

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 5

STRIKING THE BALANCE



DECEMBER 2024

CONTENTS

1. Foreword	4
2. Introduction	5
3. What does a Local Transport Plan do?	9
4. Delivering our council-wide strategies: <i>Framing Kent's Future</i> and <i>Securing Kent's Future</i>	11
5. The challenges we face	12
6. Our ambition for transport in the county	13
7. Our planned outcomes	14
8. Network-wide proposals	22
8.1 Strategic Road Network proposals	25
8.2 Local Road Network proposals	32
8.3 Public and shared transport network proposals	39
8.4 Walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised travel proposals	50
9. Considering the effect of our plan on carbon emissions	54
10. District specific proposals	60
11. The funding we need for our plan	84
12. To conclude	86
Glossary	87
Implementation and prioritisation framework	90

1. FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce our new Local Transport Plan (LTP), which has been developed taking into consideration the views of all stakeholders and members of the public who took part in our two consultations. Our plan sets out our ambition and outcomes for transport and the proposals we have identified to deliver them. We have a successful track record of ensuring we have a clear plan that can steer delivery across the transport mix.

Whether you drive, catch a bus, take the train, cycle, wheel or walk, we have aimed to strike a balance across our proposals so that delivering our plan should make your journeys better. We can be confident that by delivering across the whole transport mix we can ensure journeys are joined up and cohesive, delivering on the government's emerging Integrated National Transport Strategy.

Kent has a unique position acting as the main gateway for international road and rail travel to Europe. This means Kent's transport networks have an especially important role to play in enabling a growing national economy. Kent is also one of the largest and most populous counties, shortly behind some of the city regions and their combined authorities. With an estimated 1.6 billion trips made across the transport network each year, generated by the county's 1.6 million residents, 70,000 businesses, and the 60 million annual visitors to Kent and Medway, improvements to the network can have a very positive and widespread impact.

I know that many of you will ask how this plan will be delivered given the current challenging financial circumstances and I want to be clear – we will need new funding from government and other external sources to make it a reality. We need funding not only to get schemes built and operating, but also to develop, plan and design options in the first place. What we need to do for each of our proposals is set out in our plan. Some proposals are well developed and can be delivered as soon as we can get funding, whereas others are at much earlier

stages and will need to be developed and options designed so we can deliver value for money and consider local views.

Importantly, our plan is set upon the foundation of seeking the appropriate level of funding to maintain our existing road network. This will ensure it can cope with the demands of growing usage, but also enable it to withstand a changing climate with more extreme weather events.

What we can deliver from this plan will in large part depend on what funding we can secure from government and other sources. What type of proposals that funding can be used on is also often not entirely within our control. However, it has always been the case that we have to work hard to secure funding. Our past successes show that being clear about why and how we want transport networks in Kent to change gives us the greatest likelihood of securing new funding. Our focus on this supports us towards having a fundamentally safe road network that plays its role in the safe-system approach we established in our existing road safety strategy.

The plan sets the overall strategy and direction for the full transport mix for the coming years and will be delivered in part by the more detailed strategies and plans that sit under its umbrella, allowing us to adapt and focus resources as needed. I am very happy to present our fifth Local Transport Plan to you, and I look forward to the challenge of working to deliver it and fulfil our ambition for Kent.

