cycle stands and CCTV				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Eastern Rail Franchisee KCC MBC
RMB14	Improved cycle parking at Headcorn railway station	Installation of shelter over existing cycle hoops.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Eastern Rail Franchisee KCC MBC
RMB15	Headcorn Sustainable Transport Package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crossing improvements at A274 Wheeler Street. Footway link from EMP1(4) to A274, Headcorn 				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC Headcorn Parish Council
RMB16	Lenham Sustainable Transport Package	Traffic calming, pedestrian crossing facilities on Ham Lane and Old Ashford Road				CIL	
RMB17	Staplehurst Rail Station Forecourt Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Footway/crossing improvements on Station Approach Additional cycle parking 				CIL S106 South Eastern Rail Franchisee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Eastern Rail Franchisee Bus Operators
RMB18	Staplehurst Sustainable Transport Package	Package to improve sustainable transport infrastructure to include provision of pedestrian/cycle crossing on Headcorn Road, ped/cycle links to railway station as well as bus infrastructure, reduced speed limit, potential traffic calming				S106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC
RMB19	Yalding Sustainable Transport Package	Further work required to determine specific interventions.				CIL South Eastern Rail Franchisee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KCC MBC South

							<div> <div>Eastern Rail Franchisee</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yalding Parish Council </div>
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STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

01 December 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Objections to Off Street Parking Places Order - Mote Park

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Paul Spooner Interim Director of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Jeff Kitson Parking Services Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee agrees the recommendation in relation to The Borough of Maidstone (Off Street Parking Places) (Variation No7) Order 2015 and agree to make the Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
2. That the committee approves the monitoring of potential displaced parking in roads surrounding Mote Park, following the implementation of the order.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all.
By managing parking demand; improving parking provision for park users; generate revenue to help maintain and improve Mote Park for residents and users; and regulating dangerous and antisocial parking.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee.	13 July 2015
Strategic Planning Sustainability and Transportation Committee.	01 December 2015

Objections to Off Street Parking Places Order - Mote Park

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present to the Committee the results of the recently conducted public consultation in relation to The Borough of Maidstone (Off Street Parking Places) (Variation No7) Order 2015 which formally proposes the introduction of pay and display parking and season ticket parking in Mote Park.
 - 1.2 To enable the Committee to consider the recommendation to approve the sealing of the Parking Places Order.
 - 1.3 To enable the Committee to consider proposals to monitor the roads surrounding Mote Park following the implementation of the order to identify any localised parking problems related to potential displaced parking.
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 13 July 2015 the Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee considered a report entitled Parking Charges in Mote Park. An extract of the Record of Decision shows:

Decision Made

- (1) That parking charges of £1.00 for stays of up to six hours (with no return within two hours) be introduced to Mote Park from 10am every morning;
 - (2) That delegated authority be given to the Parking Services Manager to issue concessions and free parking permits to volunteers of Mote Park Fellowship, community and special interest groups that already pay to use the park (such as Maidstone Victory Angling Club; Big Bang Productions, Cygnet Model Boat club; etc.); park residents; and charitable or community groups (such as Mencap) based on an agreed criteria;
 - (3) That a budget of £87,000 be earmarked for the delivery of the Mote Park parking charges project from the capital programme funding for commercial projects; and
 - (4) That delegated authority is given to the Head of Commercial and Economic Development to spend the budget to implement the proposal to introduce parking charges at Mote Park.
- 2.2 Parking Services were tasked to prepare the statutory notices to formally propose a variation to the Off Street Parking Places Order to introduce parking charges in Mote Park Car Parks and to start the public consultation process.

2.3 A copy of the Public Notice was published in the local press on Friday 16 October 2015 and copies of the Notice were displayed in Mote Park within the areas subject to the order, being the Main Car Park, Overflow Car Park, School Lane Car Park and the Burning Ground Car Park.

2.4 The public notices confirmed the tariff applied as:

Pay and Display

(1) Item	(2) Period	(3) Tariff
1.	Between 10am and 12.00 Midnight Up to 6 hours	£1.00
2.	Between 10am and 12.00 Midnight Over 6 hours	£12.00

Season Tickets (Maidstone residents)

(1) Item	(2) Period	(3) Tariff for All days
1.	Annual	£40.00

2.5 Copies of the proposed Orders and a statement of the Council's reasons for proposing to make the Orders were placed on deposit for public consideration at the Reception Desk, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone and at the Main Reception, County Hall, Maidstone.

2.6 As a result of concerns from Ward Members and other stakeholders, the public consultation was also promoted to the wider community through direct letter delivery to over 700 households in each of the roads surrounding Mote Park to ensure the views of local residents were considered fully as part of the formal public consultation process.

2.7 All comments received during the formal consultation period were reviewed and considered and these are summarised in section 5 of this report with more detailed information within Appendix A.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 To not proceed with the order will result in uncontrolled parking within the park to continue resulting in reduced parking provision for park users and make it difficult to manage antisocial parking. This will also impact on the Council's ability to generate revenue to help maintain and improve Mote Park for residents and users.

3.2 To proceed with the order without considering the views of consultation respondents will not recognise local concerns or allow monitoring of potential displaced parking in roads surrounding Mote Park, following the implementation of the order.

3.3 To proceed with the order and approve the monitoring of potential displaced parking in roads surrounding Mote Park, following the implementation of the order.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The recommended option is to proceed with the order and approve the monitoring of potential displaced parking in roads surrounding Mote Park, following the implementation of the order.
- 4.2 The issue of displaced parking is a concern for some local residents and therefore provision has been made to monitor the impact of parking in surrounding roads following the implementation of the Order if agreed. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to the Waiting Restrictions and Designated Parking Places Orders will be investigated and reported to the Committee in order to manage any displacement.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 22 responses were received with 8 respondents objecting to the proposals and 8 respondents supporting the proposals. 18 consultation respondents also made comment on other related / associated issues.
- 5.2 16 respondents raised concerns about displaced parking in roads adjacent to Mote Park and the potential negative impact on local residents.
- 5.3 Public consultation was promoted in the local press and through public notices. Consultation was further extended to the wider community through direct letter communication. The result of 22 respondents is considered to be low in response to the proposals.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Where agreed The Borough of Maidstone (Off Street Parking Places) (Variation No7) Order 2015 Order will be amended accordingly and sealed by Mid Kent Legal Services.
- 6.2 The 'Has Made' order will be advertised in line with legal requirements set out under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 6.3 The objectors will be informed of the outcome.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all by managing parking demand;	Parking Services

	improving parking provision for park users; generate revenue to help maintain and improve Mote Park for residents and users; and regulating dangerous and antisocial parking.	Manager
Risk Management	Consideration has been given to formal objections letters of support and comments with regard to this proposal.	Parking Services Manager
Financial	The costs of the order variation and implementation will be met from within the existing budget.	Finance Team
Staffing	No implications	
Legal	Formal orders will need to be made and signed by Mid Kent Legal Services.	Kate Jardine, Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	No implications.	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No implications.	
Community Safety	No implications.	
Human Rights Act	No implications.	
Procurement	No implications.	
Asset Management	No implications.	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Public consultation summary.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS


None.

Mote Park
Appendix A

8 Respondents Objected	8 Respondents Supported	18 Respondents Commented on related / associated issues	Total Respondents 22
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Name	Address	Comments	Objection/Support/ Comment	Response
██████	Blythe Road	<p>By telephone call to Head of Commercial and Economic Development. Two principal points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feels the charge is appropriate and at the correct level. 2. Would like disabled parking to be moved closer to the lake. 	Support	<p>This is an important issue and proper consideration will be given to disabled parking during spatial framework planning for the park which is currently ongoing.</p> <p>The disabled bays were moved to their current location for traffic safety reasons.</p>
██████	Elm Grove	<p>By letter to the Parking Services Manager:</p> <p>Concerning the above proposal, as a resident who lives about 200 yards from Mote Park, I have noticed a significant increase this year in the density of traffic around Mote Park Avenue and Willow Way, particularly on Saturday mornings.</p> <p>I do not know whether or not this increase has been caused by the use of Mote Park for 'park and walk' purposes for Saturday morning shoppers, since Mote Park is only a ten minute walk to the town centre, and the designated parking areas in Maidstone for shoppers are unable to cope with what is becoming an unmanageable volume of traffic at peak times.</p>	Objection	<p>A number of points raised in this submission are not directly relevant to the proposed TRO consultation. There are some important points contained within it however. Responses to those points are as follows:</p> <p>The charge is not being proposed to deter commuter parkers or deliver traffic management; it is designed, as one of a range of measures, to raise revenue. This is in response to the reduced funding position the Council faces. Full details can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/mee</p>


		<p>The marketing of Mote Park as a venue for music festivals etc. has no doubt also added to an increased awareness of this facility in the volume of traffic and car parking requirements in and around Mote Park.</p> <p>If traffic parking management in the light of these recent developments is part of the rationale for introducing car parking charges at Mote Park, then a £1 nominal fee will have no impact. If, however, as seems to be the case, the reason for introducing these charges is to raise income for the maintaining of the park facilities, then I am unclear from the proposal why these charges are being proposed now, what shortfall the expected generated revenue (i.e. £30,000) will be able to address, why this shortfall has arisen and why it hasn't been previously anticipated, and what enhancements to the maintenance of Mote Park will result from the anticipated £30,000 to be generated from the introduction of parking fees.</p> <p>I would also query whether £30,000 isn't close to the annual amount of money involved in clearing up the park and the neighbouring streets following the music festivals mentioned above. Certainly following the music concert there was a trail of litter and detritus which covered a wide area from the park to King Street and beyond, which resembled a</p>	<p>tings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>It is not known where the respondent got the £30,000 figure contained within his submission. The financial projections can be found in the above report.</p> <p>The clean-up of events is charged to the organiser. This is either through cleaning companies hired by the owner direct, or re-billing Council assets used to clean-up after an event. Such operations are cost neutral to the Council.</p> <p>The Social Event referred to by the respondent attracted just over 10,500 people, 40% of whom came from the Borough. Residents in roads local to the park took up over 400 free tickets to the event which is calculated to have had a direct positive economic impact to the Borough of over £1,060,000. There were 58 stage 1 complaints received relating to this event. The Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee considered those complaints and issued instructions for future events to mitigate the issues raised by complainants. The report was considered on 3rd November</p>
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		<p>scene of devastation. The Council did very well to clean the streets so quickly; but such an operation must have involved a significant cost.</p> <p>In summary I do not see in the proposal any evidence of a thought-through and analytical process identifying key issues and their solution. All I can see is a statement on the need to raise an additional £30,000 annually (for what exactly?) and the hope that this will do the job.</p> <p>I therefore consider this proposal, on the basis of its lack of clarity and the vagueness of its aims (beyond the raising of a nominal financial figure), to be unfit for purpose, and would suggest further research is carried out into what the community needs from this exceptional facility (beyond the generation of revenue) and how those needs are best met and vouchsafed.</p>		<p>2015 and was entitled 'The Social Festival Review'. The report and Record of Decision can be read at http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2416&Ver=4</p>
	Not stated	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You propose to introduce a charge between 10am and midnight. However the park currently closes at dusk. So, are you proposing to leave the gates open in future so that joy riders can zoom round the park to their hearts content until the bewitching hour of midnight? 2. With the anticipated loss of Maidstone's second 	Comment	<p>A number of points raised in this submission are not directly relevant to the proposed TRO consultation. There are some important points contained within it however. Responses to those points are as follows:</p> <p>No there are no plans to routinely leave the park gates open at night. The midnight timing was designed with future late night events that we</p>

		<p>'Park and Ride', and the huge number of new homes being built in the area, it is reasonable to assume that there will be even more demand for car parking spaces. It seems to us therefore that a £40 season ticket would be unlikely to deter Maidstone commuters from parking in Mote Park.</p> <p>3. What provision are you proposing for drivers "dropping-off" passengers? Would a parent be expected to buy a ticket for the 15 minutes it took to off-load young football enthusiasts, for example?</p> <p>4. A new piece of street furniture has been installed outside our house, stating the parking restrictions in Zone 4. Presumably this is in anticipation of the proposed parking charges. The new post is 50cm taller than the old post by the next parking bay. Yes, 50cm! It is so tall that you need to be able to tilt your head back to a considerable degree to read its message! Other new posts along Blythe Road are a similar height.</p> <p>Not only is it ridiculously tall but it has been placed in the middle of the grass verge, which will be a problem for the mowing gang. Earlier posts were situated on the edge of the asphalt pavement.</p> <p>We would ask that the new posts can be knocked into the ground further so that the lower height is</p>		<p>may wish to hold in mind. This will assist with parking and traffic management.</p> <p>All users of the car park will be expected to pay the appropriate charge. The Parking Services Manager has delegated authority to issue free concessions to community groups (including school sports days) as specified in the report found here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MIId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>With regard to the posts recently installed in Blythe Road, these have been reduced in size and are now consistent with others placed at this location. This was carried out following concerns raised by the resident.</p>
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		consistent throughout the road.		
	Blythe Road	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>As a resident of Blythe Road, I am very concerned that a parking charge will result in increased traffic and parking on our road; plenty of cars already use our drive to turn around instead of using the turning circle at the end, and having young children this is not ideal, and increased traffic would no doubt result in more of this.</p> <p>Also, I would object to any weekend charges especially (surely not needed at weekends if the parking 'problem' is commuters?) as I'm convinced a lot of people would park in roads close to the park to avoid the charges, however small these charges were. What about our visitors or tradesmen? If our road is full, there is not a lot of alternative parking for them nearby, just a little on Square Hill, which is already usually full.</p> <p>In my opinion, commuters using the park may only be a real problem in the busy summer holidays, and if this is such a large problem, why are you forcing people into town centre car parks, when on the other hand you want to cut town centre traffic congestion? We are continually being told by the Government and Department of Health to walk</p>	Objection	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The charge is not being proposed to deter commuter parkers; it is designed, as one of a range of measures, to raise revenue. This is in response to the reduced funding position the Council faces. Full details can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The Council is promoting active travel as a theme of Maidstone's Integrated Transport Strategy, which is currently being developed with Kent County Council and will be available for consultation in the New Year. This includes measures which will encourage people away from car use.</p>

		more, get off the bus a stop early etc, so perhaps these commuters are just taking this advice to heart!		
	Mote Avenue	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>Having considered this proposal, we have the following comments to make:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We agree, in principle, with the idea to make a car parking charge at Mote Park but with the provision that any income generated from this should be ring-fenced for the benefit of Mote Park and not put back into the Council's General Fund or to subsidise other Council Services. 2. We do have concerns that the introduction of a £1.00 charge from 10.00 a.m. to Midnight will result in some users of the park using the surrounding areas (i.e. the streets) to park their cars, which will be to the detriment of local residents. Living immediately outside Mote Park, we already experience problems with some inconsiderate users who park their vehicles outside our property and even in front of our driveway. The latter has happened on two occasions this year and both times the people have been in the park when it was closed. We can see that the introduction of a charge may increase this further as people find alternative places to park their vehicles to escape paying this 	Support / Comment	<p>Full details of the allocation of revenue can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The issue of the free parking period was considered carefully by HCL. Analysis of the pattern of use of the car parks showed that extending the free period of parking beyond 08:00 to 10:00 would likely make the scheme unviable due to difficulties with enforcement.</p>

