

# PROJECT CENTRE

## Strood Draft Action Plan Consultation Report

### Transforming Strood Town Centre

Medway Council

October 2016



## DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Report Reference	Issue	Description	Originator	Checked	Authorised
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

This report details the consultation process, including activities, events and findings for the consultation of the draft Action Plan for Strood Town Centre undertaken in July 2016.

Following a number of visioning workshops with key stakeholders and the community in late 2015 and early 2016, a set of measures and key objectives were developed that informed the design of the draft Action Plan. The proposals aim to:

- Improve journey times and reduce congestion;
- Deliver a safe and attractive environment for those that walk, cycle or use public transport;
- Renew and refresh the urban realm and retail environment; and
- Create a feeling of place and pride.

The shared vision for this project is to deliver a transformational change to Strood Town Centre.

The consultation period ran from Wednesday 29 June 2016 to Wednesday 27 July 2016. The community and key stakeholders were engaged and informed of the engagement in a number of ways, this included the following:

- The draft Action Plan was displayed at the Community Hub for the duration of the consultation
- A presentation was given to the Town Centre Forum
- A Webpage to the plans and an online survey on the Council website as well a Council Press release, Tweets and on-line articles
- At the start of the consultation, posters were delivered to all Council Community Hubs
- meetings held with market traders in Tolgate Lane car park, Kent Community Rail Partnership, Southeastern Rail, Network Rail, Parish of St Nicholas Church Strood, Rochester Bridge Trust and local bus operators Nu-Venture and Arriva Buses
- Pavement consultation in the High Street
- Presented at stakeholder events such as Kent Community Rail Partnership meeting and 'Let's Talk Rochester Esplanade, Temple Marsh & Temple Manor' Medway Council event.

### Results

- The results indicate strong support for the proposals.
- Overall residents are supportive of removing the pedestrian guard rail along the High Street; there are some concerns about pedestrian safety, particularly for children and the elderly.
- Concern that the traffic calming and route changes will negatively impact the traffic flow and cause delays, particularly around the Cuxton Road junction change and Station Road.

- Discussions with Rochester Bridge Trust highlighted a need to address the section of High Street between the Station Road and the Rochester Bridge.
- The market traders were very supportive of the proposal for Tolgate Lane car park; concerns over the short term impacts of the construction works on the markets will need to be addressed.
- Maintenance for the improvements emerged as a common theme across all the comments and will be incorporated into the detailed design.
- Improved entrance to St Nicholas Church was explored but not considered a suitable option at this time due to tree root damage.
- Creating good way finding, signage and improved link to the station from the residential areas to the North East.
- Improved rear access to the Community Hub to be addressed.
- Concern about flooding and the impact of raising the level of the road.
- Concerns regarding the impact of the Right turn ban from Cuxton Road onto the High Street for bus routes.

## Recommendations

- Removal of guard railing in the High Street areas to be reviewed with a safety audit. Use of trees and planters to stop cars mounting the pavement to be considered.
- Improve and sign the route through from the residential area in the North East through to the station.
- Improve rear access to the Community Hub. This could run along the front of the commercial units to create an extra buffer between the cafe seating area and the car park.
- Due to ongoing issues regarding flooding in the Tolgate Lane car park, SuDS and water sensitive urban design to be considered through detailed design to address localised flooding. Similarly road and kerb design will mitigate the impact of flooding on the North Street and High Street junction.
- The section of High Street between the Station Road and the Rochester Bridge should be included as part of the propose streetscape and pavement improvements, subject to funding.
- Introduce a bus stop on Knight Road adjacent to the existing stop near Morrisons for the new agreed bus route.
- On-going engagement with the market traders and businesses to ensure traders have up to date information and to alleviate their concerns regarding disruptions during the construction phase.
- To ensure the improvements around the station are maintained long term, Network Rail and South Eastern will need to be involved in the design and material selection at the detailed design stage.

CONTENTS PAGE	PAGE NO.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I
1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	1
2. ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS	4
3. DISCUSSION	19
4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS	21
QUALITY	22
APPENDIX A – ENGAGEMENT MATERIAL	A
APPENDIX B – DOCUMENTATION OF PRESS AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS	C
APPENDIX C – DETAILED RESPONSE SUMMARY FROM CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE	G

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This draft report details the consultation process including activities, events and findings for the consultation of the draft Action Plan for Strood Town Centre undertaken in July 2016.

Following a number of visioning workshops with key stakeholders and the community in late 2015 and early 2016, a set of measures and key objectives were developed that informed the design of the draft Action Plan. The proposals aim to:

- Improve journey times and reduce congestion;
- Deliver a safe and attractive environment for those that walk, cycle or use public transport;
- Renew and refresh the urban realm and retail environment; and
- Create a feeling of place and pride.

The shared vision for this project is to deliver a transformational change to Strood Town Centre.

Ongoing engagement with a wide range of key stakeholders has continued throughout the design process to ensure a robust design that delivers on the vision and objectives is developed. The proposals have been informed and guided by business owners, local interest groups, political representatives, council officers and Town centre users.

### 1.1 Consultation process

The consultation period ran from Wednesday 29 June 2016 to Wednesday 27 July 2016 with all comments being received by 8pm on 27 July. The community and key stakeholders were engaged and informed of the engagement in a number of ways, this included the following:

- The draft Action Plan was displayed on large boards in the Community Hub Strood foyer throughout the consultation period. The display included flyers and pamphlets for the community to take away and information on how to provide feedback on the proposals. Copies of the consultation documents can be found in Appendix A.
- Presentation to the Town Centre Forum on 28 June – members were invited via email and approximately 90 local businesses were provided with a hand delivered letter in the week prior to the meeting. The invitation also included details of the broader engagement, URL to the online engagement platform and contact details should they have any queries. A copy of the letter can be found in Appendix A. A further drop in session was held at the end of the consultation period on 26 July.
- Dedicated webpage with link to online survey and ability to download the flyer, poster and pamphlet.
- Posters were delivered to all Council Community Hubs (Gillingham, Chatham, Rochester, Rainham and Strood). Refer to Appendix A for images of the poster.
- A stall on the High Street was set up on 7 July allowing the general public to view the proposal and speak with the design team to understand the proposals and the rationale.
- Press release – published on 29 June, the news article was published on the Medway home page. Refer to Appendix B for a copy of the press release.



- Kent Online News – an article was published on 29 June and another on 7 July advising the public on the proposal and how they can make comments. Refer to Appendix B for copies of the articles.
- Twitter – various posts of the High Street stall and links to the online information, including the Medway Messenger (10,527 followers), Kent Community Rail Partnership (238 followers), Kent News (1,025 followers), WhatsOnInRochester (4,152 followers) and Medway Council (14,394 followers). Medway Council also tweeted on 29 July advising the public that the engagement material had been released this was retweeted by 12 others including Medway Labour, Medway Green Party and MHS Homes. Refer to Appendix B for copies of the tweets.
- Presentation by the Kent Community Rail Partnership on 9 July at one of their community meetings.
- Presentation by Fiona Leadley, Greenspace Development Officer at Medway Council, during 'Let's Talk Rochester Esplanade, Temple Marsh & Temple Manor' on 21 July.
- Face-to-face meetings with market traders in Tolgate Lane car park on 5 July and emails sent to all Saturday traders. Details of these discussions are detailed in section 2.8.
- Face-to-face meetings with Kent Community Rail Partnership, Southeastern Rail, Network Rail Parish of St Nicholas Church Strood, Rochester Bridge Trust and local bus operators Nu-Venture and Arriva Bus.



Figure 1. Community Hub Strood Display



Figure 2. Community engagement in the street

In total, approximately 30,800 people were informed of the consultation, in addition to those that visited the display at the Community Hub or downloaded the plans online.

Throughout the engagement process, the community and key stakeholders were invited to participate in the survey available both online and in hard copy to gauge their level of agreement to various statements about the Action Plan and how well it met the project objectives.

## 1.2 Engagement undertaken prior to consultation

Engagement with key stakeholders has been undertaken from the early stages of the project development. Initial discussions took place with Medway Council officers to discuss issues relating to:

- Traffic management;
- Traffic signal operations and modelling;
- Road safety;
- Transport operations – bus operations and cycling;
- Regeneration proposals;
- Town centre operations and management;
- Asset management;
- Street lighting;
- Structures; and
- Waste management.

An initial Town Centre Forum took place on 27 October 2015 which involved businesses, councillors, officers from Medway council and member of the project team. This meeting generated a range of feedback which was incorporated into the designs subsequently consulted on in July 2016.



## 2. ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

### 2.1 Town Centre Forum

A second Town Centre forum meeting was held on 28 June 2016 with a number of businesses and councillors attended the meeting.

A presentation was made by the design team highlighting the objectives and vision for the Strood project along with the challenges and issues faced in preparing a transformational improvement plan for the town centre. Attendees were invited to discuss their thoughts and key issues following the presentation.

The table below lists the questions and issues raised by those who attended the session.

Nature of comment	Design team response
How will Gun Lane/Cuxton Lane work two-way? Currently the traffic builds up along the route, how will it work as a single lane?	A mini roundabout at Darnley Arches is proposed, it may be tight for HGVs to turn but it is tight currently because of the bridge restriction, every scenario for traffic has been looked as well as the impact of each proposal on other junctions. Free flowing traffic at McDonalds will release the Knight Road congestion. By removing the signalling and traffic along North and Commercial Streets it should reduce the level of traffic.
What is the impact on traffic heading into Strood from the west? It is often backed up past the cemetery.	It is proposed there will be a banned right turn into the High Street from Cuxton Road, all alternatives have been modelled and this was the best option in terms of traffic flows. Traffic signals will be optimised to reflect the number of vehicles, this means the signal timings automatically change for the time of day, and amount of traffic, and this ensures there are no long queues on one road as a result of freeing up another road.
Banning the right turn from Cuxton Road means Securicor vans will not be able to turn right into the High Street and do cash collections or deliveries for HSBC or Lloyds? Will Northcote Road, which is residential, be used more?	Vehicles will still be able to turn right from Commercial Road into the High Street or they can use Knight Road, we aren't stopping anyone using Knight Road.
What will the bus route along Cuxton Road do if it can't turn right on to High Street?	They can take Knight Road or Northcote Road. We are meeting with the operators to discuss these options.
If Knight Road is free flowing, how will vehicles get out from the retail park into Commercial Road? Currently they wait for the lights to change.	We will see how it works and if an intervention is needed i.e. a mini roundabout that can be addressed easily at a later stage.