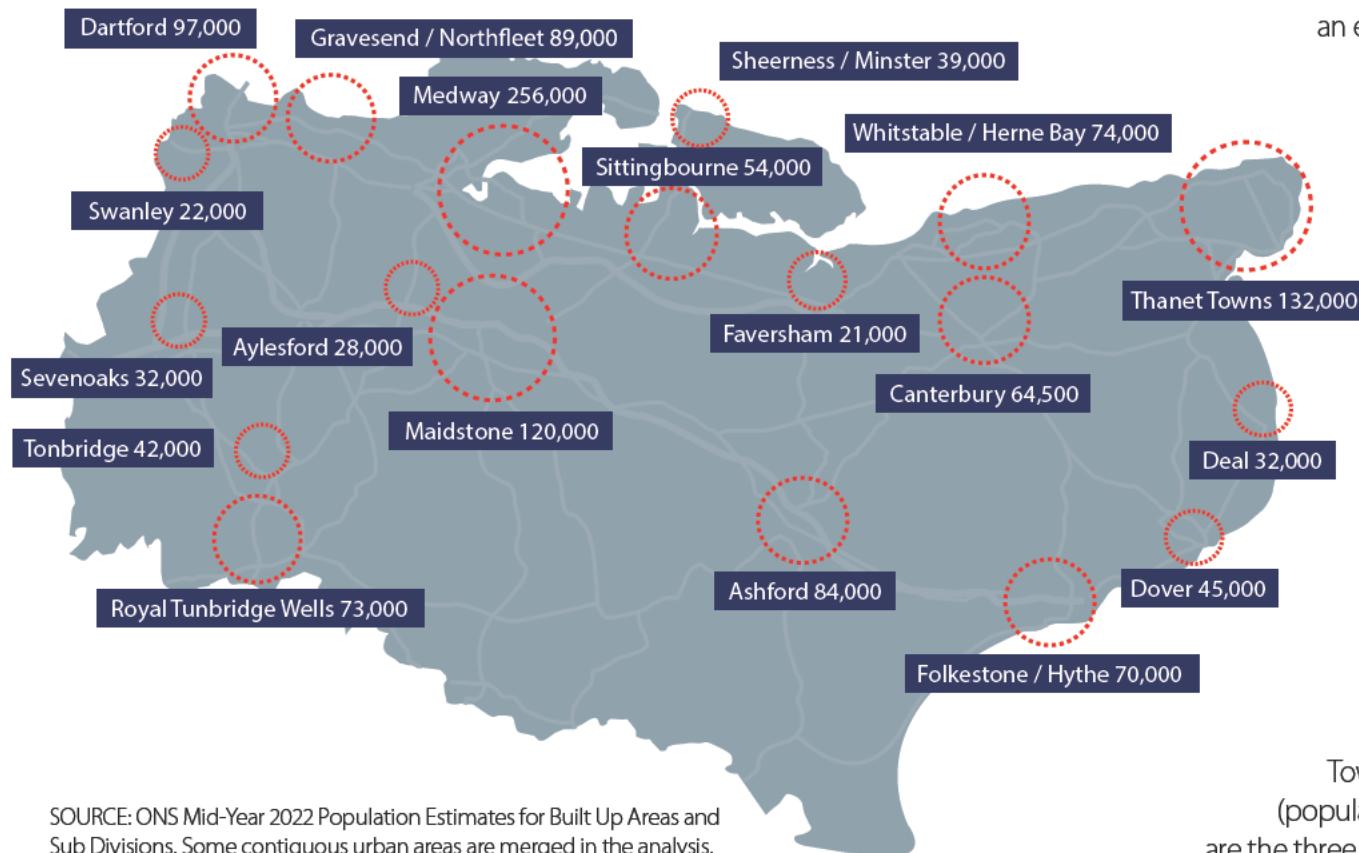


Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
December 2024

2. INTRODUCTION

This LTP, Striking the Balance (2024 – 2037), replaces our fourth plan, Delivering Growth without Gridlock (2016-2031) following an early review of that plan. We consulted on the emerging LTP in 2023 and again on the full draft plan in 2024. All comments were considered and the plan was updated before being put to

Figure 1 – Map of Kent showing towns with populations over 20,000. Note that Medway does not form part of the KCC administrative area.



the County Council for adoption. The LTP provides the overarching strategy for the full transport mix in Kent. The ambitions, outcomes and objectives will be delivered by the proposals in this plan, as well as by the sub-strategies and plans that sit under it. These include the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP), and it is generally in these documents that you will find more detailed proposals for specific modes of transport or geographical areas.

The LTP covers the Kent County Council (KCC) administrative area – an area home to circa 1.6 million people with an economy greater in size than several of the Mayoral combined authority regions. As the UK's primary gateway to continental Europe, we are a major centre for innovation in food, life sciences and manufacturing, with a vibrant cultural and creative scene. We are growing rapidly and home to some of Britain's most important locations for regeneration and investment. Kent is an area of strategic importance to the whole country, playing a crucial role in the national economy.

The county has a large number of medium sized towns and conurbations with no single large high density urban centre. This makes travel patterns in the county complex, especially when mixed with the high burden of international road traffic and London orbital traffic. The Thanet Towns (combined population of 132,000), Maidstone (population 120,000) and Dartford (population 97,000) are the three biggest urban areas in the county.

2. INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

We also enjoy a rich history and a distinctive environment, including the Kent Downs and High Weald National Landscapes, protected marshes and coastline, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites at Canterbury and the White Cliffs of Dover. These sit alongside the challenges and opportunities from our position at the heart of the UK's European trade flows as well as being closely integrated with the dynamic economy of London and the wider South East.

With rapid population, business and employment growth in recent years, we are a place where people want to live, and businesses want to invest. This creates

challenges for transport but also underlines our reliance on it. However, we are not the local planning authority and therefore we cannot control where most development takes place, notably housing. Our role here is to work with the district and borough councils to mitigate the impact of new development on our road network and help ensure that new residents and businesses have access to sustainable travel options.



Photo credit: Network Rail

2. INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

We know that sustaining investment in our transport networks can improve the county's economy and quality of life, enhancing the prospects of businesses and residents. With partners, we successfully secured investments totalling over £400m to deliver proposals in our fourth Local Transport Plan. We also supported the case for significant further investment in networks we do not manage, such as the motorway and rail networks. Overall, more than £700m has been invested – see Figure 2, delivering the completed schemes detailed in Table 1, whilst further schemes are substantially progressed and soon to be constructed.

The investment we secured was additional to our annual funding for public transport and highway maintenance, and our success demonstrates the impact of a clear plan with clear priorities. It also demonstrates the scale of investment needed, and costs have only risen since this period.

Although there are some priorities carried over from our previous LTP, much has changed since adopting it. The UK has left the European Union, new government policies have been introduced, there have been changes to the funding available to us, and we are seeing the longer-term impacts of the Covid pandemic on how people work and travel. These are just some of the significant changes that have occurred.

**Figure 2 – Funding sources for our last Local Transport Plan
(Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031)**



Table 1 - Schemes delivered from our fourth (last) Local Transport Plan: *Delivering Growth without Gridlock*

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• M2 Junction 5 Improvements• A20 junction improvements between A228 and M20 junctions• Maidstone to the city of London rail services• A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junction improvements• Elements of the Maidstone Integrated Transport package• M20 Junction 10a• Sandwich station upgrade• Herne Relief Road• Ashford to Ramsgate Rail Journey Time Improvement Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dartford town centre urban realm improvements• Thanet Parkway Railway Station• Expansion of Fastrack network in north Kent• Improvements to A2500 Lower Road and Barton Hill Drive junction• Ashford International Station Spurs Signalling project• BRT (Fastrack) network in Dover• Grovehurst Road and interchange junction with the A249 (under construction)• Urban Traffic Control improvements across Kent's towns• Gravesend transport interchange & Rathmore Road link	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ashford town centre – Station Access junction and crossings improvement• Maidstone East station redevelopment• Deal Improvements including new link road• Folkestone Seafront improvements• Sittingbourne town centre improvements and transport interchange• Tonbridge town centre regeneration and urban realm improvements• Kent Thameside local sustainable transport and St Clements Way junction improvements
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2. INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

These changes have affected how and when people travel, why they travel, what transport operators and networks can provide, and also the priorities that national and local government have for travel and transport. The challenges arising for transport in our county are summarised in section 5 of our LTP and more detail is provided in our Evidence Base report, where you can also find a review of our previous Local Transport Plan Delivering Growth without Gridlock.