		<p>charge.</p> <p>3. To help prevent the above, one suggestion could be to make the first 2 hours free of charge after which the £1.00 fee could be charged (this could even be increased to £2.00). This would allow those who wish to use the park for a short period of time, e.g. dog walkers, access without having to pay the fee, whilst still providing an income from those who wish to park longer, e.g. commuters. This would hopefully help to prevent parking in the surrounding area.</p>		
	Blyth Road	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>We are concerned at this proposal as we live in a road very close to the main entrance to Mote Park. Although this road is a cul-de-sac there is a pedestrian alley leading from the end of the road to the entrance to Mote Park.</p> <p>Charging for car parking in Mote Park is likely to lead to increased pressure for parking in local roads, including our road. Currently our road has single yellow lines on the northern side and around the head of the cul-de-sac which prevent parking between 8 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. on Mondays to Saturdays. The southern side of the road mostly has parking bays (zone S4). The residents' parking scheme restricts parking in these bays between 8</p>	Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p>

		<p>a.m. and 6.30 p.m. on Mondays to Saturdays to holders of S4 residents' parking permits or visitors' parking permits, with non-permit holders allowed to park for 2 hours with no return within 2 hours. We as local residents have to pay an annual fee for a resident's parking permit and/or a visitor's permit.</p> <p>If the charging proposals are introduced in Mote Park it is quite likely that some non-residents will be prepared to park in local roads on weekdays to avoid the charge whilst visiting Mote Park, but they would at least be restricted to two hours. However, non-residents visiting the park will be a particular problem on Sundays and Bank Holidays which are always popular days for visiting the Park. There is no limit on the time that vehicles without permits can park in our road on these days. On Sundays and Bank Holidays non-resident park users will therefore be able to park at any time on both sides of our road, on the single yellow lines and in the residents' parking bays. This could not only lead to the residents' bays being filled up by visitors to the park but with no restriction on parking on the yellow lines on the other side of the road on these days there could be obstruction of traffic in our road.</p> <p>We therefore raise concerns at the impact on our road of charging motorists to park in Mote Park and we particularly ask that parking charges should not</p>		
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		apply in Mote Park on Sundays and Bank Holidays.		
	Meadow Walk	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>I am writing to express my concern about the proposed plan to introduce car parking charges in Mote Park and the implications for local residents. We live in Meadow Walk, a residential street close to the main entrance of Mote Park.</p> <p>I have read the report about the proposed car parking charges that was prepared by Marcus Lawler and presented to the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24th March 2015 and the details of the Lake Market Research report dated 22nd December 2014 and would like to make several points.</p> <p>The market research was completed by sending questionnaires to residents of the wider Maidstone community. There was no attempt to canvas the opinions of the residents in the local streets surrounding the Park who would be most affected by the changes. While being regular users of the park (several times a week) we were not approached when using the park or made aware of the plans for the parking when the research was taking place. The views of the local residents should have been addressed particularly given the findings of the report.</p> <p>Marcus Lawler's report makes a clear statement in paragraph 1. 7. 1 that " the issue of the impact to</p>	Objection / Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The issue of funding our parks and open spaces is a Borough wide issue as it is paid for, partly through local taxation. The market research therefore included a representative sample which reflects the demographic of the Borough and over 1,300 responses were received from residents. In addition over 1,000 park users were questioned on this and various other issues. Residents local to the park have had the opportunity to comment through the recent consultation which has been advertised on the Council's websites; through social media; and by means of a letter delivered to every home in the area around the park. 22 responses to the consultation have been received.</p> <p>Potentially there may be an increase</p>

		<p>local residents through a possible displacement of parking into surrounding areas is a potential major issue" He goes on to state that there could be up to 901 cars displaced onto surrounding streets if there was a free hour followed by a £1 charge for parking. Even accepting this could be a maximum number, half that figure would still have a major impact on surrounding streets. I am unhappy that the council has gone ahead with their decision to introduce parking charges despite their knowledge that this would be a major issue to local residents.</p> <p>I have not been able to view the details of the street parking changes due to work commitments but I understand that the council hopes to address this by changing the local parking restrictions. Currently we have 2 hours unrestricted parking Monday to Saturday with unlimited parking for residents with permits. This works effectively although we do struggle with parking when there are large events held in the park. To prevent park users parking in our street it would have to be restricted to one hour's free parking and include Sunday as well. This will have a serious impact on residents being able to have visitors if they are restricted to one hours parking. We would find this particularly difficult on Sunday's when we often have friends and family visit for lunch. These changes will force me to buy a visitors permit (£50 in our case as we already have 2 residents permits) and I can then only have one visitor permit. We will be penalised if new street parking restrictions are introduced or struggle with park users parking in our street if restrictions are not</p>		<p>in charges in the future. The Council's Fees and Charges Policy enables proposed changes to be considered by elected members as they become necessary.</p>
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		<p>put in place.</p> <p>The inevitable response to this would be for residents to concrete over their front gardens. We have already lost front gardens in the street to provide additional parking. These proposed changes would accelerate the loss of front gardens. It is recognised that there is a detrimental environmental impact by homeowners paving over their gardens.</p> <p>What really worries me about this plan is that it is the thin edge of the wedge. Of course people are not going to be that concerned when they are being asked about a £1 charge for up to six hours parking and I am not surprised that many people were comfortable with the plan. However once the infrastructure for parking charges are in place it will be easy for these to be increased. What is £1 now will then be £2, £3 or even £5 in a few years time. I am sure there will be assurances that this will kept at £1 for a time limited period but I have little confidence in this being maintained in the longer term. An election, a new council, more costs and the parking charges will be increased, it is "low hanging fruit" an easy option to bring in more revenue. Higher charges will further push people into local streets to find cheaper options to park.</p> <p>I am also concerned about the costs of enforcing any changes on local parking restrictions. This could impact on a large number of local streets with significant additional enforcement costs.</p>		
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		<p>Finally I wish to express my view that the basic principle of charging for the use of the park is wrong. The park belongs to the people of Maidstone and it should be free to use. We should be avoiding anything that deters people and especially families with young children or those on low incomes who need the opportunity more than anyone to access open space and fresh air.</p> <p>In conclusion it is my view that the plans to charge for parking in Mote Park are wrong, that they should be scrapped and that the Council should be exploring other options to gain revenue for the park.</p>		
■■■■■	Birch Tree Way	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>I note with interest your letter concerning the charging for car parking in Mote Park. Apart from a news story in the local free paper this is the first official notification I have had which seems strange considering the Council have supposedly carried out wide ranging market research in 2014. With whom has this been done, certainly not the local residents who will undoubtedly be affected by this!</p> <p>Parking in Mote Park has always been an issue and is now more so since its popularity has risen since the revamping with lottery money. My concern is that by charging for the parking, even if it is only a £1, will make those people unwilling to pay for parking, park in roads nearby. I live in one of those roads, Birch Tree Way and can say that I fear the consequence of this policy.</p>	Support / Comment	<p>The issue of funding our parks and open spaces is a Borough wide issue as it is paid for through local taxation. The market research therefore included a representative sample which reflects the demographic of the Borough and over 1,300 responses were received from residents. In addition over 1,000 park users were questioned on this and various other issues. Residents local to the park have had the opportunity to comment through the recent consultation which has been advertised on the Council's websites; in the press; through social media; and by means of a letter delivered to every home in the area around the park. 22 responses to the consultation have been received.</p>

		<p>It is clear when mass events like charity runs etc. and concerts are held that people decide to park outside the park and walk in. This causes massive issues with residents and guests unable to park outside their own homes and other issues with litter and noise. The 'Social Event' held recently is a classic example of noise and litter and disturbance to residents late at night! The Council are happy to accept the event and the money it brings, but not deal with any consequences these events bring.</p> <p>I cannot see what reassurance the council can give residents that the local roads will not be occupied by people going to the park? How can the Council, if they are inclined to, going to stop this from happening? The residents parking scheme doesn't operate on Sundays, when the park is normally at its busiest and most residents are at home and have guests. I can see that this will be a nightmare for locals and lead to conflict with people legally parking their cars in the local streets!</p> <p>I welcome that the monies raised from this policy, which will I'm sure go ahead anyway, will be spent on the park.</p> <p>How will the Council demonstrate that this is the case? I hope clear accounts of monies raised and monies spent and on what are made public for the people of Maidstone to interrogate. I fear that any money will just be swallowed up in the general budget. ALL monies raised MUST go to the park and</p>		<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>Full details of the allocation of revenue can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The Council's accounts are a public record and residents can inspect them in the usual way.</p> <p>The above report shows that the introduction of parking charges is one of a range of measures designed to protect and improve the park. The Council will be refurbishing the existing café from 23rd November to 9th December 2015. In addition planning is underway to replace the café building with an iconic new visitor centre and café in 2017.</p>
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		it's up keep! I hope any plans for the park will be consulted on. I also hope the café planned is of a better standard than the greasy spoon we have at present!		
██████	Not stated	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>Having received the notice regarding parking charges, what will clearly happen is that once people have been in and had to pay once, it will be down to the local residents to bear the brunt of people abandoning cars around the local streets to avoid paying for parking if they go into mote park. This will cause more noise pollution, antisocial parking, increased traffic flow, stress and hazardous situations for local families and children to already overcrowded local streets with cars.</p> <p>This is an absolute fact to what will happen and the council are kidding themselves that it will not be this way.</p> <p>With regard to possible raised revenues for multi million pound projects in the park, If they think the minimal income from the park will boost projects is a complete fantasy. It will more than likely barely cover the cost of running the machine paying and money collection contracts.</p>	Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>Full details of the financial projections can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p>
██████	Birch Tree Way	<p>By email to Cllr. Perry:</p> <p>I just wanted to therefore write to you as your name was mentioned as a supporter of the Mote Park</p>	Support / Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the</p>

		<p>charging initiative to say that I am in favour of more money being put into the park and think that the £1 charge for 6 hours is adequate. However, me and my husband live in Birch Tree Way - very near the main entrance to Mote Park and we fear that more people will be looking to park on our road (and Greenside) if the car parking charges are put in place. Our road currently operates permit parking Monday to Saturday but anyone can park in the allocated bays for up to 2 hours free. On Sundays there are no restrictions.</p> <p>I do feel strongly that, if car parking charges are introduced at Mote Park, then it is only respectful to also review the current parking restrictions in the adjacent roads. We already have people parking on Greenside who visit the Maidstone Mosque and who do not want to pay for parking either in the short term car park nearby nor in the Chequers Centre car park so I do believe that some people who want to visit Mote Park and find that they have to pay will be looking to local roads as an alternative.</p> <p>I think that the parking bays on Birch Tree Way and Greenside should be mainly for residents that already pay for parking permits as well as their visitors and should be able to easily find parking near their homes!! What I would suggest is that, if car parking charges were introduced at Mote Park, that</p>		<p>impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p>
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
		<p>the parking down Birch Tree Way and Greenside should be permit parking Monday - Sunday all day! It does not make sense to introduce a new parking scheme in the Park without reviewing the parking schemes nearby.</p> <p>I therefore ask that this is conducted and changes put in place to protect nearby residents. We also find that there have been occasions on a Sunday where people have parked at the end of our drive and blocked our way. We already have people parking down our roads who attend the rugby and cricket grounds - please do not make this worse by forgetting about the residents when making decisions about parking at Mote Park!</p>		
	Blythe Road	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>As a long-time resident of Blythe Road, I would like to raise the following points:</p> <p>The car-parking situation in this area is already at breaking point with the huge number of cars filling our streets, especially at weekends. Overflow from Square Hill residents and Sunningdale Court in Ashford Road makes it worse. There is rarely any space in Blythe Road for non-residents. So introducing a charge for Mote Park would probably have no impact on the situation already in place.</p>	Support / Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The Burning Ground car park is for the users of the park and not visitors to Mote House. We hope that the introduction of the proposed charge will encourage Audley Homes to make</p>