Can a loading bay be built for Securicor? It will block traffic otherwise if they have to load/unload on the road.	If we are not careful the footway will be cut down at every opportunity to accommodate the traffic, we can consider it at the detailed design stage.
Will all the railings be removed? There was a collision where a car went through the shop window which is why the railings were put up. The ATMs are often used by drivers accessed by mounting the kerb.	A safety audit will be undertaken and will highlight any railings which should remain for safety. However, it doesn't have to be railings it could be measures which prevent cars mounting the kerb but allow pedestrians to move freely, e.g. trees, planter boxes etc. For years there have been requests for the railings to be removed but there have been no options for replacing them previously.
Many people walk straight across the road from Wilkinson's.	With the proposal people will not need to wait to cross.
Must consult with the businesses on Cuxton Road as many do not have rear entrances and it is a key delivery route.	Yes, these will be consulted with. Particularly with Tesco.
Strood has lost its identity and needs to become a place.	The removal of guard-rail and the encouragement of pedestrian movements will change the feel of the road. Reduction in through traffic will result in mainly 'local traffic'. Changing the perception to a cafe culture and window shopping place will help.
Strood needs a heart and central space.	Visits to the retail park and the high street need to be joined, a previous plan to improve Tolgate Lane Car Park has been developed by the team to create this link. Public realm enhancements will make it a 'place', it needs to be convenient.  Investment is required to make an area appealing; this can be achieved by seating outside, events, food markets, and entertainment to draw people in. Numerous residential properties are within a 10-20minute walk of Strood Town Centre, encouraging those people to walk into the town centre and spend time there will be the catalyst for the demand for events and more markets etc.
Can signage at the Medway tunnel direct people to the A2?	This is not part of the PCL commission but Medway Council can certainly take this forward.
Parking on Friary Place behind Aldi is an issue currently.	No waiting or loading ban is being suggested for this location and will follow up. This will need to be enforced to work.

## 2.2 Pavement Engagement

On Thursday 7 of July 2016, Project Centre consultants undertook a pavement consultation exercise between 9am and 4pm. Approximately 150 members of the public visited the display located on the north eastern side of the North Street and High Street junction, adjacent to Angel Place. The lead councillor and Medway officers also attended, along with a reporter from BBC Kent and Kent Online.



Figure 3. Photos from the day

Large boards detailing the proposals were displayed on easels as well as a large plan of the town centre and road network to help visualise the proposals.

The pavement exercise enabled members of the public to ask questions directly to the project team and raise further awareness of the project by the presence of the stand in an area with high foot fall.

A number of queries and suggestions were put forward at the event, which are listed below:

- Overall, there were a number of positive comments about the proposed interventions regarding greater space for pedestrians, improvement of the public realm and pavement surface, prioritising pedestrians, increasing pedestrian safety and reducing speeds particularly on Station Road;
- Several members of the public called for more improvements to the public space we were situated in, including addressing the blank facades and how barren the space feels;
- Signage for pedestrians needs to be improved as well as signage for HGVs and vehicles in general following the improvement works;
- Concerns regarding impact on buses due to the no right turn on Cuxton Road;
- A number of parents raised that there was a lack of play facilities in the Town Centre;
- A skate park designed by the users was suggested in the public space we were in near Aldi;
- Maintenance of vegetation was raised as an issue, particularly along Station Road;
- Improving and signing a route through to the Station from the residential area to the North-East of the town was suggested; and

- Concerns were raised regarding the impact to traffic caused by these interventions, however, following our discussions individuals were able to understand the rationale and changes to their routes.

## 2.3 Drop in session

A second drop in session was held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> of July in the Community Hub in Strood to obtain public, business and stakeholder input to the development of this project.

The session included members of the project team, officers of Medway Council and councillors and providing the opportunity for members of the public and all stakeholders to ask questions and request further information.

A number of key themes emerged from the consultation set out below:

- Illegal parking outside Wilkinson's to access cash machines;
- Holes in the guard railing outside Wilkinson's allowing people to dash across High Street;
- Access to public toilets was raised as many market traders use the McDonalds toilets and the existing block near Aldi was not well maintained;
- Concern regarding the removal of the guard-rail and pedestrian safety;
- Concern that the traffic calming measures identified in the plan on Station Street will disperse traffic to other streets; and
- The option of pedestrianising High Street was suggested

## 2.4 Parish of St Nicholas Church Strood

Project Centre met with Rev. David Green on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July to discuss the Church's vision for the Strood town centre.

Rev. Green expressed an interest to create a more inviting entrance that attracted pedestrians to use the Church green. One idea that was suggested was constructing a DDA compliant ramp off High Street at the south eastern corner (adjacent to the beauticians) and creating an archway entry between the existing trees. Refer to the images below. This path would link to an existing path on the eastern side of the Church.





A second issue that was raised was the steep incline of the ramp at the northern end of the Church green where it meets Gun Lane. This route becomes a safety hazard in the winter, with frequent slipping. Rev. Green suggested using either hand rails along the edge or reducing the gradient by building up the path.



## 2.5 Southeastern Rail

Project Centre met with Southeastern Rail and Network Rail representatives Steve Cross and Laura Heath on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July. The following is a summary of the discussion:

- Importance of the proposed re-route to divert through traffic from the centre of Strood is a key driver of the project. Making Gun Lane / Cuxton Road two-way will facilitate through traffic bypassing the centre and reduce congestion through the centre of Strood, providing a more direct route for those wishing to travel along the A2, M2 etc.
- Taking through traffic out of the town centre will facilitate improvements to the public realm, making it more pedestrian friendly, particularly the key arrival points, improving safety, destination finding and accessibility as well as creating a welcoming gateway into Strood.
- There was general support for the proposals. The main points of interest/discussion were around the Station environs and the Gun Lane bridge which has a high level of bridge strikes.
- Focusing on the station environment, an area of high pedestrian movement (a recent Southeastern Survey showed 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of station users came from Station Road), interventions will include improvements to the existing underpass and the steep footpath, with measures including improvement of lighting quality, low maintenance landscaping and construction of a DDA and DfT code of practice compliant ramp.
- Although the council commits to carry out the improvement works to the Station environs, despite it not being Council owned land, it is unlikely they will have on-going maintenance funding and as the works are on Network Rail land maintenance responsibility will be Network Rail's going forward. It was noted that if this were the case Network Rail and South Eastern will need to provide input into the detailed design to ensure easy maintenance and on-going running costs etc;
- Network Rail Structures team (Bridges & Subway) is to be involved at the next stage of design. These conversations are anticipated to start in September/October;

- In order to address bridge strike issues on Gun Road the project propose measures such as narrowing the road before the bridge through the introduction of high raised contour curbs closer to the junction to be visible as well as additional signage and direction. Network Rail to be involved in the development of these proposals.

## 2.6 Rochester Bridge Trust

Project Centre met with Rochester Bridge Trust representative Tim Belcher-Whyte on the 13<sup>th</sup> of July. The Trust was briefed on the extent of the scope, project boundary and proposed actions detailed in the plan.

In relation to the draft Action Plan, the Trust outlined their key priority, which was to remove or reduce the stop/start traffic backing up on the bridge - this negatively impacts the bridge both in terms of image and its structure. The following is a summary of the discussion:

Nature of comment	Design team response
Concerned about crossings on Commercial Road delaying traffic and impacting the bridge.	Modelling shows that Commercial Road will have improved flow, due to improved intersection design.
Interested in lighting of the viaducts. The Trust is investigating the use of LED lighting on the bridge, lighting the vertical trusses from below.	Noted. Will try to incorporate themes and designs in Strood lighting proposals.
Queried the lack of cycle routes in the action plan	Width of road does not support cycle lanes; however, the speed and traffic calming measures proposed will promote a cycle friendly environment.
Concerned over the gap in scope areas - Section of High Street between the bridge and the extent of the draft action plan.	Noted. Will speak with Medway Council about the potential to extend the area, this will be subject to funding however.
Tim advised that the Council is in the process of removing the underpass north of Canal Road on High Street. This may place more pressure on the proposed crossing change at High Street, Commercial Road and Station Road. There is a crossing to the south managed by the Trust that is signalised.	Noted. The crossing will be designed to accommodate high pedestrian numbers.
Trust advised that they propose to re-introduce the 1930s ornate features to the bridge	Noted.



## 2.7 Bus Operators

Project Centre met with local bus operator, Arriva and Nu-Venture during the consultation period. The draft Action Plan was presented and they were very supportive of the plan as a whole stating that; "We applaud efforts by Medway Council and its partners to make the Strood environment a pleasant one for residents and visitors, and we accept that the existing traffic situation is less than ideal".

A summary of the comments made are listed below:

Nature of comment	Design team response
The project misses a key opportunity to create a by-pass route parallel to the river.	This has been raised in the past, however, due to land ownership constraints and the construction costs of undertaking the work, this option has not been explored and is outside of the scope.
Commercial Road and Knight Road - traffic exiting the various retail warehouses north of Morrisons has increased substantially over the years and creates delays currently as right-turning exiting cars tend to block southbound Knight Road. This does not appear to be resolved at all and will be worsened if the 'McDonalds' signals are removed as southbound use of Knights Rd is generally regulated somewhat by these signals producing 'convoys' then gaps.	The removal of the signals will help facilitate the movement around the High Street and reduce delays at the Commercial Road Knight Road junction. Options have been considered for the retail park junction such as a roundabout, however this was not feasible and cannot be installed due to visibility at this junction. The existing yellow box junction will be refreshed with improved enforcement whilst other options are still being explored.
High Street and North Street - the proposed new bus stop is welcomed; the present stops are 'unpaired' and there is a substantial eastbound deficiency. Any new stop (and indeed all existing stops) should have at least the following features as standard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bus shelter</li> <li>• Real time information</li> <li>• raised kerb</li> <li>• 24-hour waiting restrictions allowing Buses Only (with no parking by any service vehicles)</li> </ul>	Noted. Bus stop designs proposed will incorporate any standard specifications.
Strood train station and arrival - I believe the traffic calming here to be the 'Achilles Heel' of the whole scheme – assumptions have been made about the traffic flows on Station Rd but it is my belief that, notwithstanding it to be the obvious/direct route. There will be resistance from motorists to using a calmed route, thus displacing traffic elsewhere and potentially disturbing/negating the assumptions on which the whole scheme is based.	Traffic calming has been introduced to improve road safety. The location of the traffic calming measures have been picked to correspond to areas with high collision records and areas of a high number of vulnerable road users and therefore removal of such measures are not possible.