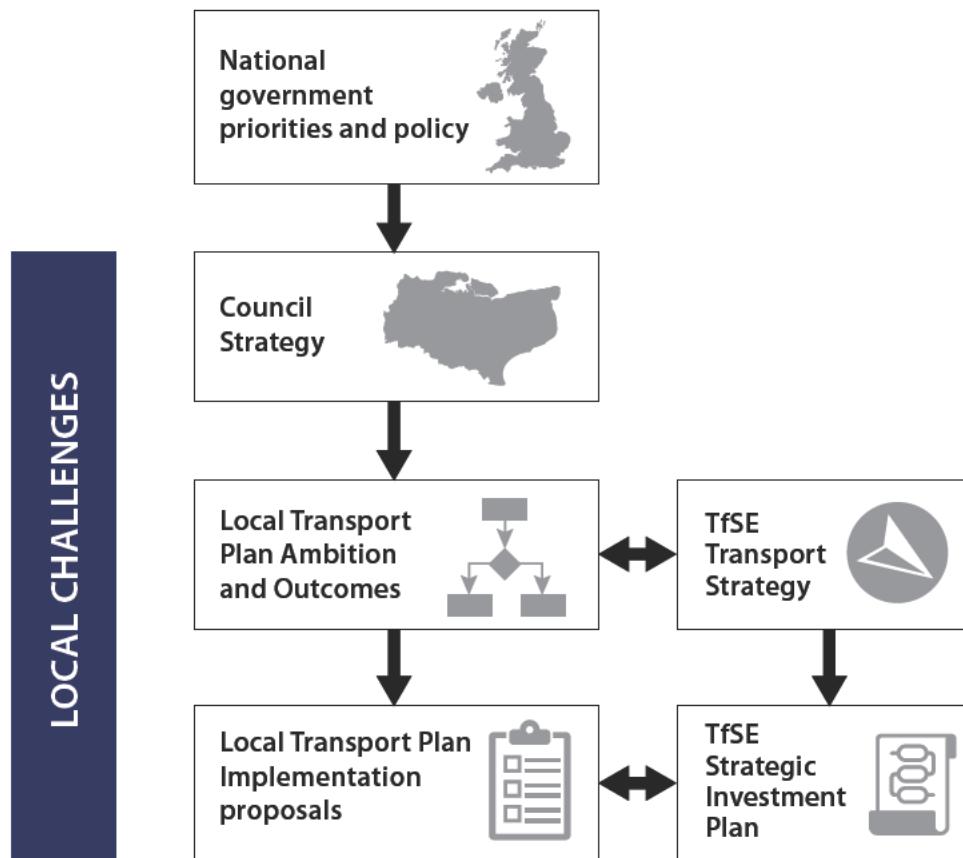
We have a range of policies and proposals to address the challenges and opportunities that these changes present. These proposals cover the local highway network that the Council is responsible for, but also the networks that other operators manage, such as the motorway and trunk road network run by National Highways and the rail network managed by Network Rail and Train Operating Companies (in Kent, this is predominantly Southeastern). Our Local Transport Plan must look at the whole transport network because the different modes of travel (by car, on foot, by train...) need to work together to enable many journeys to be completed.

Framing Kent's Future, our Council-wide strategy established in May 2022, sets clear commitments that the Council will focus on and so this LTP has been developed with them in mind. Our Supporting Evidence Base explains how our LTP can directly support *Framing Kent's Future*'s three priorities of Levelling Up, Infrastructure for Communities and an Environmental Step Change.

We have developed our plan to ensure that the detailed proposals follow the "golden thread" of policy and strategy that is weaved down from the national level, through our own Council Strategy, and our plan's relationship to the strategy for the region's Sub-national Transport Body (STB), Transport for the South East's (TfSE). These detailed assessments are set out in our Supporting Evidence Base.

In our LTP, you can read in more detail about what it is designed to do, the challenges we think we need to address, and what our ambition is for transport in the county. It then sets out a series of proposals to enable the ambition to be achieved. We have assessed the carbon impacts of our plan and the level of funding needed.

Figure 3 – The golden thread - aligning the LTP with government and council policy



3. WHAT DOES A LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN DO?

Our responsibility as a Local Transport Authority

Our responsibilities as a County Council (also known as an upper tier local authority) include a role as the Local Transport Authority (LTA). National legislation, such as the Transport Act 2000 as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, places a duty on Local Transport Authorities to:

- Develop policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within their area, and;
- Carry out their functions to implement those policies.

Due to the acts of Parliament concerning the subject of climate change, we must:

- Take into account any policies announced by the government, and;
- Consider any guidance issued by the Secretary of State concerning mitigation of, or adaptation to, climate change and the protection or improvement of the environment.

We therefore have a statutory requirement to produce a Local Transport Plan, and this is our fifth iteration since the Transport Act in the year 2000.

The legislation also specifies that we must consider any relevant policies established by government and other relevant statutory bodies and have regard to any guidance government has established for the purpose of developing local transport policies. Figure 4 shows the current policy landscape that we have had regard to in developing this Local Transport Plan.

The LTP is for the whole county, but there are differing needs and opportunities across the twelve districts that make up Kent as a whole. Delivering our ambition will mean different things in different places. This is why our proposals are set out in two geographical levels – the county-wide or network-wide proposals (typically larger in scale and impact) and the district-wide proposals (typically more local in scale and impact).