		<p>This leads to an observation on the present situation. As it so cheap to purchase a second and third parking permit for residents, there is nothing to stop people buying extra permits and 'selling them on' to anybody who asks. We have been approached by students at nearby schools looking for car parking facilities. Permits should only be issued after stringent checks, and patrols should be undertaken much more regularly to locate cars parking illegally. Perhaps there should be a more geographical restriction on parking zones – residents and their visitors should surely be able to park in their own road! Large vans should not be allowed to park up for the whole weekend, taking up space for 2 cars.</p> <p>It must surely have been noticed that most of the roads have single yellow lines protecting one side. Once park visitors realise that these restrictions are not valid on Sundays, our roads run the risk of being filled to a dangerous level by parking on both sides of the road. The impact on residents would definitely be enormous, and emergency vehicles would have restricted access.</p> <p>I often use the Burning Ground car-park near Willington Street Park and Ride when I visit Mote House; would there be special arrangements for my situation? There is not enough parking at Mote</p>		<p>proper provision for parking for their residents and visitors.</p>
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		<p>House for visitors.</p> <p>On the whole, I am in favour of introducing the car-park charge, BUT only if double yellow lines are added to local streets in the interests of residents' safety and if more effort is made by the council to regulate the potentially disastrous impact of too many cars in central Maidstone. I think £1 is a reasonable sum and park-users would be happy to contribute towards the upkeep and improvement of this valuable resource.</p>		
	Blythe Road	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>Further to your letter of 16th October 2015, there can be no objection to a modest charge of this kind to raise funds 'to protect current standards of the park'.</p> <p>The secondary motive of deterring commuters from parking will, however, simply shift the problem to local streets. Policing of controlled parking areas by wardens is woefully inadequate anyway, but just as important is the fact that, for £25 a year, town centre residents can purchase (and sell on) visitor parking permits. Given the many hundreds (if not thousands) of new residents in the town centre without parking spaces but with the right to purchase 3 parking permits each for use in surrounding roads, our area is already very</p>	Support / Comment	<p>The charge is not being proposed to deter commuter parkers; it is designed, as one of a range of measures, to raise revenue. This is in response to the reduced funding position the Council faces. Full details can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>Provision for extra enforcement for this proposed TRO can be found within the report.</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should</p>

		<p>congested. It will reach saturation point if this scheme goes ahead.</p> <p>I believe that the council's Resident Parking Permit system as a whole needs to be re-examined. I suggest:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Residents Parking system should ensure that people who actually live in a street (and their visitors) are given priority by changing the area allocation system to a street-by-street basis, or else: 2) The cost of parking permits should be increased significantly (I would suggest £200.00 a year per vehicle). This could raise more revenue for the council and/or encourage drivers to use official car parks. It would also allow a much more robust penalty to be introduced to deter commuter parking in Mote Park without causing problems for local residents. Perhaps some of the revenue could be used for better control of illegal parking? 3) You should also consider changing the rules for large commercial vans which are often parked overnight and at weekends in residents' bays taking up at least two parking spaces despite meeting your GVW regulations. 		<p>there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls which will include resident parking permit concession arrangements will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p>
	Not stated	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>I use Mote Park daily in order to walk my dog I feel it</p>	Objection / Comment	<p>The charge is not being proposed to deter commuter parkers; it is designed, as one of a range of</p>

		<p>unfair that I would now be charged a £1 every time I wished to park there, whilst I understand you wanting to deter commuters I feel this would deter frequent users much more.</p> <p>If you could perhaps implement a ticket that gave free parking for stays less than 3 hours this would resolve both problems.</p> <p>If you are not willing to do this I see no other option but to park in the residential permit areas adjacent which will no doubt cause uproar with the local residents.</p> <p>I also feel that £40 per year is far too much to park at a public rec especially when residential permits are £25 per annum.</p>		<p>measures, to raise revenue. This is in response to the reduced funding position the Council faces. Full details can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The issue of the free parking period was considered carefully by HCL. Analysis of the pattern of use of the car parks showed that extending the free period of parking beyond 08:00 to 10:00 would likely make the scheme unviable due to difficulties with enforcement.</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>A £40 per annum season ticket is in line with other major parks in the Borough; enables the generation of a sufficient contribution to support the open spaces budget; and equates to</p>
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				10.96p a day for residents.
	Birch Tree Way	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>I can't believe the total disregard to local Mote Park residents once again.</p> <p>When there is an event in Mote Park there are always non-residents using the restricted parking bays and get away with parking longer than the restriction because there are no or not enough parking wardens on duty or so it seems. Revellers also leaving the area with rubbish etc.: in the streets.</p> <p>So now with the new proposed parking charges, anyone not wanting to pay for a short stay in the park will think about parking outside the park and walking to the park thus using residential parking areas making it more difficult for residents to park.</p> <p>What about the residents who pay for parking permits and for those who also pay extra for guest permits in what is already a restricted parking area close to the park?</p> <p>We are already short of parking close to the park and when the restricted times are due (16:30 with 2 hours) and finished there is no restrictions, therefore</p>	Objection / Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls which will include resident parking permit concession arrangements will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee has recently considered complaints received in respect of events within Mote Park and issued instructions for future events to mitigate the issues raised by complainants. A report was considered on 3rd November 2015 and was entitled 'The Social Festival Review'. The report and Record of Decision can be read at http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MIId=2416&Ver=4</p>

		<p>on Sundays and after 18:30 in the evening anybody can park for as long as they want.</p> <p>The attraction of free parking and a short walk for “a Sunday afternoon in the park” for families will inevitably lead to more cars parking in the area.</p> <p>Birch Tree Way already gets used as a "race track" cut through when there is a tail back from town and drivers think they can beat any queue and join at the bottom of Mote Park Road and when there is an event we gets cars cruising round looking for a spot.</p> <p>There are more children now living in the area and the thought of more vehicles on the small side roads on this side of Mote Park is intolerable.</p> <p>I think this could also turn off some regulars like, say, dog walkers that take the car into the park and then walk the dog thus, maybe parking locally or not using the park at all.</p>		
	Blythe Road	<p>By email to Parking Consultation:</p> <p>We live in Blythe Road, so 5 minutes’ walk from Mote Park. We have no problem with the proposed parking charges as such, but fear that this change is likely to aggravate a problem we suffer of parking in our road by park visitors. At present it occurs significantly only occasionally when there is a special event in the park. It could well be that people may</p>	Support / Comment	The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls which will include resident parking permit concession

		<p>seek to escape the charges by parking in roads nearby and weekends and holidays in particular could become difficult. Our house, no. [REDACTED], is situated [REDACTED] and problem parkers use the reversing bays and the grassed areas and cause difficulties in access for residents and potentially emergency vehicles. Wardens are rare in our road and do not apparently patrol the slip road at all, so it falls to residents to take their own actions. We recommend that parking in nearby roads is given extra consideration in your planning and steps be taken to ensure as far as possible that residents are not inconvenienced.</p>		<p>arrangements will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>Blythe Road receives regular visit from the parking enforcement team as this forms part of the town centre beat. However as a result of concerns raised the Civil Enforcement Officers will be asked to pay particular attention to this area in an effort to reduce instances of inconsiderate parking.</p>
[REDACTED]	MBC	<p>By email to the Parking Services Manager:</p> <p>I have had a quick look at the proposed notice re parking charges in Mote Park and wondered if there should be clarification regarding the Annual pass as there is no reference to the 6 hour time limit. £40 for an annual pass for in excess of six hours is a pretty good deal!</p>	Comment	<p>The decision of HCL was to allow a £40 concession pass for UP TO 6 hours a day. The Committee felt this would allow regular users cheap access to the park but would not be long enough for commuter parkers to utilise Mote Park's car parks for their purposes. This decision was taken after considering the analysis of car park use.</p>
[REDACTED]	Birch Tree Way	<p>By letter to the Head of Commercial and Economic Development:</p> <p>I think a small charge to park in the car park is a good decision. My worry is the parking outside the park. The last concert in the park all the streets around us had no parking signs. I live in Birch Tree</p>	Support / Comment	<p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for</p>

		<p>Way and we didn't have those signs. We have yellow lines but they don't count on weekends and cars were parked on the corners near the main road which made it quite dangerous to get off our drives this end of the road. It would help if the corners could have double yellow lines. It would make it much safer.</p>		<p>the committee to consider.</p> <p>If dangerous parking on junctions is observed following a variation to the parking places order, Kent County Council will be approached as the Highway Authority to revise corner projection restrictions to ensure that driver sightlines are maintained at junctions.</p>
<p>█</p>	<p>Grasslands, Langley</p>	<p>By letter to the parking Services Manager:</p> <p>Maidstone Council's placing a tax on exercise. This is in direct opposition to the policy of National Government to reduce obesity, ill health and depression and the associated huge costs to the NHS. I refer to the public space of Mote ark in Maidstone and your plan to charge for access.</p> <p>About 2 years ago the park benefited from improvements funded by the National Lottery and the car parking facilities were enlarged. For the vast majority of people car transport represents the only practical way of accessing the park. The success of the improvements has been self-evident with a large increase in the number of people walking in the park every day, most of whom arrive by car as witnessed by the nearly full car parks every daily. For this achievement MBC is to be congratulated. Now this achievement is to be undone by a very ill-conceived</p>	<p>Objection / Comment</p>	<p>A number of points raised in this submission are not directly relevant to the proposed TRO consultation. There are some important points contained within it however. Responses to those points are as follows:</p> <p>There is no plan to charge for access to Mote Park, only to use the car parks.</p> <p>The Council is promoting active travel as a theme of Maidstone's Integrated Transport Strategy, which is currently being developed with Kent County Council and will be available for consultation in the New Year. This includes measures which will encourage people to use alternatives to the car.</p> <p>Maidstone Borough Council promotes</p>

		<p>tax on access imposed by MBC in the form of parking charges.</p> <p>I object to the levy of a parking tax as a disincentive to taking exercise in a public park.</p> <p>I object to the use of lottery funding to create a business for profit, as is clearly the case here.</p> <p>I object to the premature construction of a gating structure at the entrance to Mote Park in early October. This was a clear commitment to implement parking charges before the consultation process had even started on 16 October 2015 and finishing 11 November 2015.</p> <p>I object to the restriction of access to a public park, especially at a time when a huge amount of housing construction in the area will further erode access to countryside for exercise.</p> <p>Please reverse your decision to charge for parking in Mote Park or otherwise please reply with your answers to each of my objections. There are other means of raising money without acting to damage public health and happiness and without acting in opposition to the policies of parliament.</p>		<p>physical and mental well-being through a wide range of initiatives in the Borough. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Walk with over 30 walkers a week in attendance in Mote Park. There is also another walk which from time to time uses the park. • A Dementia Friendly walk in the park. • We commission a weight management programme which is delivered at Maidstone Leisure Centre • Exercise Referral programme. • Match Fit – Men’s fitness programme run at Maidstone Utd by Wellbeing People • Go For It – Family and Children’s Weight Management programme. • Falls Prevention Services – Gentle exercise classes • Let’s Get Fizzical – Engages overweight and inactive children and young people aged 8-14 in sport, building their confidence and enjoyment. • Walking for Health – 3 walks in Maidstone (including the Mote Park walk) and 3 in Lenham. We are also looking to start at least 3 more in the Maidstone Borough over the next 6 months.
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				<p>Maintaining Mote Park (and our other open spaces) against budgetary pressures is critical to delivering this programme.</p> <p>The 2012 refurbishment project was paid for by Maidstone Borough Council with Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) match funding. The HLF indicate that the proposed parking charge is, in their view appropriate to help maintain it. No 'profit' is being generated. The proposal is about balancing HCL's budget in light of reduced funding; thereby maintaining and improving the park for residents and visitors.</p> <p>The decision to put the access control measures on the main gate to Mote Park is nothing to do with the proposal to implement a TRO. As the park has become busier incidents of parkers inadvertently staying after the gates have closed has increased. Sending an out of hours' responder to each incident to let them out of the park costs the Council about £50. This measure has allowed the out gate to be kept open and still maintained control over access.</p>
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	Hereford Road	<p>By letter to the Parking Services Manager:</p> <p>I would like to register my objection to the proposal to implement parking charges at the School Lane car park.</p> <p>I have lived in Maidstone for over 20 years and use Mote Park on a daily basis to exercise my dog. As I work a 24/7 shift pattern I use the car park at all times throughout the day. I am amongst a large number of residents who enjoy the use of the car park in School Lane, I regularly meet or see the same people making use of the park not only to exercise dogs but to use the children's play area or as a starting point for their own exercise.</p> <p>My objection to this proposal is as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The car park at School Lane is a long way from the town; people do not park there and walk into town. It's just too far for most people to even consider. As a police officer I class myself as a fairly observant person; I don't ever recall seeing people parking up and walking into town. Those people will use the car parks at the Leisure Centre. 2. The proposed tariffs are restricted to two time bands, up to 6 hours and over 6 hours. Every person I see using this car park stays for a relatively short period, usually an hour or two. The pricing band 	Objection / Comments	<p>The charge is not being proposed to deter commuter parkers; it is designed, as one of a range of measures, to raise revenue. This is in response to the reduced funding position the Council faces. Full details can be found in the relevant report and record of decision here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>The proposal includes provision for a free hour of parking and in addition no charge will be levied before 10:00 daily. The issue of the free parking period was considered carefully by HCL. Analysis of the pattern of use of the car parks showed that extending the free period of parking beyond 1 hour would make the scheme financially unviable.</p> <p>The park will be open from 08:00 daily should the charge be approved. This will give regular users of the park a regular, free 2 hour period of parking to enjoy the park.</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the</p>
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		<p>does not take this factor into account and is clearly fixed to attract more money from residents on top of our council taxes.</p> <p>3. The park is free to use, so I believe there is a fair chance that people will either not pay the fee or will simply park on School Lane. Unless the Council is proposing to introduce parking restrictions on School Lane this will just add to the congestion along School Lane. This road is used by a lot of vehicles throughout the day as a cut through from Willington Street as I'm sure you are aware.</p> <p>4. The proposal from a crime prevention perspective the scheme is ill thought out. School Lane car park is remote, I assume the parking machines will be put in and these will be cash operated. Unless these are emptied on a nightly basis they will be an easy target for thieves. Not only will the council lose any revenue accrued but the damage caused would be an unnecessary drain of our money. In the past the park has suffered from vandalism to the facilities, it's been used to dump and burn out stolen vehicles, unattended cash machines will be an easy target for thieves and vandals.</p> <p>I believe that the proposed charges for the School Lane car park are ill conceived, a waste of council money and most definitely not in the interests of</p>		<p>impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>We consider that the likelihood of vehicle abandonment and/or burning is unaffected by the decision to implement this proposal, or not. This is an uncommon occurrence and we only have record of two such incidents in the last five years.</p> <p>Vandalism and theft from pay-and-display machines is rare, however this must be considered as part of the proposals. Provision for maintenance and replacement has been made within the financial projections for the report considered by HCL. There is an extension to the Council's daily cash collection service available and the cost of this has been considered in the financial projections.</p>
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		those who use the park.		
██████	Blythe Road	<p>By letter to the Chief Executive:</p> <p>I am in receipt of a letter from Ms Dawn Hudd, Head of Commercial and Economic Development, dated 16th October. In her letter which is addressed to the occupier and commences Dear Resident, two terms which I abhor, I am advised to comment on the proposals outlined in her letter by writing to the Parking Services Manager. His or her name is not given so it would be difficult to write to him or her would it not? One cannot repose any confidence whatever in the competence of Ms Hudd is she omits the name of the person one should write to. I therefore write to you.</p> <p>In the first instance you know perfectly well who the householder is at this residence. A glance at the voter register would inform you or any of your officers so do not address me as The Occupier or Dear Resident. I, like all other householders, have a name. Please use it.</p> <p>I have read the proposal. What Mrs ██████ and I wish to know is what arrangements the Borough intend putting in place to safeguard the parking in this and neighbouring roads. If a charge is introduced it is in the course of human nature to avoid it if possible. Whenever there is one of the unfortunate social</p>	Comment	<p>It is a matter of regret that the respondent felt aggrieved at being addressed as 'Resident'. However the costs associated with individually addressed and named letters needed to be considered.</p> <p>The issue of displaced parking is an important issue and therefore provision has been made in the operational projections to monitor the impact in surrounding roads. Should there prove to be a negative impact on local residents, alterations to on-street controls will be investigated for the committee to consider.</p> <p>The Social Event referred to by the respondent attracted just over 10,500 people, 40% of whom came from the Borough. Residents in roads local to the park took up over 400 free tickets to the event which is calculated to have had a direct positive economic impact to the Borough of over £1,060,000. There were 58 stage 1 complaints received relating to this event. The Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee considered those complaints and issued instructions for future events to mitigate the issues</p>