<p>Priory Road and Cuxton Road - we would welcome the diversion of northbound 'A228' buses - e.g. Bus 151 - to follow the same route as southbound buses i.e. via Priory Road. This will simplify the route network, provided that all the existing southbound stops in Priory/Knight Roads are provided with a new northbound equivalent with easy pedestrian crossing to Morrisons etc from the west side of Knights Rd.</p> <p>Lack of traffic flow for most of the working day currently, from all routes in all directions at/west of Darnley Arch, needs to be understood much more carefully, and particularly in the context of the new flow of southbound traffic along Cuxton Road which will presumably result in longer queues for westbound traffic including buses on Priory Road if the mini-roundabout east of Darnley Arch is retained.</p>	<p>Bus stop - noted</p>
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## 2.8 Market Traders

Project Centre met with market traders in the Tolgate Lane car park on Tuesday 5 July to discuss the draft Action Plan and the implications for the markets. In total, 14 traders were consulted and briefed on the plan. The markets also operate on a Saturday, many of these vendors also operate on the Tuesday, to ensure all vendors were notified, an email was sent out by Medway Council to all Saturday operators.

All the traders consulted were highly supportive of the Action Plan, particularly in relation to access to power, resurfacing, the public space proposed and the improved crossing at Commercial Road.

A number of traders expressed concerns over the short term impacts of the construction works on the markets, some felt that closing the markets temporarily would severely impact their ability to reopen. Conversely, some of the traders were supportive of closing the markets and reopening them with new traders that reflect the transformation of Strood.

Permanent signage for the market and wayfinding for the toilets was raised as a common action that should be delivered as part of this plan.

The traders also raised a number of other issues including the poor drainage in the car park. During heavy rain and high tides, the drains fill up and flood the car park (as well as High Street). Parking enforcement was a common issue raised amongst the traders. They reported that cars were parking over night in the car park and blocking the traders, also drivers were attempting to enter the car park on market day.

## 2.9 Survey

The online survey used the platform Snap Surveys, a link to which was provided on the flyer, poster, letters and website. The surveys and plans were online for the entire period of the consultation and remained open for another week following the conclusion of the engagement period should there be any later comments. Surveys which were hand delivered were subsequently entered into the on-line system. In total, 129 responses were received, of those who provided a postcode, 50% were from residents within Strood.

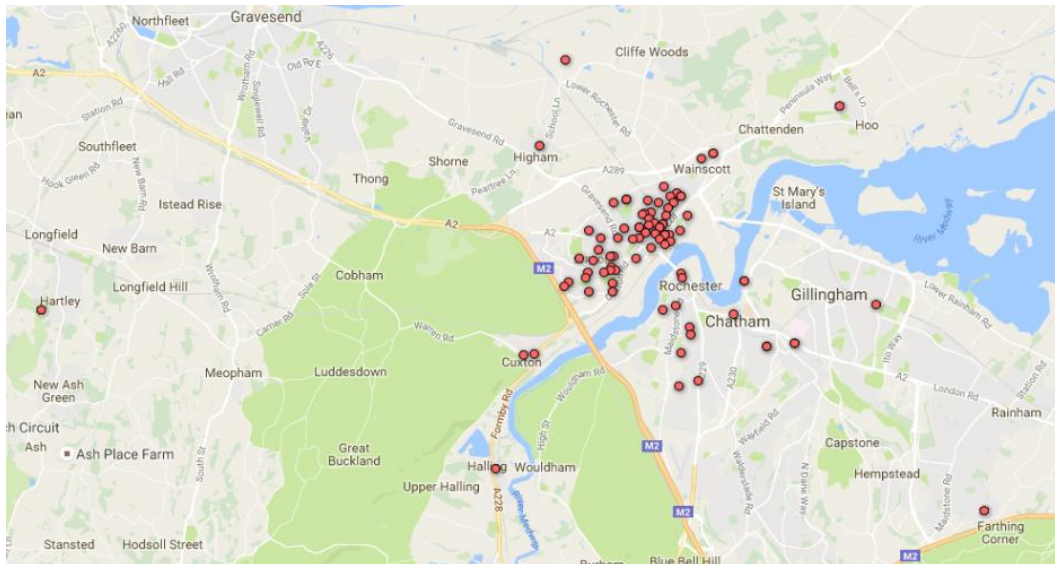


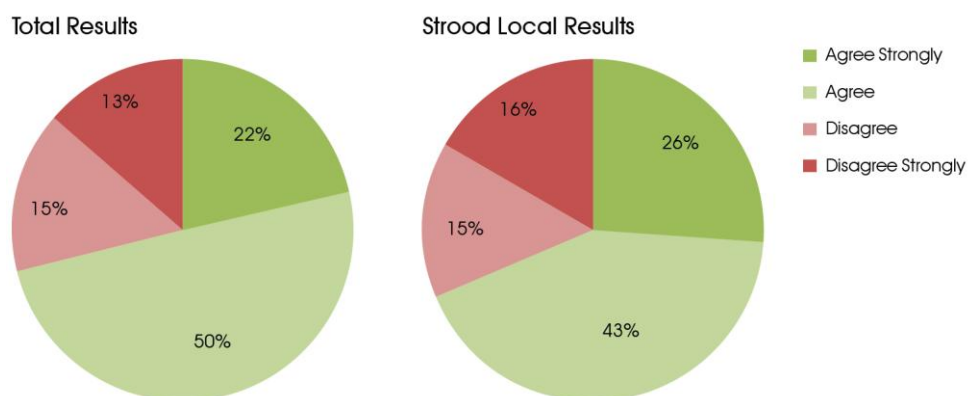
Figure 4. Map showing the location of respondents that provided a postcode

The following summarises the 129 survey responses setting out the results to various aspects of the proposals. Whilst the survey allowed comments for each of the public realm focus areas, a number of responses used this space to talk about other issues outside of the scope of this project. A detailed table of the responses have been included in Appendix C.

### 2.9.1 Public Realm Improvements

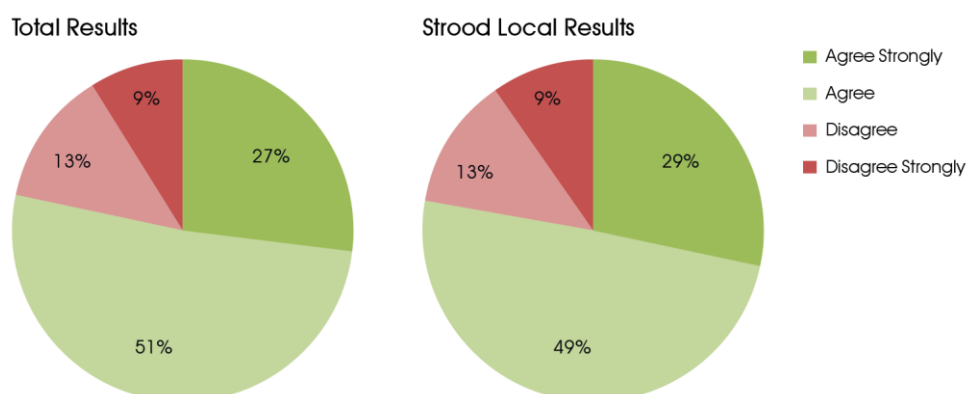
The questions in this section of the survey asked respondents to identify to what extent they agree or disagree that the design shown can deliver the vision statement.

#### *Commercial Road and Station Road*



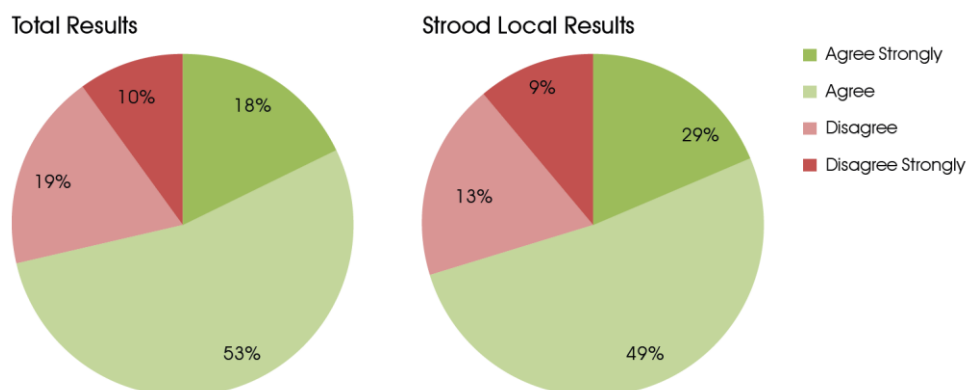
72% of all responses and 69% of those identified as living within Strood, agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed improvements met the objectives and vision statement. The majority of those that disagreed stated in the comments that they were concerned about the negative impact to traffic due to slowing vehicles on Station Road and whether this will disburse traffic onto other routes.

#### *Strood train station*



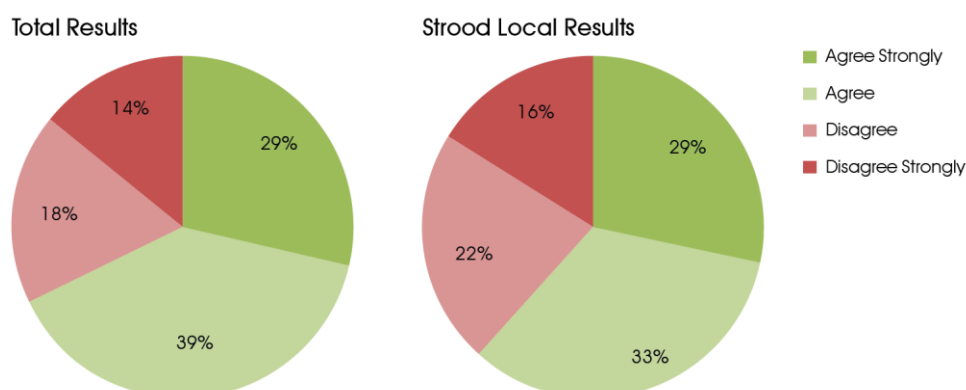
78% of all responses and for those identified as living within Strood, agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed improvements met the objectives and vision statement. A number of the comments raised, focus on areas outside of the scope of the Action Plan including quality of the train station itself and integration with the bus service. Many of those that disagreed called for improved wayfinding and addressing speeding vehicles on Station Road which these proposals will include.