Figure 4 – Policy context of our draft Local Transport Plan

National Policies, Plans and Strategies

- Gear Change
- National Bus strategy
- Action for Roads
- Transport Decarbonisation Plan
- National Air Quality Strategy
- Levelling Up the United Kingdom
- Road Safety Statement
- Future of Freight Plan
- Investment Strategy
- Future Mobility
- Public Health England Strategy
- DfT Departmental Objectives
- National Networks Policy Statement

County Policies, Plans and Strategies

- Framing Kent's Future
- Securing Kent's Future
- Highways Asset Management Plan
- Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy
- Bus Service Improvement Plan
- Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Kent Environment Plan
- Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy
- Plan Tree
- Plan Bee
- Integrated Care Strategy
- Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Kent Downs and High Weald National Landscape Management Plans
- KCC Climate Adaptation Plan

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Regional Policies, Plans and Strategies

- TfSE* Transport Strategy
- TfSE Strategic Investment Plan

Local Policies, Plans and Strategies

- District Local Plans and their Infrastructure Delivery Plans
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

*TfSE stands for Transport for the South East

3. WHAT DOES A LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN DO? CONTINUED

We understand that Local Transport Authorities have a role to play in helping the government with its aims to decarbonise transport and travel. Given the government is focused on the trajectory of emissions between now and 2050 (known as the carbon budgets, which are interim UK-wide emissions targets to reach net zero in 2050), we have considered how our proposals might contribute to decarbonisation over that timescale. However, our plan period is up to 2037 as this is the most common time horizon that Local Planning Authorities (the district and borough councils) have set out their plans for changes in land use and new development.

A costed plan to inform future funding requirements

We have considered the likely funding requirements for delivering this plan. This is essential because everyone needs to understand that the proposals necessary to improve transport networks in Kent will need sustained and significant funding given directly to the Council, transport providers or other delivery bodies. The funding requirements for delivery of the plan are set out in section 11.

It is clear that the scale of change needed cannot be funded by Kent County Council alone. To have certainty in what we can deliver, we are reliant on receiving long-term funding from government that is ring-fenced for transport.



4. DELIVERING OUR COUNCIL-WIDE STRATEGIES: *FRAMING KENT'S FUTURE AND SECURING KENT'S FUTURE*

Our Council Strategy has a horizon to 2026; however, the commitments set out in *Framing Kent's Future* will no doubt hold true and require sustained work past this point. In the short term, we are delivering on *Securing Kent's Future* to ensure that the services we deliver are sustainable given our expected budgets. Our Local Transport Plan reflects the financial challenges we face and the proposals we have set out are dependent on external funding being provided, such as from government. We have also taken a precautionary approach to new opportunities – therefore we have set out clear next steps for new proposals that are proportionate to our financial circumstances.

Our priorities set out in *Framing Kent's Future* are:

- Priority 1: Levelling up Kent
- Priority 2: Infrastructure for communities
- Priority 3: Environmental step change
- Priority 4: New models of care and support

Within each priority we have set ourselves a range of commitments, many that directly concern our work to make journeys in Kent better or will be supported by the outcomes that a good transport network can deliver. For each priority and its commitments, *Framing Kent's Future* clearly describes what actions we will take. Our Supporting Evidence Base report details what this LTP proposes to address those actions, therefore delivering our overarching Council strategy.

Figure 5 (right) – The Council-wide priorities of *Framing Kent's Future*



5. THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

In developing this plan, we considered evidence about travel in the county now and how it might change in the future. We also know that in Kent we face some key challenges that we will need to act on. There is more detail about how we identified these challenges in our Supporting Evidence Base.

CHALLENGE 1

Our highway assets do not receive all the funding they need, which risks them becoming less resilient to new pressures, such as greater use and changes to the climate.

CHALLENGE 2

Following a decline in the number of injuries and fatalities on Kent's roads, these levels rose in 2021 and remained elevated in 2022 against an intended declining trend given our Vision Zero strategy.

CHALLENGE 3

Traffic is causing congestion, poor air quality and negatively impacting Kent's economy.

CHALLENGE 4

Transport challenges in Kent arise from how the existing population of 1.6 million people and 70,000 businesses in the county choose to travel as well as traffic generated by new developments.

CHALLENGE 5

Some indicators of public health, such as obesity and life expectancy, have been worsening.

CHALLENGE 6

The financial viability of the public transport service has declined due to cost pressures and changes in passenger demand, requiring increased levels of public funding support.

CHALLENGE 7

Kent's international gateways need government leadership – the impacts that arise and affect our local communities and the national economy cannot be resolved entirely by us.

CHALLENGE 8

Related to all the previous points, carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions reductions from management and use of the road network are forecast to remain at too high a level to adequately contribute towards reducing the worst effects of climate change.

CHALLENGE 9

We need higher levels of funding and need to know what funding we will have over the coming years so we can improve transport in Kent.

6. OUR AMBITION FOR TRANSPORT IN THE COUNTY

Our ambition for what our Plan will achieve and how we intend to do that is:

- **We want to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of lives in Kent by delivering a safe, reliable, efficient and affordable transport network across the county and as an international gateway. We will plan for growth in Kent in a way that enables us to combat climate change and preserve Kent's environment.**
- **We will do this by delivering emission-free travel by getting effective dedicated infrastructure to electrify vehicles, increase public transport use and make walking and cycling attractive. This will be enabled by maintaining our highway network and delivering our Vision Zero road safety strategy. These priorities will ensure our networks are future-proof, resilient and meet user needs.**