		<p>events authorised by the Borough to take place within the boundary of Mote Park this and neighbouring roads become a car park. I do not care for vehicles parked with two wheels on the pavement outside our home. Possibly you do not mind it. This is what will happen if the Borough introduces the charge without some safeguard to the restricted parking authorised in this road. I hope this matter will be addressed. Unless the Borough acts sensibly this and neighbouring roads will be blighted by unwanted parking. Needless to say I am not sanguine that anything sensible will be done to ensure what I have outlined does not happen.</p> <p>It is a matter of regret that one has to address you personally but you should ensure that your subordinate officers prepare their letters properly.</p>		<p>raised by complainants. The report was considered on 3rd November 2015 and was entitled 'The Social Festival Review'. The report and Record of Decision can be read at http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2416&Ver=4</p>
	Not stated	<p>By email to the Chief Executive:</p> <p>A document was placed in my mail box this week entitled "Consultation on a proposal to introduce car park charges in Mote Park" which after reading is clearly not a consultation document or a proposal. (Copy Attached)</p> <p>The document is a missive stating what MBC, have already decided will happen regarding parking in Mote Park, what the parking fees will be, the times</p>	Objection	<p>A number of points raised in this submission are not directly relevant to the proposed TRO consultation. There are some important points contained within it however. Responses to those points are as follows:</p> <p>The respondent is correct that this proposal is about generating revenue. The current funding regime the Council is faced with means there are significant pressures on its Parks and Open Spaces budgets. As these are</p>

		<p>they will apply and when they will come into operation, without council tax payer consultation in any form what so ever.</p> <p>I believe that MBC is again looking to use the motorist as a cash cow, using every excuse in the book to try to justify the charge.</p> <p>Needless to say, I am against parking fees of any kind in Mote Park. The park is there for the enjoyment of all townspeople, paid for in their Council Tax.</p> <p>Town Centre Parking & Park & Ride</p> <p>Maidstone town centre shops and restaurants are always complaining about loss of business to out of town malls. May I suggest that MBC seriously investigate scrapping parking fees and park and ride fees, in the town. This will then offer shoppers what the out of town malls offer their customers.</p> <p>It could be tried for a trial period of say, one year, and if successful, extended. I am of the belief that the additional shoppers it would attract, would more than compensate for the loss of fees. MBC would attract more business rates and the town centre empty shops would disappear. A win / win situation.</p>		<p>non-statutory services they are most at risk from cuts should measures not be taken to ease financial pressures. As the respondent submits, the parks are not free and are partly paid for by residents, so the alternative to cuts or revenue generation is a rise in Council Tax. More details can be found in the report 'Parking Charges in Mote Park' considered by HCL on 13th July 2015 can be found here: http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=581&MId=2483&Ver=4</p> <p>Free parking has been trailed by some local authorities and this has resulted in a significant increase in commuter parking. In turn this has the effect of reducing parking availability for visitors which will impact directly on the prosperity of town centre businesses.</p>
	Kent	By email to the Parking Services Manager:		

	Constabulary	<p>Kent Police have no specific observations to make regarding these proposals, however in general terms we would expect the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application meets the necessary criteria. • The introduction of new signage complies in all respect with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002. • The introduction of such measures will not leave the Police with the task of carrying out constant enforcement issues such as obstruction by transferring the problem to other areas. • The safety of other road users is not compromised by the introduction of these measures.. 	Comment	<p>These points have been considered as part of the formal proposals.</p>
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Agenda Item 16

Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transport Committee

**1st December
2015**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transport Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Chris Berry, Interim Team Leader, Spatial Policy
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	Harrietsham and Lenham; Headcorn; Leeds; North Downs; Sutton Valence and Langley;

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the Committee approves this report as the basis for formal representations on the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015) according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012; and
2. That the Committee agrees the Council's consultation responses to the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015) in paragraph 3 below which are described in more detail in paragraphs 2.15 to 2.24 this report.
3. That the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Development Plan (October 2015):
 - a) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 except with regard to the allocation of a significant development proposal of twenty (20) units outside the village boundary of Kingswood;
 - b) has been assessed, at this stage, to not require Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment;
 - c) is in general conformity with the adopted policies of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 apart from the following specific policies of the Local Plan:
 - Local Plan Policy ENV28 - Development in the Countryside: NP Policy VG1- Village Green and Enabling Development - in that the

Neighbourhood Plan allocates a site which includes 20 dwellings in the countryside. The village envelope would necessarily extend beyond the settlement boundary defined on the Local Plan Proposals Map in order to accommodate new proposals for the village which extend to 2031. The Submission Neighbourhood Plan is not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as a proposal for market housing development encroaches into the countryside.

- The Neighbourhood Plan and the level of community engagement identified attempt to explain the development of housing in this location but there is no evidence base which justifies this scale of development. NP Policy VG1 also notes that: "The proposal may also include a mixed-use community building" which does not bind the provision to the housing proposed, so community benefits may not be achieved.
- Local Plan Policy H1 – Housing Land Allocations: None of the housing allocations in the Local Plan are located in Broomfield and Kingswood but the Submission Neighbourhood Plan allocates a site which includes 20 dwellings for the period to 2031 and is thus technically not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as substantial (more than ten units) market housing development is proposed outside the settlements in which the Local Plan allocates housing development.
- Local Plan Policy H27 – Rural Settlements (Minor Development): The adopted Local Plan identifies Kingswood as appropriate only for minor development, which includes limited infill development. The Submission Neighbourhood Plan is not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as it allocates a site which represents more than minor development outside the village boundary of Kingswood.
- The Submission Neighbourhood Plan and the level of community engagement identified provide an explanation for the development of housing but there is no evidence base similar to that used in the Local Plan which clearly justifies the scale of development in this location. As noted in para. 2.17, the Submission Neighbourhood Plan notes that a mixed use building may be provided but this is not included in the proposal.
- Local Plan Policy T21 – Accessibility of New Development: NP Policy VG1 seeks a single point of access and a footpath linking Gravelly Bottom Road within the site to the landscape strip to the south. The access point has been amended during the evolution of this plan and no evidence is presented that the current proposal is acceptable to the Local Highway Authority and the Neighbourhood Plan may not be in general conformity with the Local Plan in this respect.
- Local Plan Policy T23 – Need for Highway/Public Transport Improvements: NP Policy VG1 no longer seeks off-site proposals related to traffic calming and three pedestrian crossings and no evidence is presented that the current proposal is acceptable to the Local Highway Authority and the Submission Neighbourhood Plan may not be in general conformity in this respect.
- Adopted Open Space DPD Policy OS1: NP Policy VG1 allocates a site which includes at least one hectare of public open space (which must

include a children's play area) to serve 20 dwellings. In quantitative terms, this would more than meet the adopted standard of open space for a development of this size.

- The local standards refer to a range of open space types, some of which may be incorporated into the village green. The standards refer to equipped play areas and the insertion of the word 'equipped' would ensure conformity with DPD Policy OS1.
- Adopted Affordable Housing DPD Policy AH1: NP Policy VG1 allocates a site of 20 dwellings, eight of which are for affordable homes to meet the need of the local community of Broomfield and Kingswood. This wording should be checked with the Housing Service to assess its appropriateness and the Submission Neighbourhood Plan may not be in general conformity with the Local Plan in this respect.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all.
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough Council.

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	1 December 2015

Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report constitutes the formal response of the Borough Council to the Consultation on the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan (October 2015) (for the purposes of this report, herein after referred to as the Neighbourhood Plan) according to Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 ("the 2012 Regulations"). The Parish of Broomfield and Kingswood was agreed as a designated Neighbourhood Plan Area on 15th October 2012 and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared.
- 1.2 An initial draft was prepared in accordance with Regulation 14 in May 2014 and this was consulted upon and informal comments made by council officers in July 2015. The draft was amended in the light of representations made and the Submission Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the Borough Council for public consultation as required by Regulation 15 on 21 October 2015.
- 1.3 The Borough Council is responsible for the conduct of the public consultation which is required by Regulation 16, and can also make its own representations on the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the consultation process. Comments may be made with regard to the extent to which the Council believes the Neighbourhood Plan has satisfied the basic conditions (see para. 2.7 below) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and these are then passed to the independent Examiner at the next stage of the process.
- 1.4 The following representations are made with regard to the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan:
 - a) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 ("the Local Plan 2000"), apart from the proposal for 20 units outside the village boundary;
 - b) has been assessed, at this stage, to not require Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment;
 - c) is in general conformity with the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2000 apart from the following specific policies of the Local Plan:
 - Local Plan Policy ENV28 - Development in the Countryside .
 - Local Plan Policies H1, H27
 - Local Policy Policies T21, T23
 - Open Space DPD Policy OS1
 - Affordable Housing DPD Policy AH1,

in relation to the proposal for 20 dwellings outside the village boundary.

- 1.6 If approved, the representations made at paragraph 3 of the Recommendations Section of this report will be forwarded with the record of any subsequent discussion by Members of this committee, without further processing, for consideration by the Examiner. After consideration of these and all other representations from consultees, the Examiner will prepare a report and make a recommendation regarding a referendum.

2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council has supported Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council in preparing its Neighbourhood Plan by offering advice and guidance to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan meets the necessary regulations and legal criteria, as well as providing practical advice about how to achieve the overall aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as updated by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations set out the formal stages which a Neighbourhood Development Plan must proceed through before it is made (adopted). Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for Maidstone Borough.
- 2.2 Following the formal submission of the Neighbourhood Plan according to Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, Maidstone Borough Council has a statutory responsibility for a number of stages, both in terms of organisation and cost. These formal stages may be generalised as:
- consultation, (Regulation 16)
 - examination,
 - referendum and
 - formally making the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.3 The statutory (Regulation 16) consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan referred to in paragraph 1.1 above began on Friday 6th November 2015 and will be completed on Friday 18th December 2015. Preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan began in September 2012, when the Neighbourhood Plan Area was agreed, and has been developed by Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council with support from community volunteers, Maidstone Borough Council and consultants, Designscape Consultancy Ltd.
- 2.4 The final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was submitted for consultation in October 2015. It aims to reflect community-wide views, concerns and wishes about the future of the area and must be in general conformity with national policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the policies in the adopted Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will progress to Examination following the Regulation 16 Consultation and when made, the plan period will run alongside the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan which is currently going through its own statutory consultation period towards its Examination in Public and adoption thereafter, with a plan period running to 2031.

- 2.5 The Neighbourhood Plan has six main sections: Introduction; Background: Vision Statement, Aims and Objectives; Constraints and Opportunities; Neighbourhood plan Policies; and Delivery. Officers have assessed the Neighbourhood Plan against the legal, procedural and technical criteria for its preparation, and are satisfied that it should proceed to examination.

Policy Proposal

- 2.6 The only policy proposal in the Submission Neighborhood Plan is "Policy VG1: Kingswood Village Green and the provision of new housing." This policy states that "permission will be granted for a Village Green and twenty (20) new dwellings in land enclosed by Gravelly Bottom Road, Duck Pond Lane and Chartway Street", and further notes that the village green will be publicly available and of at least one hectare. Twelve (12) "market houses" are proposed together with eight (8) "affordable houses suitable to meet the needs of the local community of Broomfield and Kingswood".
- 2.7 The housing is proposed immediately south of Kingswood village and is outside the village boundary. The affordable housing proposed is 40% of the total and is for local community needs.
- 2.8 After the consultation is closed, the Neighbourhood Plan, together with supporting documents and comments received during the consultation, will be submitted to the Examiner for independent examination. The Examiner's role is to test whether or not the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations and further matters set out in the planning legislation.
- 2.9 The 'basic conditions' may be summarised as; whether the Neighbourhood Plan:
- a) has regard to national policy and guidance;
 - b) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - c) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area or any part of that area; and
 - d) does not breach or is otherwise compatible with EU obligations, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC and Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC.
- 2.10 The further requirements of the Examiner, as defined in the Regulations, will include considering whether the Neighbourhood Plan complies with the definition of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and the provisions that can be made by a Neighbourhood Development Plan; and whether the draft plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention. The Examiner may also make recommendations on whether the Neighbourhood Plan Area for referendum should extend beyond the Neighbourhood Plan boundaries and whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets a set of 'basic conditions'.
- 2.11 The current consultation gives the Borough Council an opportunity to comment on whether it considers the Neighbourhood Plan meets the "basic conditions". The consultation response set out in this report will inform the

Examiner of areas of particular concern to the Borough Council During the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, meetings were held between council officers and the authors of the Neighbourhood Plan to discuss the basic conditions and other related items.