### *Tolgate Lane and Car Park*



71% of all responses and 78% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed improvements met the objectives and vision statement. A number of comments raised concerns over the use of loose gravel or chipping, however, loose material was never proposed. Some comments argued that there was a lack of free parking available for High Street users and that the markets should move to make this a permanent car park.

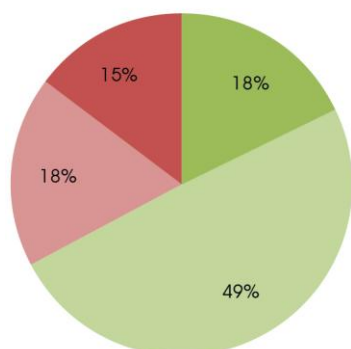
### *High Street and Angel Corner*



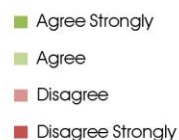
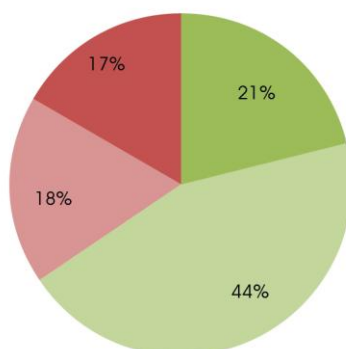
68% of all responses and 62% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed that the proposed improvements met the objectives and vision statement. The majority of those that disagreed were concerned about the impact of removing the traffic signals at North Street, slowing down traffic on High Street and pedestrian safety with the proposed removal of the guard rails. Whilst these comments are valid concerns, particularly in its current state as a highway through a town centre, slowing down the traffic on High Street and reducing the traffic numbers on North Street will create a safer pedestrian environment that would negate the need for guard rails. The guard rails also provide a sense of safety to drivers meaning that they are more comfortable to speed. The pedestrian crossing at Tolgate and further west at High Street and Commercial Road will provide the space for vehicles on North Street to enter High Street.

Overall

Total Results



Strood Local Results



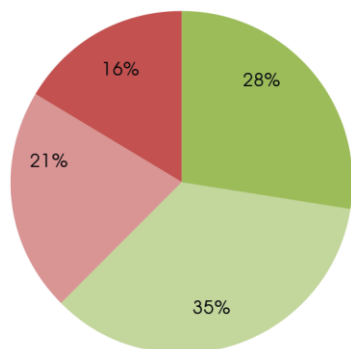
67% of all responses and 65% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed overall that the proposed improvements met the objectives and vision statement. Seven comments raised a desire for public toilets in the Town Centre, particularly around Tolgate Lane car park.

## 2.9.2 Amendments to the Traffic Movement in Strood

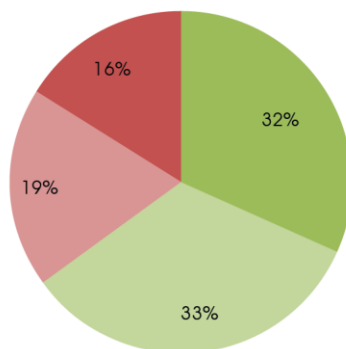
Respondents were presented with several statements regarding the proposed changes to the traffic and asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the intervention. The statements and results are summarised below.

*The action plan aims to redirect traffic from the centre of Strood if it is only passing through rather than visiting*

Total Results



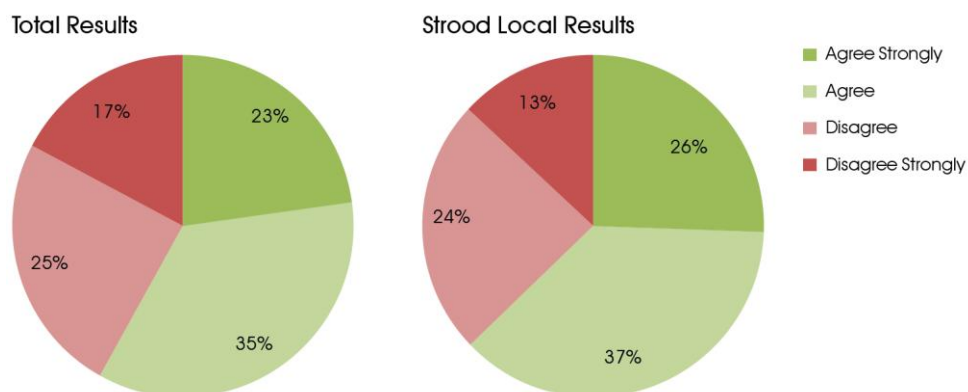
Strood Local Results



63% of all responses and 65% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed that through traffic should be redirected away from the centre of Strood.

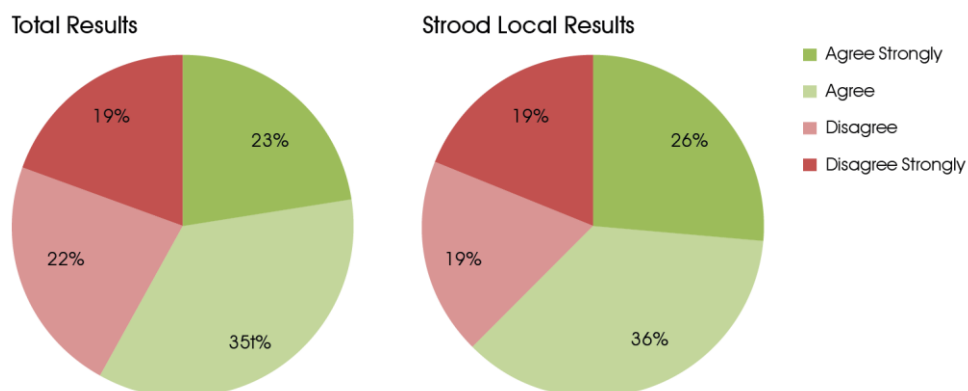


*Removal of traffic signals at the junction of Knight Road and Commercial Road*



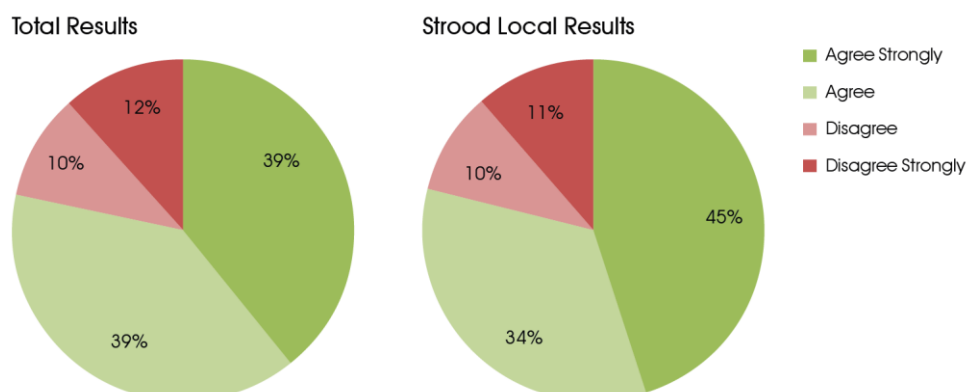
58% of all responses and 63% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with the removal of traffic signals.

*Removal of traffic signals at the junction of High Street and North Street*



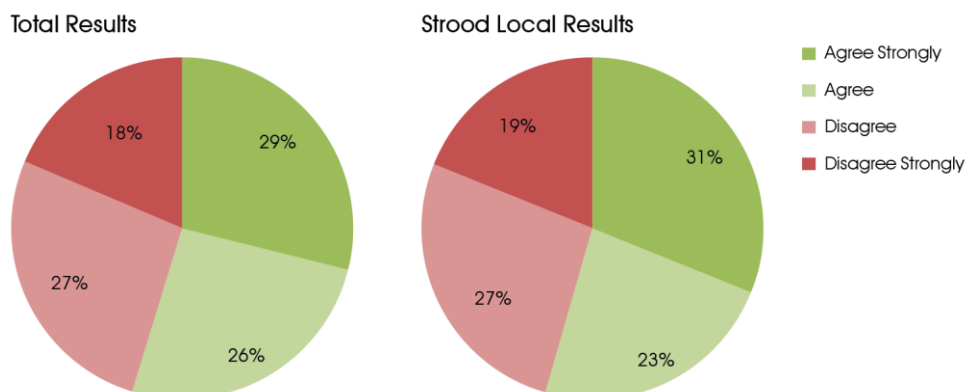
58% of all responses and 62% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with the removal of traffic signals.

*New controlled pedestrian crossing opposite Tolgate Lane within the High Street*



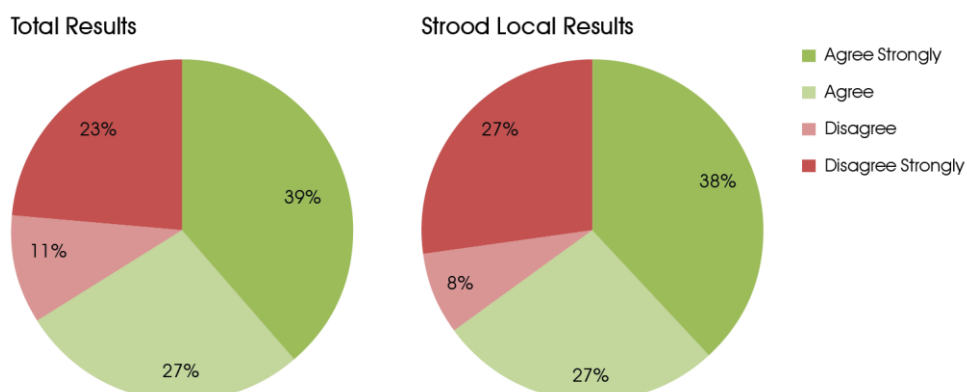
78% of all responses and 79% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with the pedestrian crossing opposite Tolgate Lane.