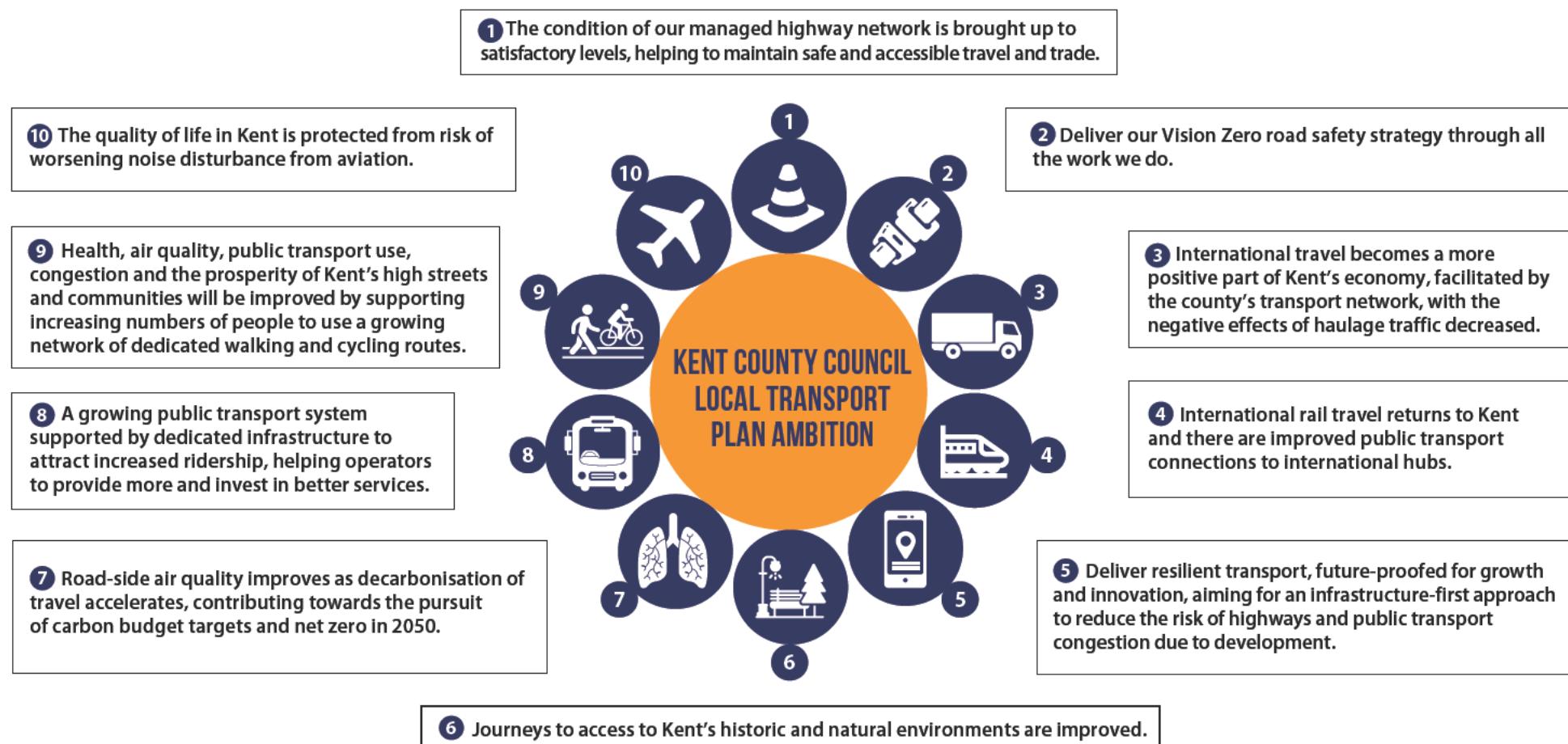
Further detail on the policies we considered and the alignment of our ambition with those is set out in the Supporting Evidence Base report.

7. OUR PLANNED OUTCOMES

We have developed ten policy outcomes that will drive our focus and efforts to fulfil our ambition and tackle the challenges we face. Our planned policy outcomes are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Planned policy outcomes from our draft Local Transport Plan

Our planned outcomes are not in any priority order, but they cover all parts of the transport mix so that we can strike the balance across the different modes and needs for journeys in Kent. Delivering them will not be easy but the objectives we have set for each outcome demonstrate the types of actions we will pursue and help us to monitor our progress, to give us the best chance of having a positive impact.





POLICY OUTCOME 1:

The condition of our managed transport network is brought up to satisfactory levels, helping to maintain safe and accessible travel and trade.



POLICY OUTCOME 2:

Deliver our Vision Zero road safety strategy through all the work we do.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 1:

- A) Achieve the funding necessary to deliver a sustained fall in the value of the backlog of maintenance work over the life of our Local Transport Plan.

We currently receive funding to maintain our highway network from the government and council tax. However, the competing pressures on our County Council budget from all the other services we provide, as well as the scale of the work required on our highways compared to the annual funding we receive, means that further funding will need to come from government.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 2:

- A) Achieve a fall over time in the volume of people killed or very seriously injured on KCC's managed road network, working towards the trajectory set by Vision Zero for 2050.

Our Vision Zero strategy sets specific objectives for a reduction in deaths and very serious (life-changing) injuries on our managed highway network considering all users of the highway (motorists, pedestrians, equestrians, cyclists, wheelchair, mobility aid users, and so on). The emphasis is on working towards sustained reductions over time, but this is challenging. The Vision Zero approach is designed to set a stretching target that drives activity through the Safe System Approach so that our actions consider all the different areas that affect safety outcomes for highway users.



POLICY OUTCOME 3:

International travel becomes a more positive part of Kent's economy, facilitated by the county's transport network, with the negative effects of haulage traffic decreased.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 3:

- A) Increase resilience of the road network serving the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel by adding holding capacity for HGVs across the southeast region to support establishment of a long term alternative to Operation Brock.
- B) Increase resilience of the road network servicing the Port of Dover through delivery of the bifurcation strategy including improvements to the M2 / A2 road corridor and its links to the M20 and a new Lower Thames Crossing for traffic towards the north, and utilising further non-road freight opportunities.



Photo credit: Getlink Ltd



POLICY OUTCOME 4:

International rail travel returns to Kent and there are improved public transport connections to international hubs.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 4:

- A) International rail travel returns to Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International stations, supported by the infrastructure investment needed at Kent's stations to ensure they provide secure and straightforward journeys across the UK-EU border within the entry exit system.**
- B) There is a reduction in the time it takes to reach international rail stations by public transport compared to conditions in 2023.**

We know that the requirements on international travel between the UK and Europe are going to continue to change as new border controls are introduced by the European Commission. We have seen that the impact of changes to border controls coupled with the impact of the pandemic has prevented international rail services from operating in Kent.