- 2.12 The following points are the Borough Council's proposed responses to the consultation and are summarised in the recommendations to this report at 1.1 above.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.13 The Neighbourhood Plan makes limited reference to the general requirements of the NPPF in terms of planning positively and supporting policies for housing and economic development. Neither the existing Local Plan 2000 nor the emerging Local Plan proposes new development in Broomfield and Kingswood and as such the Neighbourhood Plan area makes no contribution to the Borough Council's objectively assessed need in terms of allocated sites.
- 2.14 The Neighbourhood Plan notes that: "the NPPF supports the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, including local shops, meeting places, sports venues and public houses." The Neighbourhood Plan also notes that: "In rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. New isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided."

Conformity with Adopted Local Plan Policy

- 2.15 A basic condition for the Neighbourhood Plan is that it must be in general conformity with the 'saved' strategic policies of the adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000, that is, the high level strategic elements in the Local Plan 2000 that are essential to delivering the overall planning and development strategy for the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 2.16 For the purposes of decision-taking, saved local plan policies should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF. However, from March 2013, due weight should be given to saved policies in existing plans according to their consistency with the NPPF, and the adopted policies have been assessed for their consistency with the NPPF and the emerging Local Plan.
- 2.17 Neighbourhood plans should thus only be expected to be in conformity with those strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan which are consistent with the NPPF. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan have been tested for their general conformity and the following comments are made with regard to their consistency with Local Plan saved policies.

Consistent policies

- 2.18 Local Plan policies where the Neighbourhood Plan is either consistent or reliant on existing policy, comprise:
- Policies ENV 22, 23, 24, 27, 32, 34, 41, 44

- Policy ED1, 2
- Policy T17, 18,
- Policy R11,
- Policies CF1, 2, 3, 8

Inconsistent policies

- 2.19 Local Plan Policy ENV28 - Development in the Countryside: Neighbourhood Plan Policy VG1- Village Green and Enabling Development allocates a site which includes twenty (20) dwellings in the countryside. The village envelope would necessarily extend beyond the settlement boundary defined on the Local Plan Proposals Map in order to accommodate new proposals for the village which extend to 2031. The Neighbourhood Plan is not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as a proposal for market housing development encroaches into the countryside.
- 2.20 The Neighbourhood Plan and level of community engagement indicated attempt to explain the development of housing in this location but there is no evidence base which justifies this scale of development. NP Policy VG1 also notes that: "The proposal may also include a mixed-use community building" which does not bind the provision to the housing proposed, so community benefits may not be achieved.
- 2.21 Local Plan Policy H1 – Housing Land Allocations: None of the housing allocations in the Local Plan are located in Broomfield and Kingswood but the Neighbourhood Plan allocates a site which includes twenty (20) dwellings for the period to 2031 and is thus technically not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as substantial (more than ten units) market housing development is proposed outside the settlements in which the Local Plan allocates housing development.
- 2.22 Local Plan Policy H27 – Rural Settlements (Minor Development): The adopted Local Plan identifies Kingswood as appropriate only for minor development, which includes limited infill development. The Neighbourhood Plan is not in general conformity with this adopted Local Plan policy as it allocates a site which represents more than minor development outside the village boundary of Kingswood.
- 2.23 The Neighbourhood Plan and level of community engagement indicated provide an explanation for the development of housing but there is no evidence base similar to that used in the Local Plan which clearly justifies the scale of development in this location. As noted in paragraph 2.17 above, the Neighbourhood Plan notes that a mixed use building may be provided but this is not included in the proposal.
- 2.24 Local Plan Policy T21 – Accessibility of New Development: NP Policy VG1 seeks a single point of access and a footpath linking Gravelly Bottom Road within the site to the landscape strip to the south. The access point has been amended during the evolution of the Neighbourhood Plan and no evidence is presented that the current proposals is acceptable to the Local Highway Authority and the Neighbourhood Plan may not be in general conformity with the Local Plan in this respect.

- 2.25 Local Plan Policy T23 – Need for Highway/Public Transport Improvements: NP Policy VG1 no longer seeks off site proposals related to traffic calming and three pedestrian crossings and no evidence is presented that the current proposal is acceptable to the Local Highway Authority and the Neighbourhood Plan may not be in general conformity in this respect.
- 2.26 Adopted Open Space DPD Policy OS1: NP Policy VG1 allocates a site which includes at least one hectare of public open space (which must include a children’s play area) to serve twenty (20) dwellings. In quantitative terms, this would more than meet the adopted standard of open space for a development of this size.
2. 274The local standards refer to a range of open space types, some of which may be incorporated into the village green. The standards refer to equipped play areas and the insertion of the word ‘equipped’ would ensure conformity with DPD Policy OS1.
- 2.28 Adopted Affordable Housing DPD Policy AH1: NP Policy VG1 allocates a site of twenty (20) dwellings, eight (8) of which are for affordable homes to meet the needs of the local community of Broomfield and Kingswood and the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the Local Plan in this respect.

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 2.29 The Borough Council has carried out its duty to screen the Neighbourhood Plan for the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and received responses from statutory consultees as required by the legislation. At this stage the Borough Council is satisfied that there are no requirements for an SEA or HRA.

Conformity with emerging Local Plan Policy

- 2.30Whilst it is not a direct requirement for a neighbourhood plan to be in conformity with an emerging plan, it is clear that the emerging strategic policies and priorities, and importantly the substantial evidence which underpin them, are relevant and that any planning at any level should take account of the NPPF. The Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed for its consistency with the Borough Council’s emerging Local Plan and although it is regarded as broadly in line with the vision of the emerging Local Plan with regard to the role of minor settlements, it is not in line with the spatial objectives in respect of the scale of housing development that is proposed being greater than a minor development and outside the village boundary.
- 2.31 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks the retention and development of local services and community facilities and regards itself as being in line with the NPPF requirements of existing services, the addition of new infrastructure to locate housing where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and the avoidance of new isolated homes in the countryside.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, it becomes part of the Borough Council's development plan and is used for development management decision making. If the Borough Council does not respond to the consultation draft, it will have missed an opportunity to submit formal comments to the examination. There are therefore two options to consider:
- 3.2 Option A: To approve this report as the basis for the Borough Council's comment on the Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.3 Option B: To recommend additional or amended comments on the Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.4 Option C: To not agree the above representations.

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Councillors are recommended to adopt Option A.

5 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	When the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' it will form part of the development plan for Maidstone. This will assist in the delivery of the Council's objectives, notably 'Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all'. The action areas supporting the priorities will also be addressed through the development plan.	Head of Planning and Development
Risk Management	This consultation is being run to ensure that the plan maintains the requirements of government legislation.	Head of Planning and Development
Financial	Initial financial implications in terms of staffing resources will be mitigated by future Neighbourhood Plan Grant.	Section 151 Officer and Finance Team
Staffing	Staff resources have been required to assist in the planning and running of the consultation including support from the Communications and Web teams. This has been managed within existing resources.	Head of Planning and Development
Legal	The Neighbourhood Plan has been completed in accordance with the statutory requirements relating to Neighbourhood plans and their preparation	Team Leader (Planning), Mid-Kent Legal Services

Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The needs of all interested parties have been considered as part of the consultations. Alternate formats of documents will be made available on request.	Policy and Information Manager
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The plans has been the subject of both Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment.	Head of Planning and Development
Community Safety	There are no implications for Community Safety	Head of Planning and Development
Human Rights Act	There are no implications for the Human Rights Act	Head of Planning and Development
Procurement	When the current consultation is complete, the plan will proceed to Examination. The Examiner will be appointed with due consideration to procurement requirements of the Council's Purchasing Guide and Contract Procedure Rules	Head of Planning and Development; Section 151 Officer;
Asset Management	There are no implications for asset management	Head of Planning and Development

6 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan
- Appendix 2: Sites Assessment Report

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

The Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan



Prepared by Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council

October 2015

Foreword

Welcome by Chairman of the Parish Council

As Chairman of Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council it is my pleasure to introduce you to the Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

You may recall that the Localism Act came into force during the beginning of 2012 and it was decided that the Parish would seek the views of Parishioners. Therefore a public meeting was held at the village hall on 19th March 2012 to enable everybody to understand the implications of the Act.

Following this meeting a number of people put their names forward to form a Steering Group to progress a Neighbourhood Plan (NPSG) the main objective being to find out from Parishioners their needs and wishes for future development, if any, within the Parish.

The intention to undertake such a plan was registered with Maidstone Borough Council who publicised the fact for a 6 week consultation period. At the same time letters were delivered to all residents, together with local advertising, asking for any comments.

In November 2012 a questionnaire was delivered to all households and this resulted in a 25% response from which the NPSG were able to start to formulate a plan.

In April 2013, following a tendering exercise, the Parish Council awarded a contract to Designscape Consultancy Ltd to turn the aspirations into workable documents and to ensure that proper procedures were followed.

Numerous meetings were held and further information gathered at Fetes and the School culminating in a Workshop in September 2013. There was a subsequent presentation of the draft plan at the village hall in November 2013, with the draft plan having taken note of comments that had been received. Discussions were carried out with Maidstone Borough Council in late 2013 and early 2014, leading to a Draft Plan. The Draft Plan was then subject to further public consultation, and further discussion was carried out with Maidstone Borough Council in the period late 2014 to early 2015, and further revised to form this Submission Plan.

The Parish Council and the NPSG believe that the preparation of the plan has been an opportunity to create something beneficial for the people of the Parish and at the same time provides an opportunity to help protect the countryside of the Parish.

The Parish Council would like to thank all of the members of the NPSG for all of the hours of hard work that it has taken to prepare these documents and for the people of the village for their input during the process.

**Terry Baker
Chairman, Broomfield & Kingswood Parish Council**



Map showing Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Boundary and the extent of the Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan, being the whole Parish.

Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Background**
- 3. Vision Statement, Aims and Objectives**
- 4. Constraints and Opportunities**
- 5. Neighbourhood Plan Policies**
- 6. Delivery**

Figures

- 1. Site Allocation**
- 2. Diagram of the Plan Requirements**

1. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan in the Town and Country Planning System

- 1 The Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council has prepared this Submission Neighbourhood Plan to assist local people to help shape the approach to future development of the Parish of Broomfield and Kingswood.
- 2 Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in the "Localism Act" 2012 and are a measure to meet the Government's aim to give local communities more say in the planning of the places in which they live and work.
- 3 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared through an iterative process with local people and has included consultation through the circulation of questionnaires and participation through workshops.



Neighbourhood Plan Community workshop

- 4 Details of the consultation process are set out in a Consultation Statement which provides an overview of the process and also people's responses. It is available on the Parish Council website (www.broomfieldandkingswoodpc.kentparishes.gov.uk) and on the Borough Council's website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) or is available at the Parish Council Office or Maidstone Gateway.
- 5 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to determine the extent of any future development in the parish and identify where it is best located. It is also to identify any other physical improvements to the village that development will help to enable.
- 6 The Neighbourhood Plan must accord with higher level planning policy. It must comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and also the Maidstone Development Plan.
- 7 The main document in the Maidstone Development Plan is the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan, 2000. In 2007 the Secretary of State deleted some of the policies in the document, but the policies that were saved are used to make decisions on planning applications.
- 8 Maidstone has two adopted local plan documents which are part of the local plan. These documents contain planning policies and should be read with the saved policies of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000.
 - Affordable Housing DPD (2006)
 - Open Space DPD (2006)
- 9 Maidstone Borough Council has also adopted supplementary planning documents (SPD) and endorsed supplementary guidance documents (SG). These provide supplementary guidance to local, regional and national planning policies. The following are relevant in Broomfield and Kingswood Parish.
 - Sustainable Construction SPD (2006)
 - Residential Extensions SPD (2009)
 - Kent Design Guide 2005 SG (2009)

- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan SG (2009)
- Draft Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

- 10 The Borough Council is currently working on a new Local Plan which will replace the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan. The new plan will be called the Maidstone Borough Local Plan it will provide a framework for development until 2031. Maidstone Borough Council aims to be able to adopt their new plan in 2015. The Council recently completed a formal consultation of the first draft of their Local Plan, the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation, Local Plan 2014.
- 11 When it is adopted the Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan and will carry equal weight in determining planning applications as the Local Plan.

The format of the Broomfield and Kingswood Submission Neighbourhood Plan

- 12 The Plan is prepared in four sections:

i) Background

This describes the purpose of neighbourhood plans and how Broomfield and Kingswood Plan is being prepared.

ii) Constraints and Opportunities

This explains how the Parish has been assessed to identify its strengths, its future needs and how these might be met through the development process.

iii) Vision Statement, Aims and Objectives

This is a clear statement of what the Plan aims to achieve.

iv) Neighbourhood Plan Policies

These are the policies that will describe the form of development that will be acceptable in the Parish in the period until 2031.

This Document with its appendices is the Neighbourhood Submission Plan for Broomfield and Kingswood Parish.

During the preparation of the Plan background information was assembled, this is known as the Evidence Base. It is available on the Parish Council and Maidstone Borough Council websites.