### *Removal of guard railing in the High Street areas*



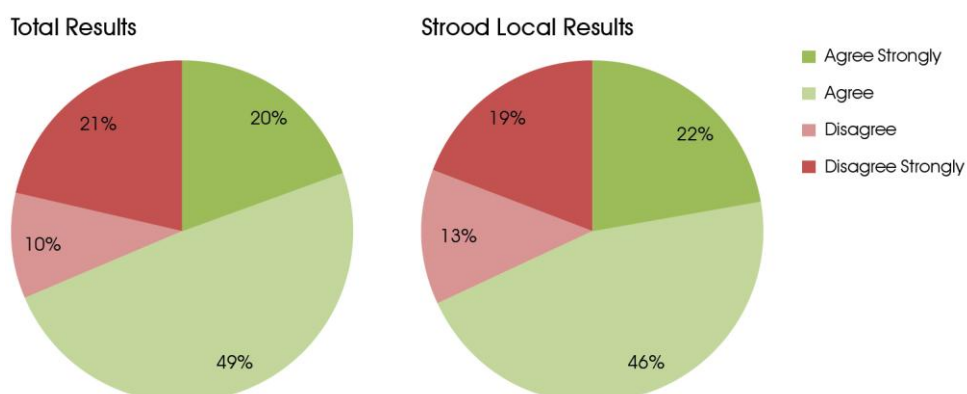
55% of all responses and 54% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with the removal of guard railing in the High Street areas. This had the lowest level of agreement and a number of comments (15) raised concerns over pedestrian safety.

### *Making Cuxton Road two-way to cut the amount of through traffic in the High Street*



66% of all responses and 65% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with making Cuxton Road two-way.

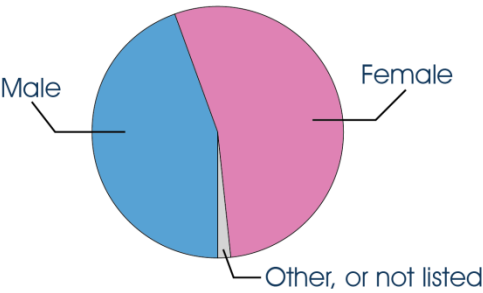
### *Overall traffic proposals*



69% of all responses and 68% of those identified as living within Strood agreed or strongly agreed with the traffic proposals overall.

Demographic Information of respondents

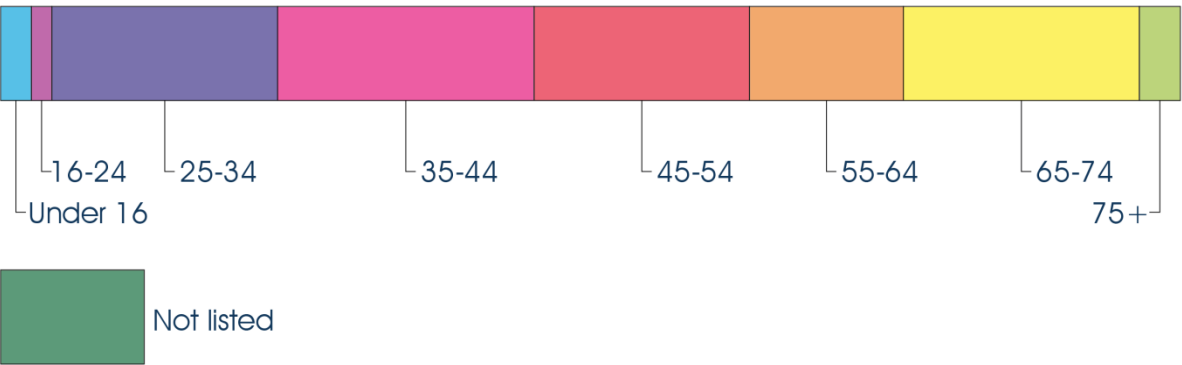
Gender



Ethnicity



Age Group



### 3. DISCUSSION

A number of key themes emerged from the engagement exercise:

- The results indicate a strong approval of the Action Plan with 67% support for the proposals overall.
- Overall residents are supportive of removing the pedestrian guard rail along the High Street; however they are concerned about pedestrian safety, particularly for children and the elderly. It was also suggested that the rails would allow cars to illegally park on the footpath as they already do in parts. In response to safety concerns the proposals look at slowing down the traffic on High Street and reducing the traffic numbers on North Street which will create a safer pedestrian environment that would negate the need for all the guard rails. The guard rails also provide a sense of safety to drivers meaning that they feel more comfortable to speed in this area. The existing gaps in the guard rails allow for informal crossing points and create a less safe crossing option. Finally, there are a number of areas in the Town Centre that lack guard railings and this has not been raised as a concern.
- There is a concern raised in the surveys and in conversations during the pavement event that the traffic calming and route changes will negatively impact the traffic flow and cause delays, particularly around the Cuxton Road junction change and Station Road. Rigorous modelling has been undertaken across the network which shows minimal disruptions and improved traffic flow. Secondly, there was a concern that changes would push traffic onto local residential roads; however, with any regeneration scheme such as this, there will always be minor adjustments to individual routes. However the objectives of the funding is to create reliable journey times through Strood and to create an attractive environment to foster the economic growth of the town centre, these traffic proposals will enable these objectives to be met.
- A number of comments and discussions with Rochester Bridge Trust highlighted a need to address the section of High Street between the Station Road and the Rochester Bridge. Currently there is a gap in the planned works for both the bridge and the project area. We agree that the area should be improved to enhance the entrance into Strood Town Centre from this direction.
- The market traders were very supportive of the proposal for Tolgate Lane car park; however, concerns over the short term impacts of the construction works on the markets will need to be addressed.
- Maintenance for the improvements emerged as a common theme across all the comments. This will be taken into account during the detailed design and recommendations will be made regarding future maintenance.
- A number of comments raised concerns regarding the proposed surface treatment in Tolgate Lane due to it being loose gravel, however, loose material was never proposed.
- The desire for a more inviting entrance to St Nicholas Church by Rev. Green is noted however, due to the construction cost and potential loss of the trees due to root damage by any alterations this was not considered to be a suitable option at this time.

- Creating a signed and improved link to the station from the residential areas to the North East was considered a suitable option that provides a route with less vehicle traffic for cyclists and pedestrians and will be developed through the detailed design stage.
- Some of the feedback we received included improving the rear access to the Community Hub, the design team agreed that this was a good idea as it would also improve access to the toilet, another issue that was raised.
- Concern about flooding and the impact of raising the level of the road potential exacerbate flooding issues were captured. This issue could be addressed with a sustainable drainage system (SuDS) in the car park, which reflects the natural drainage system and is capable of reducing surface water flooding, this will be explored through detailed design. For high Street this could be achieved through road design to channel the water away from the footpath.
- Concerns regarding the impact of the Right turn ban from Cuxton Road onto the High Street for bus routes were identified. During the consultation the bus operators were engaged with and an alternative route (along Priory Road, up Knight Road and right onto the High Street) was agreed, this provided an additional stop outside Morrisons.
- Developments as a result of the consultation require the section of Grove Road between South Eastern Road and Station Road to be proposed as one way. This change is necessary as the road is quite narrow and will allow us to relocate the pedestrian crossing closer to the desire line of pedestrians, deliver a safe pedestrian route from the residential area through to the Station and will help access to the adjacent car park. The change will also accompany the well lit walking route which is being addressed through the proposals.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Following the stakeholder and community engagement that was undertaken in June and July, the following is a list of proposed changes to the draft plan:

- Removal of guard railing in the High Street areas to be reviewed in further detail with a safety audit during the continuing design process. Use of trees and planters to stop cars mounting the pavement. One of the responses raised that the rails have been decorated on occasions by colourfully planted flower boxes and this may be a suitable compromise on the rails that remain.
- Improve and sign the route through from the residential area in the North East through to the station.
- Improve rear access to the Community Hub. This could run along the front of the commercial units to create an extra buffer between the cafe seating area and the car park.
- Due to ongoing issues regarding flooding in the Tolgate Lane car park, we will explore the use of SuDS and water sensitive urban design to address localised flooding. Similarly road and kerb design will mitigate the impact of flooding on the North Street and High Street junction.
- The section of High Street between the Station Road and the Rochester Bridge will be included as the design develops as part of the propose streetscape and pavement improvements, subject to funding.
- Introduce a bus stop on Knight Road adjacent to the existing stop near Morrisons for the new agreed bus route.
- On-going engagement with the market traders and businesses to ensure traders have up to date information and to alleviate their concerns regarding disruptions during the construction phase.
- To ensure the improvements around the station are maintained long term and the width restrictions by Cuxton Bridge are fit for purpose, Network Rail and South Eastern will need to be involved in the design and material selection at the detailed design stage.



## Quality

It is the policy of Project Centre to supply Services that meet or exceed our clients' expectations of Quality and Service. To this end, the Company's Quality Management System (QMS) has been structured to encompass all aspects of the Company's activities including such areas as Sales, Design and Client Service.

By adopting our QMS on all aspects of the Company, Project Centre aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure a clear understanding of customer requirements;
- Ensure projects are completed to programme and within budget;
- Improve productivity by having consistent procedures;
- Increase flexibility of staff and systems through the adoption of a common approach to staff appraisal and training;
- Continually improve the standard of service we provide internally and externally;
- Achieve continuous and appropriate improvement in all aspects of the company;

Our Quality Management Manual is supported by detailed operational documentation. These relate to codes of practice, technical specifications, work instructions, Key Performance Indicators, and other relevant documentation to form a working set of documents governing the required work practices throughout the Company.

All employees are trained to understand and discharge their individual responsibilities to ensure the effective operation of the Quality Management System.



## APPENDIX A – ENGAGEMENT MATERIAL

Invitation to Strood Town Centre Forum



Our ref: DX56006 STROOD; PCL 2542  
Date: 14 June 2016

**Local Growth Fund Projects Team  
Frontline Services**

Regeneration, Community and Culture Directorate  
Medway Council  
Civic Headquarters  
Gun Wharf, Dock Road  
CHATHAM, Kent ME4 4TR

Dear Sir/Madam

**Invitation to Strood Town Centre Forum - Transforming Strood Town Centre  
5.30pm on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at Strood Community Hub**

Following on from the successful workshop with the Town Centre Forum in October last year, the design team have developed a number of public realm, retail and traffic management interventions to deliver transformational change to Strood Town Centre. We are now presenting these concepts to the community and key stakeholders to inform and offer them a chance to have their say on the future of the Strood Town Centre.