Our objectives aim to ensure that the stations in Kent do not become barriers in themselves to future international rail operations, either because they do not meet the new border control requirements or because connectivity from Kent and the wider region stop them from being attractive locations for international rail operators to serve.



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POLICY OUTCOME 5:

Deliver a transport network that is quick to recover from disruptions and future-proofed for growth and innovation, aiming for an infrastructure-first approach to reduce the risk of highways and public transport congestion due to development.



POLICY OUTCOME 6:

Journeys to access and experience Kent's historic and natural environments are improved.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 5:

- A) Strengthen delivery of our Network Management Duty to deliver the expeditious movement of traffic by using our new moving traffic enforcement powers and modernising the provision of on-street parking enforcement.
- B) Reduce the amount of forecast future congestion and crowding on highways and public transport that is associated with demand from development by securing funding and delivery of our Local Transport Plan.
- C) The prospects for the future of transport increase across the whole county, with new innovations in transport services having a clear pathway to trial or delivery in Kent.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 6:

- A) Proposals are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution to providing new, quicker, or more inclusive access to historic and natural environment destinations in the county, with proposals targeting access to such locations where appropriate.

Our overall ambition is to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of Kent. The transport network has a vital role to play in this and it can be achieved alongside other co-benefits and outcomes outlined in this strategy. After all, the unique historic and natural environment in Kent is often why people choose to live, work and study in our county.



POLICY OUTCOME 7:

Road-side air quality improves as decarbonisation of travel accelerates, contributing towards the pursuit of carbon budget targets and net zero in 2050.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 7:

- A) Reduce the volume of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions entering the atmosphere associated with surface transport activity on the KCC managed highway network by an amount greater than our forecast “business as usual” scenario. This means achieving a greater fall than those currently forecast of 9% by 2027, 19% by 2032 and 29% by 2037.**
- B) No area in Kent is left behind by the revolution in electric motoring, with charging infrastructure deployed close to residential areas, to reduce barriers to adoption.**
- C) Proposals are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution to providing lower emissions from transport in Air Quality Management Areas in the county.**

These objectives focus on the close co-benefits of decarbonisation and improved air quality from reduced emissions at the tailpipe and is aligned with the government's Decarbonising Transport strategy





POLICY OUTCOME 8:

A growing public transport system supported by dedicated infrastructure to attract increased ridership, helping operators to invest in and provide better services.



POLICY OUTCOME 9:

Health, air quality, public transport use, congestion and the prosperity of Kent's high streets and communities will be improved by supporting increasing numbers of people to use a growing network of dedicated walking and cycling routes.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 8:

- A) We will aim to obtain further funding to deliver the outcomes of our Bus Service Improvement Plan (or its successor) beyond its current horizon of 2024/25. We will ensure that our Local Transport Plan proposals are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution towards achieving our Bus Service Improvement Plan.**
- B) We will identify and support industry delivery of priority railway stations for accessibility improvements and route improvements to reduce journey times and improve reliability.**

Our objectives for public transport address the main challenges facing bus and rail transport. For the former, it is the need for long-term sustained and sufficient funding from government to ensure services attract passengers.

Although rail services have less flexibility than buses, the advantage of dedicated tracks means they can be highly reliable and efficient. But to make rail an attractive option means removing barriers to their use, such as long wait times due to low frequencies, high ticket prices, and physical barriers such as outdated stations on a rail network that established itself in the Victorian era.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 9:

- A) We will aim to deliver walking and cycling improvements at prioritised locations in Kent to increase activity levels and support Kent's diverse economy, presented in a Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.**

Walking and cycling are already essential parts of people's journeys in Kent. Almost everyone walks or wheels for at least some part of their journeys, whether it's to shop around the town centre, get from the train station to the beach, or from the bus stop to the GP surgery. Supporting everyone to be able to walk, wheel and cycle with confidence will help meet Active Travel England's target of 50% trips walked, wheeled or cycled in towns and cities by 2030.



POLICY OUTCOME 10:

The quality of life in Kent is protected from the risk of worsening noise disturbance from aviation.



POLICY OBJECTIVE 10:

- A) Where there is evidence of impacts on our communities, we will make representations on airport expansion proposals and argue for measures to mitigate their effects.

In recent years there have been a series of airport proposals that could affect communities in Kent. Our former LTP set out our strategic approach and we continue to ensure that negative impacts of any new proposals can be addressed. Significant noise disturbance from flight paths has been shown to have detrimental impacts on health and wellbeing, and therefore we will try to impact any proposals to avoid them worsening the noise environment.

Delivering our outcomes.

Our proposals are set out in the next sections. They each have a positive impact on one or more of the ten outcomes that we want to achieve, which is why they form part of our plan. Some of our proposals may have a negative impact on an outcome but on balance have been judged to make an overall positive contribution to achieving our ambition.

Our Supporting Evidence Base report sets out in more detail how each of the proposals in our LTP delivers against the outcomes and objectives.

8. NETWORK-WIDE PROPOSALS

We have identified a series of network-wide proposals that deliver on the ambition and outcomes of our plan. These network-wide proposals are so called because they have either or both of the following characteristics:

- A scheme of a scale that will require action by KCC across more than one district in Kent, or beyond the boundary of Kent itself.
- A scheme with an impact that is likely to affect the way people or goods travel, or has impacts across more than one district.

Whilst these are the focus of our LTP, we recognise that there are also a series of smaller scale proposals where their delivery or impact is likely to be isolated within the district they are based. Nevertheless, these proposals have the potential to make a positive contribution towards achieving the ambition and outcomes of our plan. These local proposals are covered in the district-specific sections.