2. Background

Purpose

- 13 Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work.
- 14 A Neighbourhood Plan is a means for local communities to establish planning policies for their local area. The aim is for a Plan to set a vision for the future indicating what can be built and where. In Broomfield and Kingswood this Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council.

Process

There are key stages to Neighbourhood Planning.

- 15 The first is to define the neighbourhood. The Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan area is defined by the parish boundary (as shown on Page 3).
- 16 The second stage is to pull together ideas from local people and to begin to formulate a draft plan. The Parish Council has undertaken this process and it has included:
 - Letters to every household informing them of the intention to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan,
 - Articles in the Village News magazine;
 - Notice in the Parish section of the Kent Messenger newspaper;
 - Notices placed on telegraph poles within the

parish;

- Questionnaire Survey, November 2012;
 - Consultation event with Kingswood Village School + questionnaire survey July 2013;
 - Consultation workshop event, September 2013.
 - Further consultation event, November 2013;
 - A further formal consultation in May, 2014 led to further revisions of the Plan and the completion of this Submission Plan.
- 17 Liaison also was also carried out with the Local Authority during this time, including a number of meetings.
 - 18 The third stage was the Formal Regulation 14 Consultation conducted by the Parish Council. This initially took place in May and June 2014. The process was then repeated for the avoidance of doubt, as explained in the consultation statement, in June and July 2015.
 - 19 The fourth stage will be the formal Regulation 16 Consultation conducted by the Local Authority.
 - 20 The fifth stage will be examination of the Neighbourhood Plan by the Examiner.
 - 21 The sixth and final stage will be a community referendum. Maidstone Borough Council will organise the referendum. People living in the Parish who are registered to vote in local elections will be entitled to vote in the referendum. If more than 50% of people voting in the referendum support the Plan then the Borough Council must bring it into force.

3 Vision Statement, Aims and Objectives

The Vision –

- 22 The vision is to maintain the general character of the Parish of Broomfield and Kingswood and to create a new village green in Kingswood. The new Green will create a focal point for village life, an open space for leisure and limited recreational use, somewhere for people to meet and connected to the existing Village Hall a place to host local events and entertainment.

Aims –

- a) To maintain the character of the Parish and the villages of Broomfield and Kingswood;
- b) To provide a new village green and limit new residential development to that which is necessary to enable the provision of the proposed village green.

Objectives –

- a) To provide a new Village Green on land identified allowing up to 20 new dwellings to enable the Green to be established;
- b) The Village Green will be a minimum of 1 hectare;
- c) The new dwellings will be a mix of houses but generally arranged around the Village Green and be of low density and designed in a Kentish Wealden vernacular;
- d) That the developer of the housing scheme of the Plan shall meet the Local Plan requirement for affordable homes which wherever possible shall in the first instance be offered to those in need within the Parish;
- e) To ensure that traffic management measures create a safe environment in and around the proposed Village Green area. The Plan includes on-site traffic calming measures but it has been concluded that any potential off-site traffic calming measures shall be pursued by the Parish Council separately outside the Plan;

- f) To safeguard important landscape features of the allocated area including perimeter trees and the Peter Pease tree, and to provide structural landscaping proposals to create a high quality environment;
- g) To safeguard the remainder of the open countryside, woodland, and landscape areas and features of the Parish, where these areas are valued and considered important by local people, and as also protected by Local Plan policies.

4 Constraints and Opportunities

Sustainable Development

- 23 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development. The NPPF identifies three dimensions to sustainable development economic, social and environmental. The roles are mutually dependent. Plans need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas.
- 24 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making this means that plans should respond positively to meet the development needs of their area.
- 25 The Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan is a response to local people's desire to establish a village green in Kingswood and create a new heart for the Village. It is envisaged that this new public space will provide a focus for local events and for informal leisure and recreation.

Rural Settlements and Countryside

- 26 The NPPF supports the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, including local shops, meeting places, sports venues and public houses. In rural areas housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. New isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided.
- 27 The central aim of the Plan is to create a new village green. This will provide a valuable resource for the Kingswood creating a new focus for local people. In order to deliver the green it is necessary to accept a limited number of new homes. This is an important fiscal tool providing the necessary funding to prepare and make available the Green. The new houses will also help to provide physical enclosure and security which will benefit users of the Green.
- 28 The housing will not be isolated but rather a small scale extension to the village.

- 29 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2000 has a policy which limits housing development at rural settlements. Policy H27 identifies Kingswood as a village where minor housing development is permitted within a boundary defined on the Proposals Map. The Borough Council's interpretation of what constitutes minor development is considered in each case in the context of the settlement concerned.
- 30 The emerging Local Plan aims to allocate new land for 18,600 dwellings to meet future needs. It is clear from the Draft Local Plan and its preparatory work including the Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations Interim Report, as subsequently supported by the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in 2015, that it will be necessary to commit land within open countryside to meet the extent of the housing needs.
- 31 No new sites are proposed within Broomfield and Kingswood but rather most of the housing is to be focussed within and adjoining the urban area of Maidstone with further housing at the Rural Service Centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, and Staplehurst. Smaller housing developments will be permitted in five larger villages but not including Broomfield or Kingswood.
- 32 There is no strategic need to provide new housing in Kingswood. The Neighbourhood Plan proposal is a direct response to the limited needs of the community of Kingswood to accept very limited housing development to enable the provision of a new Village Green.

Landscape

- 33 The Parish of Kingswood and Broomfield is a varied landscape. In the North it comprises a mix of the parkland of Leeds Castle and a rich riverside habitat of the Len Valley and the setting of the hamlet of Broomfield. The northern part of the Parish is in view from the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the North.

- 34 To the South there are large areas of ancient woodland and farmland. The village of Kingswood is isolated and surrounded by a mix of woodland and farmland mainly arable but with some grazing.
- 35 Broomfield features high quality architecture and townscape, with historic buildings of traditional materials and St. Margaret's church which dates back to Norman times. The hamlet benefits the protection of the Broomfield Conservation Area.
- 36 The Village of Kingswood is the dominant settlement within the parish comprising approximately 500 dwellings. The settlement was largely set out in plots for servicemen returning from World War II. Originally comprising largely pre-fabricated homes these have now largely been replaced by modern houses and bungalows. The village is generally well served but lacks any real focal point.
- 37 The proposed Village Green will create a focal point or "heart" for the village. The site is currently used for arable farming. It is not within an area designated as being of particular landscape importance and site relates well physically to the existing settlement.

Biodiversity

- 38 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the parish. However, a large area of deciduous woodland is designated as a BAP Priority Habitat.

Agricultural Land

- 39 NPPF requires that plan makers take into account the economic and other benefits of best and most versatile agricultural land (Agricultural Land Classification Class 1,2 and 3a). Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary poorer quality of land should be used.
- 40 Across Kent Grade 1 Land is along the low-lying coastal fringe areas - including the Hoo Peninsula, Gillingham to Faversham, Thanet, Canterbury to Sandwich/Deal, and Romney Marsh.

- 41 Much of the land along the top of the Greensand Ridge from Borough Green to Pluckley, including to the north, south, east, and west of Maidstone is Agricultural Land Classification Class 2.
- 42 The quality of land is lower across the Weald is generally class 3.

Design

- 43 It is considered important that the development aspect of the proposal is of very high design quality. This will help frame the Village Green, will help ensure a high quality of life for occupants, and will aid in the acceptability of the proposal to local people. There are two ways of helping ensure high design quality;
- 44 Firstly, to ensure the proposal refers to and follows the guidance of relevant best practice relating to design; and
- 45 Secondly, to put in place a process of design review by the setting up of a Design Review Panel which shall include local people to furthermore ensure that what is proposed is acceptable to local people.
- 46 Both aspects can and should work in tandem, and the Policy embodies both approaches.

Transport

- 47 Key issues are access, public transport, highways design parameters, cycling, and pedestrian links. These are addressed in a separate report by BdR. The limited number of dwellings proposed are considered to have no discernible impact on local highways.

Identifying a site

- 48 This is supplemented by a separate identification and justification document which also is available in the public domain.

Adjacent to site:
- 49 The site is currently used for arable farming. It is not within an area designated as being of

particular landscape importance and it relates well physically to the existing settlement.

- 50 BAP (Biodiversity Action Plan) Sites: These sites are unaffected by the proposals in this Plan
- 51 The site of the proposed village green and housing is Agricultural Land Classification Class 2 on the national classification plan, although this is a coarse level of analysis and classification. The proposed loss of Class 2 agricultural land would be regrettable but this is a relatively small area in the wider context and there are no other reasonably available alternative site options within the area.

5 Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Village Green and Enabling Development

- 52 The central purpose of the Plan is to create a new heart to the village of Kingswood. This reflects a common desire of people living and working in the parish. However, the community is also clear that any development should be consistent with maintaining the overall character of the village. Enabling development is necessary to ensure investment in a village green but it is to be limited so that the general impact on the village and its surroundings is contained.
- 53 It is considered that any new housing should be of a low density befitting an edge of village location and providing considerable scope to mitigate impacts on the landscape. Furthermore, a design style reflecting local vernacular is also desired in order to help maintain the character of the village and the Parish as a whole. It also is considered important that the market housing offer comprises a range of sizes and costs/values rather than being restricted to top-end executive dwellings.
- 54 A range of site options were considered during the consultation process. Clear preference was expressed for the northern of two fields enclosed by Gravelly Bottom Road, Broomfield Road and Chartway Street. The site was favoured because of its clear relationship with the most densely populated part of the village, its direct relationship with the village hall and close proximity to the local school and shops.
- 55 The site is generally unconstrained.

- 56 The site benefits from established hedgerows around much of its boundary with a mix of more mature hedgerow trees. On its Southern boundary it is bordered by a distinctive line of poplars. It is important that as far as possible these features are retained and enhanced.

Affordable Homes

- 57 NPPF paragraph 50 sets out national policy for the need to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes. This includes provision of Affordable Housing which in the first instance should be provided on-site unless provision off-site or a financial contribution can be robustly justified.
- 58 Maidstone Borough Council's planning policy for affordable housing is policy AH1 of the Maidstone Local Development Framework, Affordable Housing Development Plan Document which was adopted in December 2006 and replaced Policy H24 of the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan (2000). Policy AH 1.
- 59 A new policy is proposed in the emerging Local Plan.
- 60 The policies generally require that affordable homes will be integrated with market housing and provided on site.
- 61 It is accepted that affordable housing is needed within the Maidstone area. The need is identified in the Borough Council's Strategic Market Housing Assessment (SHMA, 2014).
- 62 The proposed allocation of 20 new dwellings includes the provision of 8 new affordable homes being fully policy compliant at 40% of the whole.

Policy VG1: Kingswood Village Green and provision of new housing

Village Green and Enabling Development

Permission will be granted for a Village Green and 20 new dwellings on land enclosed by Gravelly Bottom Road, Duck Pond Lane and Chartway Street as identified on the site allocation plan (Figure 1).

The proposal must be based on a masterplan indicating how the whole of the site is to be used. This shall be in accordance with the Diagram (Fig 2).

A proposal will include:

- a) A Village Green which will be publicly available, landscaped area of at least 1 hectare. The Village Green must be arranged in accordance with the Diagram (Figure 2) and shall include a children's play area.
- b) 12 market houses which shall comprise a range of types and costs/values rather than being limited to only top-end executive dwellings.
- c) 8 affordable homes suitable to meet the needs of the local community of Broomfield and Kingswood.
- d) Structural landscaping proposals as shown in the Diagram;
- e) Access and parking arrangements;

The proposal may also include a mixed-use community building (use class D, Use Class Order 1987 as amended) as part of the mix of uses, in the area identified within the Diagram.

The proposal must demonstrate that the development will deliver a good quality public space and arrangements to ensure how it will be maintained in the long term.

Design

The detailed proposals shall be in accordance with:

- a) Building for Life 12;
- b) Secured by Design;
- c) Kent Design Guide guidance for Villages;

and shall be subject to Design Review by a Design Review Panel set up by the Parish Council.