In advance of the full public consultation we would like to present the proposals to you, hear your views. We are therefore arranging a special meeting of the Town Centre Forum on 28<sup>th</sup> June at the Strood Community Hub.

All business leaders, retailers, property owners and stakeholders are welcome to attend. We need your input. The agenda will be as follows;

- 17.30 to 18.00 – Refreshments and welcome
- 18.00 to 18.45 – Introduction and presentation by design team
- 18.45 to 19.15 – Questions / discussion
- 19.15 to 19.30 – Summary and roundup
- 19.30 – End

If you are planning to attend would you please let us know by contacting me on [annette.lebreton@medway.gov.uk](mailto:annette.lebreton@medway.gov.uk). Please let us know the name of the person attending, the business name and address represented and a contact email address or telephone number if available.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you there.

Yours faithfully

Annette Lebreton  
**Town Centre Co-ordinator  
Medway Council**

## APPENDIX B – DOCUMENTATION OF PRESS AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

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## Help to shape the future of Strood High Steet

29 June 2016

Strood town centre is set to undergo a £9million transformation over the coming years and local people are being asked to share their views on proposed plans.

Medway Council successfully bid for the Local Growth Fund money last year, and now a draft town centre review and concepts plan is ready for the public to comment on.

The scheme pulls together a range of proposals including improvements to the road layout in a bid to reduce congestion, the creation of safe and attractive routes for cyclists and pedestrians, and plans to refresh the look of the area and retail environment.

The transformation is set to boost economic growth, providing new and increased numbers of jobs in the town, as well as creating a location where people are proud to live and work.

Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration Cllr Rodney Chambers said: "I encourage residents, business owners and anyone with an interest in the future of Strood town centre to have their say on the proposals. All feedback we receive is of great help and will go towards shaping the area over the coming years."

The draft town centre review and concepts plan will be open for comment from 29 June until 29 July 2016 and there are a variety of ways to see the plans and have your say:

**Online:**  
See the full engagement document and make your comments at [www.medway.gov.uk/stroodtowncentre](http://www.medway.gov.uk/stroodtowncentre)

**Email:**  
Comments can be sent to [sam.neal@medway.gov.uk](mailto:sam.neal@medway.gov.uk).

**Post:**  
Integrated Transport Service  
Medway Council  
Gun Wharf Dock Road  
Chatham  
KENT ME4 4TR

**In person:**  
See the plans and chat with the design team in the public space near the entrance to Aldi and Barclays Bank in Strood on 7 July between 9am and 4pm.

A public display of the plans can also be found on the first floor of the Community Hub Strood, 133 High Street.

**Opening times:**  
Monday 9am - 6pm  
Tuesday 9am - 6pm  
Wednesday 9am - 6pm  
Thursday 9am - 6pm  
Friday 9am - 6pm  
Saturday 9am - 5pm

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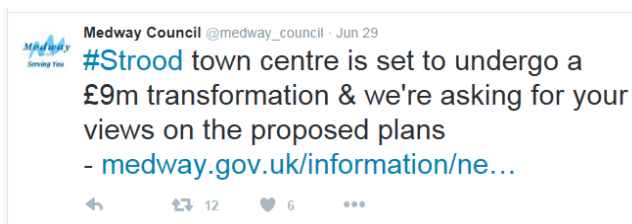
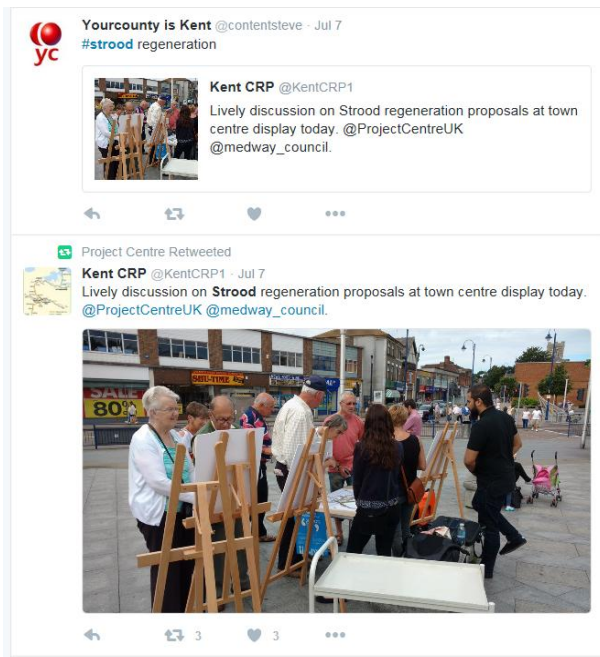
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<http://www.medway.gov.uk/information/news/newsfor2016/futureofstroodhighstreet...> 01/08/2016





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## Medway Council asking views on how £9m for Strood town centre should be spent

Comments | 18

by Jenni Horn | [jhorn@thekmgrouop.co.uk](mailto:jhorn@thekmgrouop.co.uk)

29 June 2016

Strood town centre is set to undergo a £9million transformation and people are being asked to share their views on the proposed plans.

Medway Council successfully bid for the Local Growth Fund money last year, and now a draft town centre review and concepts plan is ready for the public to comment on.

The scheme pulls together a range of proposals including improvements to the road layout in a bid to reduce congestion, new routes for cyclists and pedestrians, and plans to refresh the look of the area and retail environment.



Strood town centre



Tollgate Lane, Strood

The transformation is set to boost economic growth, providing new and increased numbers of jobs in the town, as well as creating a location where people are proud to live and work.

Cllr Rodney Chambers, who is in charge of regeneration, said: "I encourage residents, business owners and anyone with an interest in the future of Strood town centre to have their say on the proposals.

"All feedback we receive is of great help and will go towards shaping the area over the coming years."

People can comment on the draft plans until July 29.

Visit [www.medway.gov.uk/stroodtowncentre](http://www.medway.gov.uk/stroodtowncentre) to view them and have your say.

## APPENDIX C – DETAILED RESPONSE SUMMARY FROM CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Comments made in the consultation questionnaire were themed and grouped

Number of comments	Nature of comment	Design team response
<b>Commercial Road and Station Road Junction</b>		
9	Positive comments regarding the improvements.	Noted.
8	Perceived concerned about the proposal's negative impact on traffic and HGV's.	Rigorous modelling has been undertaken by professional traffic engineers, we are confident that the Action Plan will deliver an improved traffic flow and public realm and meet the objectives of the funding.
4	Due to the current traffic dominated space a number of comments question the need/location of seating.	Noted, although through planting and linking with the existing land uses we aim to create an improved public realm.
3	A sense of arrival is not considered necessary.	Noted, however this was identified as a significant issue for the Town Centre Forum.
3	Establish sense of arrival from the Rochester side of bridge e.g. Land where Civic Centre was.	Noted. Whilst the rail bridge is the formal gateway into Strood we agree that the area should be improved and this is one of our recommendations.
2	Improve every shop front, not just a select few.	Due to budget constraints, we won't be able to improve every shop front.
2	Concerned about vandalism to artwork. Respondents believed that the artwork proposed on the flank wall would attract vandalism and would deteriorate due to pollution.	Based on previous experience of public art this should not be the case. The artist will be required to engage with the community hence there will be a sense of ownership of the art.
2	Remove right hand turn on Station Road into Commercial Street as cars block the intersection and causes traffic to back up across the bridge, blocking the Esplanade junction.	A yellow box junction has been proposed as part of the designs at this junction to try to prevent this from occurring.
1	Sight lines in the junction need to be improved not obscured by planting.	The landscape design will take into consideration sightlines across all intersections.
1	Improve pedestrian crossing times How will the traffic at McDonalds be controlled now that the traffic lights will	We do not feel that there is a need to control traffic flows at this location. The signals prevent free flow of traffic

	be removed at the junction?	and can be readily replaced with new Zebra crossings to assist pedestrians
1	What about grassed area near Strood Laundrette on the southern side of the rail bridge between the town centre and Rochester Bridge opposite the Texaco Fuel Station.	Through the extension of the scope of works we will explore the potential for some tree planting in this area.
1	Whilst not ideal, the current arrangements are more user friendly.	Noted
1	Agree about the location of the seating, potentially this could be adopted by the cafe.	Noted
<b>Strood Train Station</b>		
18	Positive comments regarding the improvements	Noted
5	Perceived concerned about the proposal's negative impact on traffic including concern that the traffic calming measures proposed redirect to other streets thus clogging up other roads.	Rigorous modelling has been undertaken by professional traffic engineers, we are confident that the Action Plan will deliver an improved traffic flow and public realm and meet the objectives of the funding.
4	Improve signage to/from station	Wayfinding will be part of the proposals
3	Need to address cars speeding along Station Road - speed camera - Pedestrian safety is an issue	Speed surveys do not indicate excessive speeding on this section of the network; however it is known that individual drivers travel at unsuitable speeds for the road's nature. The proposals will provide natural traffic calming for Station Rd with raised tables and a redesigned raised pedestrian crossing.
2	Station is too isolated, needs a more retail around it for commuters	Whilst the introduction of retailers is outside the scope of this project, improvements to the Station itself, the public realm in front of the station, lighting of the alleyway and improvements along Station Road will seek to address the feeling of isolation.
2	Need to retain or increase the parking provision as many people park in	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is

	surrounding local streets.	therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
2	Proposals need to take the redevelopment of Strood Station into consideration.	We continue to engage with Southeastern Rail who are undertaking the Station re-development to ensure the two schemes align
2	Needs greater integration of public transport including whether there are plans to include a bus stop outside station so station can be served by buses	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
2	Agree with cleaning up underpass but don't cover it with artwork - looks shabby quickly as it deteriorates and will attract vandalism.	Due to the nature of the walls on this underpass it won't be possible to install artwork; however through lighting we will look to develop an attractive environment.
1	Need to address the fenced off area to the right of the Station and could something be done to make use of that space?	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Need to address cars that currently illegally park over double yellow lines on Station Road.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Any improvements to the approach to Strood railway station is to be welcomed and cannot come soon enough. The	Noted. The area in front of the station is included in this scheme. We are engaging with Network Rail and