Completing delivery of our last Local Transport Plan's proposals

These proposals remain priorities for us, and we have already taken decisions as a Council concerning the delivery of some of them. In some instances, such as the A20 junction proposal, further development work and new decisions by the Cabinet Member may be required. We will continue working with developers, Local Planning Authorities, National Highways, and government to ensure the proposals are delivered. They are:

- Bearsted Road
- The Paddock Wood junction improvements at Mascalls Court Road with Badsell Road
- The Sturry Link Road in Canterbury
- The A2-A249 Key Street junction in Sittingbourne
- The A20 London Road junction with Mills Road and Hall Road in Aylesford

Working with partners across the region through Transport for the South East

We work within a collective of local authorities called Transport for the South East (TfSE). Primarily funded by the government, with some funding support also from its member authorities, TfSE is responsible for championing the needs of the region and is well-placed to make the argument for proposals with a cross-boundary impact.

The transport schemes TfSE are focused on progressing are:

- Cross-boundary rail services from Kent towards locations like Gatwick Airport in West Sussex.
- Improvements to the rail line from Ashford International towards Hastings in East Sussex.
- Extension of Elizabeth line services into north Kent from the line's current terminus at Abbey Wood.
- The A21 National Highways corridor through southern Kent and into East Sussex.
- Freight gauge enhancements to benefit freight transport from the midlands and north all the way to the Channel crossing in Kent.

Some of these schemes could have a positive impact on Kent and, we think, significant progress can be made in the coming years. Therefore, we have set out further proposals for some of them in this plan.

We will work with TfSE to direct their resources, expertise, and representation on behalf of our county towards further progress on these schemes. This will include building a case for investment that demonstrates the benefits beyond Kent alone.

A balanced set of proposals

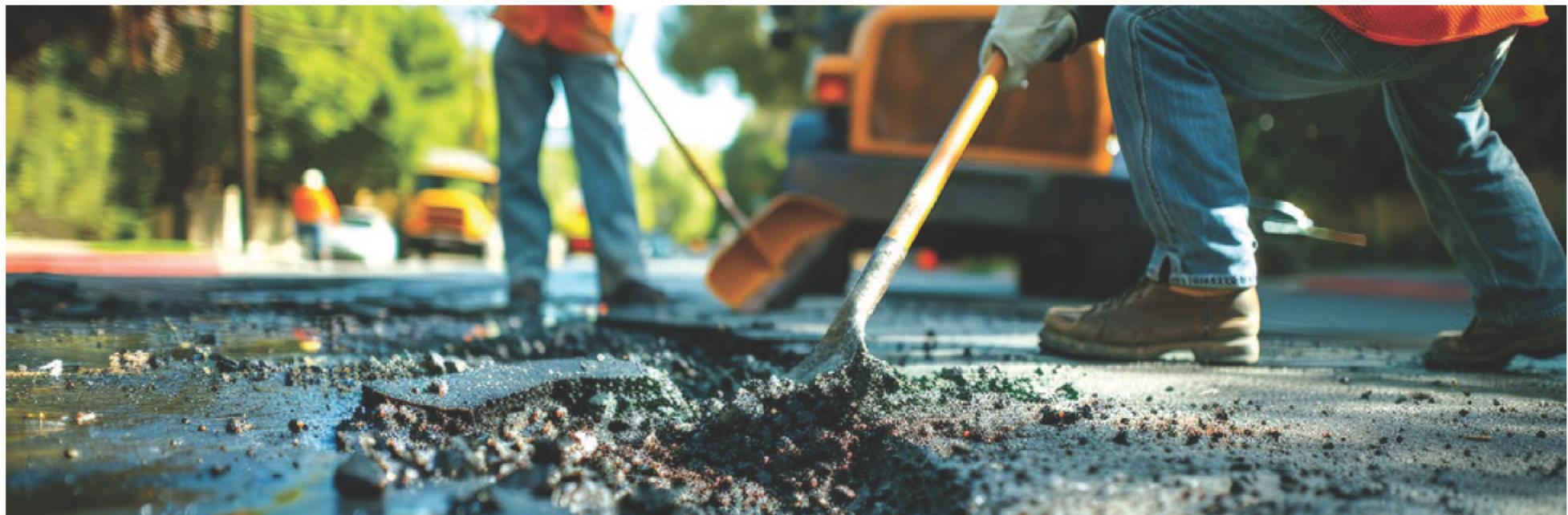
Our network-wide proposals aim to strike a balance across the mix of transport in Kent. This is in recognition of the needs of all users and the different types of places where people live and work.

We think a balanced approach is the right approach because it gives us the best opportunity to secure improvements to deliver on our ambition and outcomes. No part of the transport mix is overlooked, with clear specific proposals for each part waiting to be developed and delivered when we obtain suitable funding.

Some of the proposals, if funded, would deliver a more detailed programme of actions both county-wide and tailored for different places. This is particularly the case for proposals such as further road maintenance, delivery of our Vision Zero road safety strategy, or delivery of our Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The full range of network-wide proposals are shown in Table 2. They are presented for each part of the transport network:

- Strategic Road Network (motorways and trunk roads managed by National Highways);
- Local Road Network (all roads managed by Kent County Council);
- Public transport (buses, rail services and other types of shared mobility);
- Walking and cycling.



8. NETWORK-WIDE PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Table 2 - Balance of network-wide proposals across the transport mix

Strategic Road Network	Local Road Network	Public Transport Network	Walking and Cycling Network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower Thames Crossing M2 Junction 1 capacity enhancement A282 (M25) Junction 1A capacity enhancement M2 Junction 4 capacity and local development connections M2 road capacity enhancement A2 Brenley Corner (M2 Junction 7) capacity enhancement South Canterbury A2 junction access enhancements A2 Dover Access / Duke of York and Whitfield improvements International haulage traffic management M25-M26-A21 East-facing slips M25 Junction 3 improvements A21 enhancements Trunking: A229 and A249 between M2 and M20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining the road network Road Safety Vision Zero A229 Blue Bell Hill North Thanet Link Alkham Valley Spitfire Way junction improvements Sandwich bypass improvements A2 Gravesend local junctions A226 Galley Hill Road A228-A264 corridor improvements – West Malling to Tunbridge Wells Development management principles Supporting the shift to electric vehicles through new charging points Local road freight management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail freight gauge enhancement for international traffic Maidstone rail journey time improvements Gatwick rail access improvements Dover / Folkestone High Speed rail journey time improvements International rail passenger services for Kent Sturry and Canterbury West rail corridor improvements Local rail services Improve local access to rail stations Bus Service Improvement Plan (county-wide) Thameside Fastrack network growth Dover Fastrack network growth 'Hoppit' Mobility as a Service platform Cycle Hire trials Shared transport hubs (Mobility Hubs) Elizabeth line extension to Ebbsfleet Opposition to Gatwick expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Rights of Way Improvements Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, including: 15 initial route corridors for focusing improvements on cycling 15 initial walking zones for focusing improvements on walking and wheeling