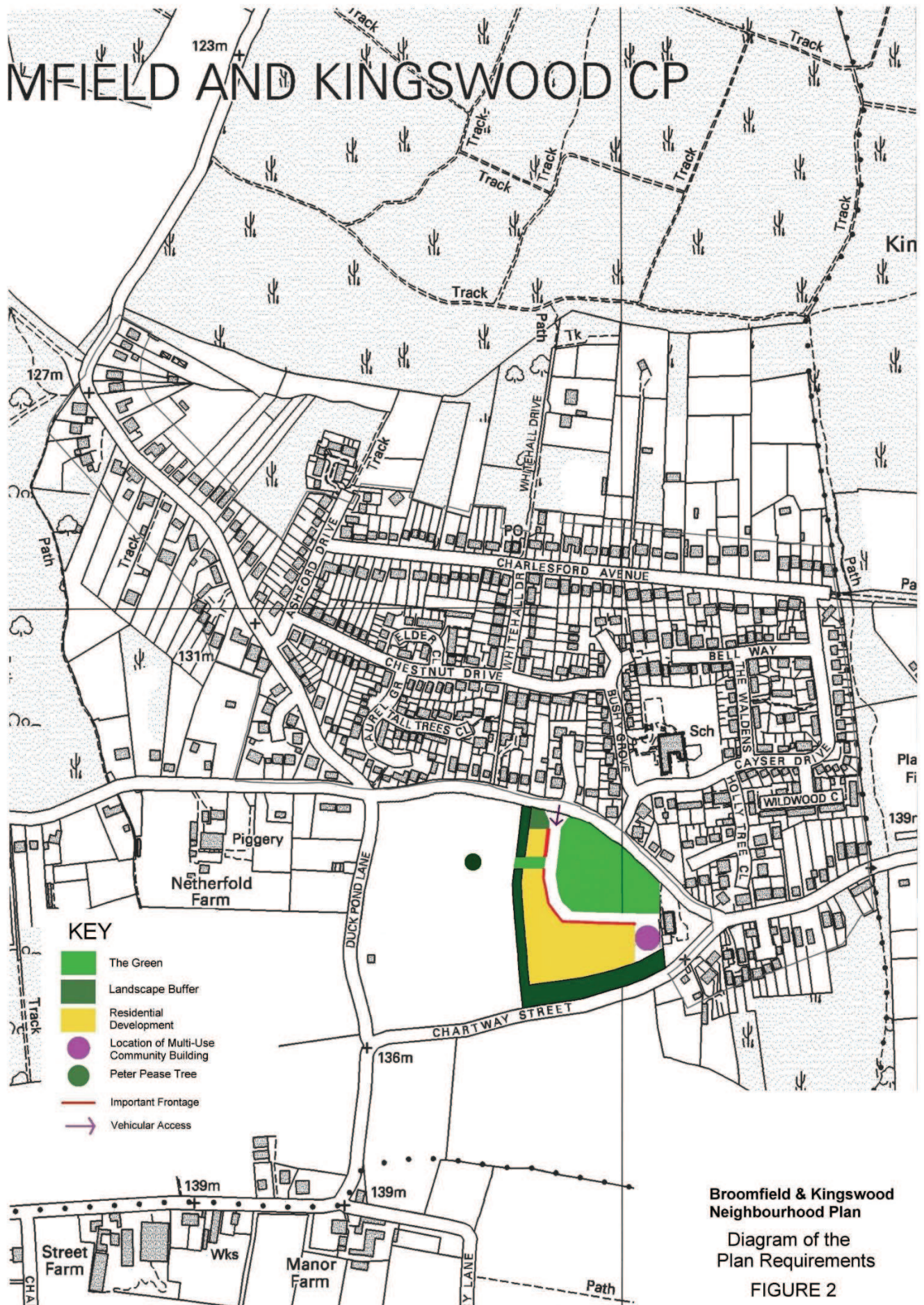
Transport

The proposal must provide the following on site

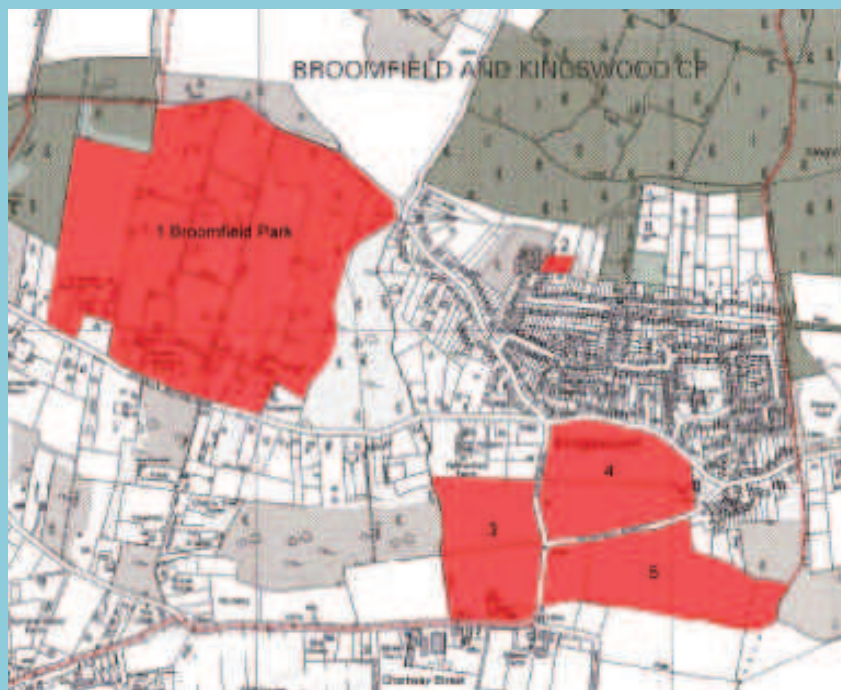
- a) Traffic calming measures to help minimise vehicle speeds for traffic entering from Gravelly Bottom Road and within the site;
- b) Provide a single point of vehicular access to Gravelly Bottom Road as shown in Figure 2;
- c) A footpath shall link to Gravelly Bottom Road within the site to the South of the landscape strip;
- d) The carriageway width should be 4.8metres with 1.8 metre wide footpaths.

6 Delivery

- 63 The Neighborhood Plan's focus is the implementation of a single proposal. The Parish Council will work with the landowner of the allocated site to ensure that the proposal is delivered in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 64 It is intended that a planning application will be submitted is to deliver the Village Green proposal within 5 years, subject to reasonable market conditions. The proposal will be delivered as a single development.
- 65 The Village Green shall be set out in the early stage of implementation and shall be planted and seeded in the first available planting season. This will provide a suitable setting for the housing and provide the desired amenity for local people.
- 66 It is intended that the proposal will allow the Parish Council to carry out further improvement measures in the Parish through the use of Community Infrastructure Levy contributions.
- 67 Maidstone Borough Council and Kent Highways will be involved in a proposed Design Review process to ensure that planning and highway matters are co-ordinated.



1:2000 @ A1 1:4000 @ A3



Broomfield and Kingswood Neighbourhood Plan

Appraisal of Site Development Options

**Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council
October 2013**

**Broomfield and Kingswood
Neighbourhood Local Plan**

Appraisal of Site Development Options

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to assess the most appropriate means to meet the plans key aim to provide a site for a new Village Green and associated enabling development.

The plan is the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence.

A range of five potential site options are considered and assessed with reference to national and local constraints and other sustainable development criteria and also tested through consultation with local people.

The sites are:

1. The Broomfield Park Eco Village is proposed as a mix of uses reflecting the aim to create a freestanding sustainable settlement.
2. The Ashford Drive site is a small site intended for between 4 and six houses.
3. Three fields to the south of Kingswood, south of Gravelly Bottom Road and spanning Broomfield Road.

This report is divided into sections.

Section 2 sets out the methodology that that has been followed in assessing site options

Section 3 describes the options.

Section 4 is a detailed assessment and comparison of the impacts of each of the sites.

Section 5 is an account of public opinion towards the site options.

2. Methodology

A. Identifying Options

The first challenge was to identify reasonable options to compare.

It was agreed that sites should meet the mutual aims of maintaining the character of the villages and providing a new village green. Broomfield village and the northern part of the Parish were discounted because of the village's historic built environment, the landscape value and remoteness from the main population. Areas of ancient woodland were also avoided. This focussed meant the focus was close to the village of Kingswood.

This assessment includes the sites recently submitted to Maidstone Borough Council in response to its call for sites. In January 2013 two sites that lie within the Parish were proposed, the Broomfield Park Eco Village forming part of the Broomfield Park Estate north of Gravelly Bottom Road and a site in Ashford Drive Kingswood.

Three sites to the south of Kingswood, south of Gravelly Bottom Road and spanning Broomfield Road emerged through local knowledge and because they relate well to the core of Kingswood, are open land, as opposed to forest, and the land owner is willing to make some land available for development.

The possibility of a dispersed option was also considered.

The following options are summarised below and identified on the plan opposite.

- Option 1 Broomfield Park
- Option 2 Land at Ashford Drive
- Option 3 Land West of Duck Pond Lane
- Option 4 Land South of Gravelly Bottom Road & North of Chartway Street
- Option 5 Land East of Duckpond Lane & South of Chartway Street
- Option 6 Dispersed Sites



Figure 1 - Plan indicating Site development options

All 5 sites and the dispersed sites option were then objectively assessed and also considered at the consultation workshop.

3. Description of Site Options

Option 1: New Settlement at Broomfield Park

Option 1 is considered as it has been advanced to Maidstone Borough Council in response to their call for sites as they prepare their replacement Local Plan.

A meeting has been held between the landowner and representatives of the Parish Council both accompanied by their respective advisers. Eco-Build Partnership UK has prepared a document to explain the Broomfield Park Eco Village. The proposal is for a new free-standing settlement to the west of Kingswood Village. The proposal includes 450 market “Eco homes”, 200 affordable homes, 250 retirement bungalows, a care home, 50 business units, a primary school, a village green, a village hall, cafe, crèche and swimming pool, library, digital cinema, medical centre (inc. Doctors surgery, dentists surgery and optician), public house, shop and post office. The proposal is seen as a means of accelerating the construction of the Leeds Langley by-pass. It also proposes the promotion of electric cars and mini buses with electricity supplied from an on-site bio mass station.

The land is currently a mix of forestry and light industrial uses. Part is used for the growing of Christmas trees.



Option One

Option 2 Ashford Drive

Option 2 is considered as it was advanced to Maidstone Borough Council in response to their call for sites as they prepare their replacement Local Plan.

The meeting was held with the landowner who described his aspirations for developing the site. The site is approximately xx hectares and the owner wishes to build between 4 and 6 dwellings on the site. The site is clearly too small to provide a village green and is discounted on this basis.



Option Two

Option 3 Land West of Duck Pond Lane

The land is currently part of a farm estate and is in arable use. The land owner has been approached and expressed an interest in providing a village green with enabling development provided that that meets the general wishes of the people of Kingswood.



Option Three

Option 4 Land South of Gravelly Bottom Road and North of Chartway Street

The land is currently part of a farm estate and is in arable use. The land owner has been approached and expressed an interest in providing a village green with enabling development provided that meets the general wishes of the people of Kingswood.



Option Four

Option 5 Land East of Duckpond Lane and South of Chartway Street

The land is currently part of a farm estate and is in arable use. The land owner has been approached and expressed an interest in providing a village green with enabling development provided that meets the general wishes of the people of Kingswood.



Option Five

Option 6 Dispersed Sites (SLAA)

The merits of a dispersed sites option was considered. However, the recent call for sites by Maidstone Borough Council as part of their Local Plan process attracted only two site options and they have been considered as options 1 and 2 above. Furthermore, the site needs to be a substantial size to enable a village green and a dispersed site option would not meet this requirement. The dispersed option was not therefore pursued.

4. Site Options – Assessment of Impacts

The 6 site options are assessed against the two aims of the Neighbourhood Plan:

Aim 1 To maintain the character of the Parish and the villages of Broomfield and Kingswood

Aim 2 To provide a new village green and limit new residential development to that which is necessary to enable the provision of the village green.

Site Option	Description	Evidence
Option1 Broomfield Park Eco Village	<p>The proposal is to create a new freestanding settlement. The scale of the development which would be expected to double the population of the Parish would clearly have a major impact on its character.</p> <p>The proposal includes a range of improvements to transport but there would nevertheless be a major impact on local roads.</p> <p>The required by-pass will have its own impacts.</p> <p>The proposed access Road to north may impact on AONB and Listed Building/Historic Garden.</p> <p>The site for the proposed development at Broomfield Park includes several large areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland. (Loam Pits Shaw comprises 11.5 Ha of ancient coppice woodland to the east of the proposal site; Broomfield Woods comprises 13 Ha of similar ancient coppiced woodland to the west, and an additional area of ancient replanted woodland (also known as Broomfield Woods) to the north.)</p> <p>There is a small area of ancient woodland toward the centre of the site.</p>	<p>No direct impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Local Landscape Area SPA and RAMSAR and SSSI Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Buildings Conservation Areas Historic Gardens <p>Potential Impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient Woodland directly North and West of site. Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Area to most boundaries of the site and part within the site. Local Wildlife Site to north west of site.

	<p>The majority of the rest of the site is used for the production of Christmas trees.</p> <p>The aim of the Eco Village is to create its own focus and to provide services for nearby villages including Kingswood. This does not meet the expressed needs of the community of Kingswood.</p> <p>The option has significant impacts and doesn't meet the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	
Option 2 Ashford Drive	<p>The site is clearly too small to provide a village green. Option 2 is discounted on this basis.</p>	<p>No direct impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Local Landscape Area SPA and RAMSAR and SSSI Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Buildings Conservation Areas Historic Gardens Local Wildlife Site to north west of site. <p>Potential Impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ancient Woodland Close proximity to Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Area
Option 3 Land West of Duck Pond Lane	<p>Options 3, 4 and 5 have very similar impacts when considered by national and local planning designations. The main difference between the three sites is that options 3 and 5 relate less well to the built form of the village. This means that the proposed new housing will be more remote from existing village services and also that a new village green would be further from most of the existing housing.</p> <p>The topography of the northern part of this area constitutes a shallow depression with an area of woodland to the west which would mean the sensitivity of this area to visual impact of development would be reduced.</p> <p>A high density residential development would have an impact upon the ancient woodland/BAP woodland to the immediate west of Option 3.</p>	<p>No direct impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Local Landscape Area SPA and RAMSAR and SSSI Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Buildings Conservation Areas Historic Gardens Local Wildlife Site to north west of site. Ancient Woodland Close proximity to Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Area <p>Potential Impact on:</p>

	Both options 3 and 5 also extend further into the open countryside. For these reasons Option 4 is preferred.	Agricultural Land Classification Class 2.
Option 4 Land South of Gravelly Bottom Road and North of Chartway Street	<p>Options 3, 4 and 5 have very similar impacts when considered by national and local planning designations. The main difference between the three sites is that options 3 and 5 relate less well to the built form of the village. This means that the proposed new housing will be more remote from existing village services and also that a new village green would be further from most of the existing housing.</p> <p>Both options 3 and 5 also extend further into the open countryside. For these reasons Option 4 is preferred.</p>	<p>No direct impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Local Landscape Area SPA and RAMSAR and SSSI Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Buildings Conservation Areas Historic Gardens Local Wildlife Site to north west of site. Ancient Woodland Close proximity to Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Area <p>Potential Impact on:</p> <p>Agricultural Land Classification Class 2.</p>
Option 5 Land East of Duckpond Lane and South of Chartway Street	<p>Options 3, 4 and 5 have very similar impacts when considered by national and local planning designations. The main difference between the three sites is that options 3 and 5 relate less well to the built form of the village. This means that the proposed new housing will be more remote from existing village services and also that a new village green would be further from most of the existing housing.</p> <p>Option 5 would have an impact on the Landscape Character Area as it becomes much more open and characteristic of the Coxheath Plateau Farmlands LCA moving south away from the settlement of Kingswood into open countryside.</p> <p>Both options 3 and 5 also extend further into the open countryside. For these reasons Option 4 is preferred.</p>	<p>No direct impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AONB Local Landscape Area SPA and RAMSAR and SSSI Scheduled Ancient Monument Listed Buildings Conservation Areas Historic Gardens Local Wildlife Site to north west of site. Ancient Woodland Close proximity to Deciduous Woodland BAP Priority Area <p>Potential Impact on:</p> <p>Agricultural Land Classification Class 2.</p>
Option 6 Dispersed Sites	Site needs to be a substantial size to enable a village green and a dispersed site option would not meet this requirement. Dispersed Sites Option discounted for this reason.	