	<p>approach along Canal Road is a disgrace and must give those arriving by train for the first time a very poor impression of the town. I realise that the regeneration of Canal Road is not a priority in the context of this scheme, but anything which can be done to brighten up this depressing area must be welcome. The grassed area to the right of the station entrance -which was once so well-maintained by the station staff – would also benefit from being tidied up, although this may be the responsibility of Network Rail rather than Medway Council. Improvements to the pedestrian tunnel between the station approach and Station Road, with clean walls and improved lighting, must also be welcome, but again there must be provision for future maintenance; previous attempts to improve the environment within the tunnel have fallen victim to lack of maintenance within quite a short time.</p>	<p>Southeastern about the on-going maintenance of these elements</p>
1	<p>Move zebra crossing to west of Grove Road junction, so that pedestrians exiting the rail station don't have to walk away from the town centre to cross safely.</p>	<p>The proposed crossing location will be moved closer to the station access, so will be more attractive for those exiting the tunnel, who will only have to walk a few paces north before they can cross. It will also provide a direct connection to the popular car park opposite the station entrance, and will therefore provide a good compromise between connectivity to the town centre and the car park along the proposed walking route on Grange Road. If the crossing was installed to the west of Grove Road this would also require the installation of a Belisha Beacon almost directly in front of a residential property and front windows, the footway to the west is also considerably narrower than the</p>

		eastern side.
1	Do not agree with a zebra crossing on Station Road outside the station. It is dangerous and likely to lead to other issues including delays to traffic as the constant flow of commuters will stop the flow. A pelican crossing is a more sensible solution	With our experience we feel that the crossing would operate safely. It will also improve priority for pedestrians using the station, whose movements are equally as important as that of through traffic. Traffic calming proposals for Station Road will also help to enhance safety on this street.
1	Allow a taxi rank and drop off point to be placed in the car park where vehicles are less likely to pull out into flowing traffic and cause an accident.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Concern that raising the level of the junctions along Station Street will increase the chance of accidents and damage to vehicles, particularly motorbikes.	Raised features are commonplace as a traffic calming measure and, if negotiated at a reasonable speed, they do not cause damage to vehicles. There is already a record of accidents on this section of road, which are partly caused by inappropriate speeds. Traffic calming will make the road safer and create a better environment for vulnerable road users.
1	Formalise the short cut through old fairground and the water board property to the Victorian housing estate	Noted and to be developed further.
1	Consideration also needs to be given to the Canal Road access to the station, the most likely route to Rochester for pedestrians and cyclists. Canal Road is also the most likely access route to the National Cycle Network Route 1, if route 178 is developed, this would also have Canal Road as the primary access. This needs to be reflected in signing from the station.	Wayfinding will be covered as part of this project.
1	Scheme should introduce an electronic departure board at the Station Road	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is



	entrance to the station tunnel	therefore not addressed in this report. We have passed on this suggestion to Southeastern for consideration.
1	Could the scheme be rethought to include (or to allow for the later inclusion of) a formalised cycle and/or pedestrian path forming a shortcut to Rochester for residents of this side of Strood? This would run via the station tunnel, along the river side, over the Rochester Bridge.	Unfortunately the station tunnel is not wide enough to accommodate cyclists as well as pedestrians. Cyclists could of course walk their bikes through the tunnel, and would then be able to use the quieter Canal Road route to access Rochester Bridge cycle lanes.
<b>Tolgate Lane and Car Park</b>		
22	A number of comments raised concerns over the use of loose gravel or chipping for a number of reasons including the material being carried away by flooding, vehicles, potholes forming, material is not disable friendly and is a safety hazard.	Loose gravel was never proposed in the Draft Action Plan, it will be some form of resin bonded gravel to be determined at the detailed design stage.
7	Move the market to another location including to the (now closed) council offices/Civic Centre car park area near River Medway.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
6	Positive comments regarding the improvements.	Noted.
4	Respondents expressed a concern that the intervention proposes to reduce parking levels. Including one comment that asked for parking all week not limited to 1-2 hour slots or certain days.	The number of bays will be reducing only by two or three bays. When not used for the market, the space remains a car park. The duration of the parking is outside the remit of this project.
4	Agree that the car park could be used as an events space, but then there would not be enough space to park in town. According to some comments, the markets already cause parking issues.	This project will provide the facilities for events and activities but it will be up to the Council as to when and how frequently these activities take place. Concern regarding availability of parking during these events will be passed on to Medway Council for consideration as they programme this

		space.
2	Proposed crossing needs to reduce the waiting time for pedestrians.	This will occur under the proposed changes.
2	Relocate the markets to make the space a permanent car park, enlarge the size of the car park and allow for free short term parking.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
2	Improve rear access to the Community Hub. This could run along the front of the commercial units (Parana Cafe etc) to create an extra buffer between the cafe seating area and the car park.	Noted this will be progressed at the detailed design stage.
1	Concerned about the use of paving material. What has Medway Council learnt from the experience of the Ashford Shared Space whereby natural materials that have been used have presented cleansing issues to remove staining?	A resin bound gravel is proposed, which is a smooth surface, not a bumpy or loose surface. This type of surface is porous and because it has lots of different colours in the gravel aggregate, staining is not an issue. It can be power washed if necessary.
1	Improve the car park at night - currently uninviting, isolated and dark.	This will occur under the proposed changes.
1	The arrangements for Commercial Road with free flowing lanes to/from Knight Road are detrimental to cyclists. This is an opportunity to complete the "missing link" of National Cycle Network Route 177 between Rochester and its current end near Strood Sports Centre.	Investigations are currently being undertaken to explore the opportunity for cycle facilities to be provided at the Commercial Road Knight Road junction, unfortunately the funding for this scheme is ring fenced to the town centre area. However this request will be passed onto Medway Council to investigate the potential extension of NCN Route 177.
1	Disagree with seating area in the middle of a car park and its impact to the location of stalls on market days.	Noted.
1	Agree with the proposal but this is only of value if there is a plan for 'activities and events'. Are these really going to happen or is this a fictitious reason to make this space nice? The Council's	Noted

	strategy is that Rochester is the cultural centre of Medway. The Council is not going to sponsor or support events in Strood if this threatens the status quo – there are too many Rochester interests at stake. So you might be asking the wrong question here. The bigger question is, 'If Strood market car park is improved..... is there an interest and a demand and the commitment to provide activities and events...?'	
1	Clean up the untidy area at rear of library	Noted, this will be addressed through the proposals
<b>High Street and Angel Corner</b>		
17	Positive comments regarding the improvements	Noted
9	Concerned about negative impact to traffic	Rigorous modelling has been undertaken by professional traffic engineers, we are confident that the Action Plan will deliver an improved traffic flow and public realm and meet the objectives of the funding.
4	Agree with removing the guard railing	Noted
4	Need to improve the retail offer	These interventions seek to indirectly improve the retail offer through the provision of support to businesses as well as improving the appearance of the area and potentially increasing footfall which will in turn attract new businesses and encouraging existing businesses to diversify their offers.
2	Concern that removing the signalised junction will make it impossible to enter High Street from North Street especially at peak times	Gaps in traffic flow will still be created due to the proposed crossing immediately west of the junction. North Street traffic should therefore have opportunities to exit in those gaps. North Street will also be less important as a through route due to the planned two-way use of Gun Lane.
2	People do not go to the high street to relax and sit about, they go there to shop and then get out of the place as	These interventions will improve the appearance of the area which will encourage people to change this

	best they can - either by car or public transport.	behaviour and spend more time in the town centre doing activities other than shopping.
2	This is an opportunity to complete the "missing link" of National Cycle Network Route 177 between its current end near Strood Sports Centre and Rochester Bridge.	We are keen to improve safety for cyclists and many of the areas are too narrow to provide segregated cycle lanes, however we can slow traffic and provide advanced stop lines at key junctions to help improve cycle safety.
2	Pedestrianise the high street	This option was considered but dismissed due to the significant impacts on traffic flows and congestion. It was also felt that an active town centre street would be more vibrant than one with no through movement or natural surveillance from passing drivers.
1	Allow right turns for buses at Cuxton Road	This has been explored with the bus operators and a new route has been identified which will provide an additional bus stop by Morrisons.
1	Having the centre orientated around pedestrians is a great step forward. Need to ensure that there is a sense that it is now a 'people's space', not a traffic space. You have the Community landscaping (great) but what about other ideas to create a town centre that people think of as their own? A visual arts space, for example, or power and small stage for performing arts? Places for local news and information (the community notice board has been non-functional for a long time).	Noted. Art installations and lighting features are proposed as part of the commission. The issue of the community notice board will be fed back to Medway Council.
1	Concern about flooding and rising the level of the road will cause further issues	Drainage assessments will be undertaken as part of the design to ensure that surface water is effectively drained from the Highway. Sustainable drainage systems will be explored in areas where increased drainage cannot be achieved.
1	Improve the public realm and	Agreed. This is a problematic area.