5. The Site Options and Public Opinion

Site Option	Summary of Responses from local communities as it expressed at the consultation workshop.
Option1 Broomfield Park	There was no evidential support for this option through the public consultation process other than from the owner of the land and his representatives. Comments from workshop groups included: “No support new housing on Gravelly Bottom Road”. “Opposed to the proposal for 1000 new homes”.
Option 2 Ashford Drive	There was no strong objection to development of this site and some limited support. It was recognised that this would not meet the aim of creating a new village green. Comments from workshop groups included: “Acceptance of the limited development envisaged for Identified Area 2 (4 to 6 houses) “Ashford Drive proposal ok”; “Accept small development at Ashford Drive”;
Option 3 Land West of Duck Pond Lane	This site was consistently considered to be less appropriate to site 4. One view from the workshop was that, “Accept partial development at site 3” this was in addition to providing a green and limited enabling development at site 4.
Option 4 Land South of Gravelly Bottom Road and North of Chartway Street	There was a strong preference that if there was to be any new housing development then the majority of this should be on site 4. Comments from workshop groups included: “Acceptance for Creation of Village Heart such as a Village Green within Area 4”; “Utilise field (Site A) as village green with housing around it. Include public house”; “Area 4 most suitable for 15 houses”; “Other new development should be around perimeter of site 4” “ Add village centre at site 4” “Development of site 4 to include Village Green etc” “Prefer to expand site 4 Preferred site for housing ½ of site 4 Development preferred at site 4”; “Limited development preferred at site 4 (8 in favour) – more in favour if it included the provision of a village green”; “Site 4 preferred”

Option 5 Land East of Duckpond Lane and South of Chartway Street	This site was not considered to be appropriate for development.
Option 6 Dispersed Sites	This option was discounted as it would not be a clear way of creating a village green.

6. Conclusions

Five potential site options and a dispersed site option have been assessed. This has been done with reference to national and local constraints and other sustainable development criteria. The options have also been tested through consultation with local people.

The conclusion is that site 4 Land South of Gravelly Bottom Road and North of Chartway Street is preferred. The site is of a scale that is sufficient to provide a new village green and related enabling development.

The site relates well physically to the existing village encouraging use of the Green by local people and enabling residents of the proposed new housing to access existing services with ease and without requiring the use of cars.

As has been shown the site is largely unconstrained by national and local landscape and conservation policies. The land is within an area of Agricultural Land Classification Class 2 however, the other key competing sites are similarly affected.

It is considered that the proposed development of site 4 is the most appropriate strategy to meet the Plan's aims when considered against the reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

1 December 2015

Is this the final decision on the recommendations?

Yes

Response to recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of Transport in Maidstone 2015

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability and transportation Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Rob Jarman
Lead Officer and Report Author	Tessa Ware
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the SPST Committee note the responses to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of Transport in Maidstone 2015, received from Guy Schofield, Project Officer for Kent Community Rail Partnership.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Great People
- Great Place
- Great Opportunity

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Decision Maker	1 December 2015

Response to recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of Transport in Maidstone 2015

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 For the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to have sight and note the responses to the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny review of Transport in Maidstone 2015.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During 2014 the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee carried out a review of transport in Maidstone, looking at alternative modes of transport other than the car.
 - 2.2 The final report for the review was published in April 2015 with copies sent to all parties who provided evidence for the review. One of the parties involved in providing evidence was the Kent Community Rail Partnership, who have responded to the recommendations from the review.
 - 2.3 Their responses are attached as **Appendix A** of this report.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee are asked to note the responses from the Kent Community Rail Partnership attached at **Appendix A**.
-

4. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A - Responses to OSC Transport review recommendations from Kent Community Rail Partnership.
-

Appendix A

Kent Community Rail Partnership

Comments on Recommendations of the “Review of Transport in Maidstone Borough – alternatives to using a car.”

November 2015

10 Recommendations

A. That after the publication of this report a sub group be formed from the beginning of the municipal year 2015, by the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference, to explore:

- *Alternative methods of transport for the future that will help ease congestion in Maidstone town. This sub-group to take forward research into future alternatives (for example rail halts on the Medway Valley Line, trams) and improving existing forms of transport, and;*

We are supportive this recommendation although mindful of the high cost of new stations/rail halts.

- *Possible European Union funding to fund new transport initiatives.*

We would be happy to support the sub- group in its work and are supportive of its aims.

B. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to carry out consultation with car users to establish why they drive into Maidstone town and what would encourage them to use an alternative mode of transport to get into the town.

We believe this research would be very helpful in identifying barriers to use of alternative transport. It is something we discuss with visitors to our ‘Pop-up’ Hub events.

C. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to lobby Kent County Council on the reconfiguration of the Maidstone Gyratory system to ensure safe cycle passages. The design of the gyratory system should incorporate surface cycle passages (not subways) for cyclists heading in and out of the town from west Maidstone using the A20 and A26.

In view of its close proximity to Maidstone West station, we would request that the redesign of the gyratory should ensure easy and safe access to Maidstone West station for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers and car users.

We thoroughly support the comment about the need for surface cycle passages for cyclists. In order to encourage cycle use, cycle routes should always avoid unnecessary detours and slopes, thus ensuring that cycling in town is seen as the quickest and easiest means of travel.

Appendix A

We would also ask that the plans should include consideration of the links to Maidstone West station and the gyratory from the new/improved cycle route south along the River Medway which we understand is due for completion in 2016.

In view of the complex nature of the gyratory we believe that clear and comprehensive signage for all users should be catered for in the plans. Directions and journey times to and from Maidstone East and West stations should feature on signage.

It has been pleasing to note the increased number of cycles using the cycle shelters at Maidstone West station, which are frequently full, so we would recommend that support is given for additional shelters be installed at the station.

It is important that sufficient and affordable car parking spaces are available in the vicinity of Maidstone West station in order to maximise use of services, particularly the very valuable High Speed service.

Can fresh consideration be given to the access in and out of the Maidstone West Car park to provide an in and out and prevent the gridlock that frequently happens.

Is the special dial-up parking arrangement in Barker Street for Rail users permanent? Can it be more widely publicised?

D. That the Head of Planning and Development be asked to report back to the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference during the 2015-2016 municipal year on:

- *The identity of potential routes for the provision of cycle ways from rural locations (villages and hamlets) with poor bus services, to bus stops on major routes with a more frequent bus service;*
- *The possibility of creating an orbital cycle and footpath route around Maidstone linking to Maidstone town centre via radial routes such as:*
 - *Len valley to the north of Maidstone*
 - *Medway Valley to the west of Maidstone*
 - *Tovil Nature Park*
 - *The Loose Valley Conservation area*
 - *Boughton Monchelsea, and*
 - *Langley to the east of Maidstone*
- *The costs of firstly providing cycle parking at the end of these routes;*
- *The cost of the longer term aim of developing the cycle route to the cycle parking.*

E. That the Head of Planning and Development be recommended to urgently refresh and update the draft Maidstone Borough Council Cycling Strategy, dated June 2012 and present it to the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference in the new municipal year 2015-2016 before taking it for public consultation.

We support this recommendation.

Appendix A

F. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, use the principal proposals from the refreshed Cycling Strategy to inform the emerging Integrated Transport Strategy.

We support this recommendation.

G. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to:

- Proceed with establishing the Maidstone Cycling Forum and ensure it is supported by an officer with responsibility for cycling in their job description;
- Identify a lead member to act as a cycling champion within the authority.

We are aware of the re-established Cycling Forum and its' proposals in relation to the Cycling strategy which we support. We are not aware of the appointment of a lead member or of support being provided by an officer, both of which we would support.

H. That a member of Maidstone Borough Council's Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee (PTD OSC), or a member of the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be invited to join the Quality Bus Partnership.

That provision be made for the needs of rail users be included on the partnership to ensure safe secure travel interchange.

I. That the Public Transport Team at Kent County Council at meetings with KCC Highways, raise the following requests and report back to the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference during the 2015-2016 municipal year:

- A definitive list of forthcoming road closures be sent to bus service providers in a timely manner to facilitate compliance with the Traffic Commissioners regulations;

Please could the Community Rail Partnership be added to the distribution list for these closures: kentcrp@sustrans.org.uk It is important that this is shared with all users.

- A set of processes and procedures are established and put in place for communicating road closures to avoid problems when changes to Highways personnel are made;
- A definition of what constitutes an emergency road closure is published and shared with bus service providers.

J. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to re-establish the Maidstone Borough Transport User Group. Membership to include representatives from all public transport service providers, KCC transport planners, MBC officers/members, parish councils, service users and other interested parties to ensure on-going issues with transport and ideas for enhancements to services are communicated and dealt with.

Appendix A

We support this recommendation and would request we are again offered a place on the group.

K. That a Maidstone Borough Council Officer be asked to investigate and report back to the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference Committee during the municipal year 2015-2016 on the progress and lessons learnt from the Medway twilight bus service once the trial is completed.

L. That the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for Community and Leisure in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended, as part of the Parish Charter refresh, to include a section on the powers and opportunities parish councils have in the provision of transport services and capital equipment, such as bus shelters and real time transport information, and funding streams available to them.

We support this recommendation.

M. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new 2015 municipal year, be recommended to include the potential use of Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy monies to support the provision of bus services, and/or provide capital equipment for bus services in the Borough in the Local Plan.

We would recommend that this be extended to include rail access and services to stations for all, parking at stations (car and cycle).

We believe 106/CIL policy should be flexible to ensure monies can be agreed, when planning consent is given, to improve facilities at and around stations including access and parking that encourages positive use of alternative transport.

A current example of this is Yalding station where a potential new housing development adjacent to the station requires both flood proof access and offers the opportunity to provide access for all to the northbound platform (which can currently only be reached by using the bridge). We are supporting the Parish Council in trying to progress this with Southeastern and Network Rail.

N. That Kent County Council Transport Planning Officers be recommended to make strong arguments where they can to give Section 106 agreements impetus to provide bus services in and around the Borough of Maidstone.

Again, we would recommend that this be extended to include rail services and access to stations, parking at stations (car and cycle).

O. That parishes, residents associations and neighbourhood forums be encouraged by the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, to form groups similar to the East of Maidstone Bus User Group.

P. That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of

Appendix A

reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to survey the users of Maidstone East railway station car park to find out their reason for using it to establish how many users were rail passengers and how many were not.

We believe that this will be a very useful survey and would ask to receive a copy of the results if possible.

Q. That the Cabinet Member for Planning Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to:

- Respond to the Department for Transport's franchise consultation, which due in 2016;
- Reduce unnecessary car travel within the borough, this response should request improved commuter and off peak services using high speed trains and Thameslink services to reduce the number of rail users travelling across the borough by car to other stations that offer better service than their local station;
- Continue to promote aspirations for re-securing a Maidstone to Canon Street service.

We strongly support this recommendation and will be involved and responding to DfT franchise consultations.

R. That the Cabinet Member for Planning Transport and Development or the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015, be recommended to promote the appointment of a Kent County Councillor for Maidstone and a Maidstone Borough Councillor to the Steering Group for the Medway Valley Line and Kent Community Rail Partnership to ensure Maidstone borough's needs are pursued.

We are delighted that councillors have now been appointed and thank Members for implementing the recommendation. We are already seeing positive signs of improved collaboration on transport initiatives.

S. That Councillor Chittenden investigate how Maidstone Borough can be represented on the South Eastern Public Transport User Group and report back to the relevant new Committee with responsibility for transport and development in their terms of reference from the new municipal year 2015.

T. That the Head of Planning and Development be recommended to ensure Section 106 funding be sought from developers at every opportunity to:

- Support public transport links to and from new developments linking bus and rail services, and;
- Ensure the provision is timed in a way to provide services that increase as occupation of developments increase.

We strongly support this recommendation.

U. That the Chairman of the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee write to Mr Mike Gibson, Public Affairs Manager, SouthEastern Trains to:

Appendix A

- Establish how parish councils can access funding for improvements to rural rail stations;
- Request he take forward his suggestion to approach Network Rail regarding the possibility of expanding rail station car parks at Bearsted and Headcorn and look into the possibility of extending this to other rural rail stations;
- Request he take forward his suggestion to reduce parking costs at rural rail stations such as Headcorn to discourage rail users from parking in residential areas.

We support this initiative.

V. Maidstone Borough Council, through the Committee with responsibility for transport in its terms of reference from the new 2015 municipal year, consider aggregating the Park and Ride Service and Parking Services Budgets to ensure that the access to the Town Centre is managed in a more coherent and integrated manner and to safeguard against possible changes in the regulatory climate.

W. Maidstone Borough Council, through the Committee with responsibility for transport in its terms of reference from the new 2015 municipal year, should actively investigate and seek to bring forward an express bus service linked to the Park and Ride service,

We would like to stress the importance of the Footbridge across the Medway which links Maidstone East to Maidstone Barracks which not only provides a rapid link between the rail lines but is also used by many pupils for access to local schools.

Finally, we are keen supporters of the transport delivery group and would be wish to invited back as a member of the group.

For further information or questions, please contact:

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or

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