	<p>pedestrian access near Asda on North Street. There is no clear navigable pedestrian route into the Asda/Wilkinson building for pedestrians approaching downhill from under the railway arch on North Street. Many older residents use this route and can be seen to struggle with wheeled baskets or mobility scooters etc at this point. Pushchairs, Mobility Scooters and Wheelchairs struggle with the lack of properly executed dropped curbs outside the Asda car park. There is a drainage issue which frequently causes pedestrians to enter the road (opposite taxi office) to avoid the puddle. There is problematic parking (taxis and royal mail vehicles) at the entrances which again can cause pedestrians to risk walking on the road.</p>	<p>There is little scope to effect changes within the public highway boundary. Unfortunately very large articulated vehicles access Asda for deliveries and given the narrow width of North Road they need a wide entry to allow them to turn in or out. Better dropped kerbs and smoother surfacing can be considered.</p>
1	Need a ring road around the town	<p>This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.</p>
1	Need to take turning circle for the Asda HGVs into consideration for the junction	<p>Noted. This will be taken into account.</p>
1	Negative comment regarding improvements - paving colour too grey and construction time will take too long	<p>The grey paving would only be used in the immediate area of Angel Corner. Other colours and shades can be used elsewhere. The colour palette has not yet been determined.</p> <p>Noted, however the construction strategy for the paving requires that access is maintained at most times to businesses. This can add a bit of time to the building process, but it is not envisaged that there will be any major difficulties.</p>
1	The existing trees in the town centre	<p>Noted. There are methods by which</p>

	have been subject to damage from aggressive dog training (where dogs are encouraged to rip at the bark). This has endangered the survival of some of the trees. With this behaviour prevalent in Strood, trees throughout the new scheme should be safeguarded by metal tree guards or other means.	trees can be protected from such treatment and these will be explored at the detailed design stage.
1	Would like to see more landscaping as a barrier between road and footpath	Any trees/ landscaping beside the road could only really be in planters in this location, due to the huge number of underground utilities. It must be borne in mind that this is a shopping street and so barriers to movement should be carefully located. To be investigated at the next design stage.
<b>Overall Comments</b>		
17	Positive comment regarding improvements	Noted
15	Concern that removal of guard rail along the High Street would reduce safety. Removing guard railing may be dangerous for children and elderly. It was also suggested that the rails would allow cars to illegally park on the footpath as they already do in parts.	A pedestrian safety audit will be carried out to assess the requirement for guard rail in this area to ensure safety is maintained. The use of planters, bollards and cycle stands can deter parking on pavements without being a barrier to crossing the street.
11	Concerned about negative impact to traffic	Rigorous modelling has been undertaken by professional traffic engineers, we are confident that the Action Plan will deliver an improved traffic flow and public realm and meet the objectives of the funding.
9	Concerned about negative impact to traffic due to the removal of the right hand turn on Cuxton Road - How will the increased traffic on Alma Place be addressed as this would then become a more desirable route from Tesco towards Rochester or Wainscott.	As Charles Street is One-Way there will be no access from Cuxton Road. This means that Alma Place will not become a more desirable route.
6	Proposed interventions were not transformational enough. The area's amenity is reduced by hoardings, car	This scheme will improve the amenity of the area within the restrictions of the funding requirements and budget



	yards and traffic.	available.
7	The scheme should provide public toilets around Tolgate Lane Car Park or Angel Corner.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
4	Need to improve the parking provision in town.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
4	Concern that the traffic calming measures proposed will redirect traffic to other streets.	Rigorous modelling has been undertaken by professional traffic engineers, we are confident that the Action Plan will deliver an improved traffic flow and public realm and meet the objectives of the funding.
3	Plan needs to address the current retail offer on the High Street.	These interventions seek to indirectly improve the retail offer through the provision of support to businesses as well as improving the appearance of the area and potentially increasing footfall which will in turn attract new businesses and encouraging existing businesses to diversify their offers.
3	Plan needs more detail.	These proposals are at feasibility stage. Once agreed by the Council they will be developed further through detailed design stages.
3	Absence of litter bins and dog waste bins needs to be addressed.	Bins will be included in the detail plans. Medway Council will input into the types and locations.
3	Concerned about HGVs on Gun Lane which has a low bridge.	Improved pinch points and width restrictions, as well as early signing will be implemented to prevent HGVs from approaching the bridge. The design team will work with Network

		Rail to ensure interventions meet with their requirements.
3	Better traffic control is needed at entrance/exit points to Strood Retail Park now that entrance from Commercial Road has been blocked by new developments in retail park. A solution to this could be a single entry point to both via the Morrisons roundabout and exit via retail park current entrance and exit.	We understand the concerns with the exiting from Strood Retail park and will be placing a yellow box at this location to try and improve traffic flow. The two areas mentioned are not within council land, will require further discussion with land owners and was therefore outside the scope of potential solutions.
4	The plan includes no provision for cyclists.	Noted, however, to improve the environment and increase safety for all road users including pedestrians and cyclists it is proposed to changing driver behaviours through the removal of guardrail and prioritising pedestrians through the use of zebra crossings rather than signalised junctions.
2	On entering Strood over Rochester bridge, many drivers use the right hand lane to jump the queues and then force their way into the left lane prior to the lights at the railway bridge. Respondents have regularly witnessed drivers at the front of the right lane jumping the lights and turning left.	This is a driver behaviour issue that is very difficult to overcome, the option to independently signalise the ahead and right turn movement at this junction could be investigated. This may however lead to increased queuing on the Rochester bridge.
2	The road surface of Strood High Street is unsuitable and needs to be returned to tarmac.	The road surface will be changed to tarmac as part of this project.
1	Given the limitations of the budget and the constraint of not being able to make more impact on traffic volumes, not bad. However, Medway Council ought to have shown vision and commitment to securing significant funding to deliver a more fundamental traffic solution.	Noted
1	It would be great to have a sensory garden or community led garden.	Agreed. This will be explored at the detailed design stage.
1	Improve the public realm around the vacant space east of the Knight	Noted. We could consider some trees here, but it is not a very attractive

	Road/Commercial Road junction.	place to pass time, nor are there any cafés or other reasons to sit there, so to spend budget on other landscape features would be unnecessary.
1	Slow down traffic on Grove Road and reduce ability for shortcuts.	Developments as a result of the consultation require the section of Grove Road between South Eastern Road and Station Road to be proposed as one way. This change is necessary as the road is quite narrow and will allow us to relocate the pedestrian crossing closer to the desire line of pedestrians, deliver a safe pedestrian route from the residential area through to the Station and will help access to the adjacent car park. The change will also accompany the well lit walking route which is being addressed through the proposals.
1	Scheme should include free and secure motorcycle parking.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	A 5 minute loading bay and some 7.5 tonne loading bays near High Street with 10 minute restriction monitored by a dedicated camera is needed.	The majority if not all of the properties on the High Street have servicing and loading access to the rear of the properties. Any loading activities that are required on the High Street will be permitted during the unrestricted hours.
1	A dedicated slip road through the industrial area for traffic heading towards the M2 is needed. This could involve redesigning the A228 to Morrisons through Knight Road joining up Norman Close and up to Roman Way. Alternatively utilising some of the industrial estate in Priory Road to build a	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.

	dedicated left slip road and building a new bridge under the railway line to join back further along the Cuxton Road away from the roundabout.	
1	A major pinch point for traffic is the minor roundabout at the junction of Cuxton Road and Darnley Road (Darnley Arch area) - this is a minor roundabout that has four arteries two of which are the major road in and out of the area with two heavily used local roads. The roundabout is too small for the amount of traffic it carries, delays often occur through difficulty in large lorries negotiating the bridge/bending round and roundabout, the crossing point just past the roundabout and traffic generally being unsure as to who has priority.	There are many pinch points created around Strood due to the train lines and we agree this is one such location. We have investigated trying to widen the junction but the buildings and arches limit this from happening. A wider strategy of directing large lorries in other directions should also help in reducing congestion here.
1	Concern that planting mature trees by a junction is only going to lead to an increase of incidents due to sight obstructions and debris created by the trees.	The landscape design will take into consideration sightlines across all intersections.
1	Could provision be made to changing the markings from a 'box' to 'keep clear' at the Gravesend Road/London Road Junction?	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	HGVs should have distinct routes that bar them from other roads in the area.	As part of the project, Medway are looking at the wider HGV routing and signage to ensure they only reach these points if needed.
1	If there is going to be increased traffic flow along Frindsbury Road, could the pedestrian crossings be improved as currently we have only two crossing points one at the bottom of the hill where three flows of traffic converge making it very difficult to see if it's safe to	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council Department to consider within other projects which are being

	cross and one right at the top of the hill. Perhaps another crossing opposite Mill Road might help?	progressed and developed. The traffic volumes that are observed on Frindsbury Road should remain the same without major increase as no movements have been restricted to alter vehicles numbers using this route.
1	Introduce signage at distance out from Strood to encourage vehicles to find alternative routes to High Street	As mentioned previously, Medway are looking at the wider HGV routing and signage to ensure they only reach these points if needed.
1	More space for small start up businesses like those in Tolgate Lane	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Need to address the land around the River Medway	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Need to address the level and quality of signage for wayfinding within Strood	This will be addressed through this project.
1	Open up Canal Road for cars and small vans to by-pass the High Street	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	Remove roundabout at Darnley Road and replace with lights	There is not enough space to provide signals, and these would not work as efficiently as the roundabout.
1	The council should also consider in the future and improved route for pedestrians between the town centre	As a result of the consultation this scheme will look to improve the route to the Station for pedestrians to the

	and railway station without the need to cross busy congested roads.	north east of the town. Other routes could be explored by The Council as part of future projects.
1	The Council should be looking at how to increase access to the car park behind where the Civic Centre use to be while looking at where it can remove some pedestrian crossings and combining them with other sets of traffic lights.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
1	The main problem for flow of traffic through Strood in both directions is the reduction from dual lane at Station Road junction heading into Strood, and the reduction of dual lane carriageway from Watling Street into single lane at London Road and traffic coming from Cuxton Road into Strood, both heading towards Rochester. With two major roads from outside Medway funnelling into one single lane carriageway at Strood this is always going to be a pinch point.	Agree that this issue cannot be overcome. However, proposals have been modelled and show that the plans will improve traffic flows. They will not "cure" congestion through Strood, but should assist to reduce traffic through the centre and improve the town environment.
1	The proposed slip road at Knight and Commercial Road does not lead to a long enough section to enable safe lane changes.	The current lane changes take place immediately after the slip, and as such is dangerous. They also create blockages as traffic immediately tries to move left before having straightened. We acknowledge that the arrangement is not ideal, but it will at least ensure that drivers enter Commercial Road and straighten before they try to slip left. The number of vehicles making this movement will also reduce as a result of Gun Lane being made two-way.
1	The slip road from Station Road into Aldi car park should be one way only in the direction from Station Road and the exit from the car park should be a "No Right Turn".	There is sufficient width on Friary Place to accommodate two way vehicle flows as at the junctions on Station Road and North Street. The conversion to one way will see an increase in vehicle flows on Station Road and a potential increase in



		vehicle speeds.
1	Is there an opportunity for the promenade which is in existence by the Cinema and has the potential to extend along the riverfront. This would remove most of the cycle traffic from Strood town Centre.	This sits outside the remit of this project and the Local Growth Funding and is therefore not addressed in this report. However all comments have been passed to the appropriate Medway Council department to consider within other projects which are being progressed and developed.
	Focusing on creating a town centre feel for Strood, by creating more pavement areas through narrowing down the carriageway, reducing guard rail to facilitate ease pedestrian movement between shops and making the town centre feel more like a street than a road.	Noted, this is the aim of the project and the approach to design that has been undertaken.

## Accreditations



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## Memberships