8.1 STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS

In this section each proposal concerning the Strategic Road Network (SRN) nationally important motorways and trunk roads – is detailed. We would not deliver the proposals in this section ourselves, rather they would be the responsibility of National Highways, who manage the SRN. The proposals we have identified are centred on ensuring that the A2/M2 and M20 enable local journeys to be made effectively by ensuring they have the capacity and resilience to cope with national and international traffic.

The proposals are designed to ensure that traffic using the SRN accesses it in the most effective and efficient way possible. This is to limit the burden on the local highway network in our towns and villages where congestion can occur.

LOWER THAMES CROSSING

LOCATION: GRAVEHAM, NORTH KENT, TO THURROCK AND THROUGH ESSEX TO THE M25

Strategic aims:

- To add resilience to the Kent highway network by providing new capacity on an alternative route to the Dartford Crossing – supporting the bifurcation strategy of splitting traffic across the A2/M2 and M20 corridors.
- To support the movement of traffic across the county, including between the Channel crossing terminals and the Midlands and the North.
- To minimise adverse impacts from the growth in traffic as the population and economy grows.

What needs to happen?

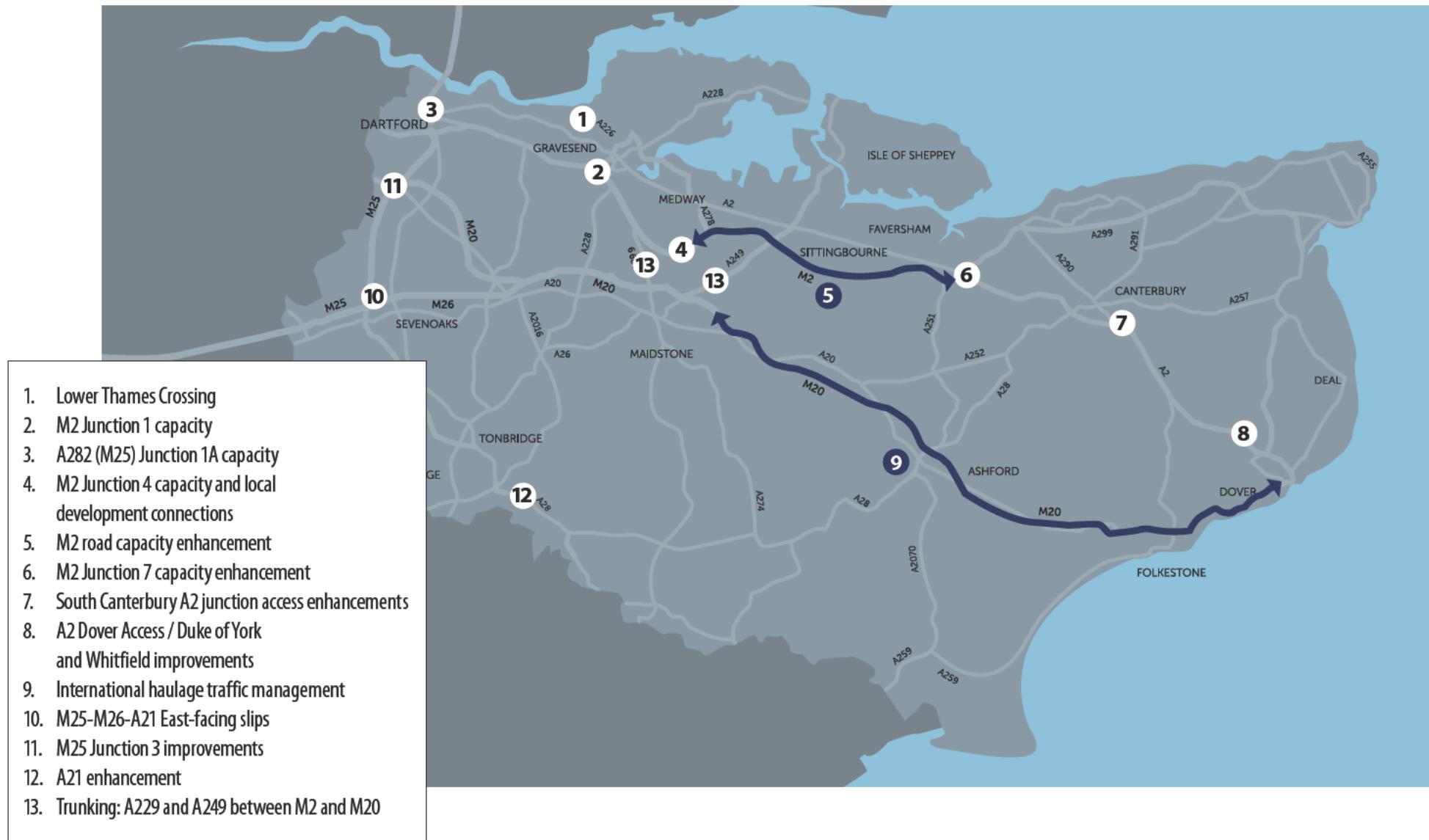
The Lower Thames Crossing and the wider road network mitigations needed to realise its benefits must be funded, consented, and delivered. The scheme is critical to Kent and the nation's wider highway network – funding must be forthcoming by National Highways and the government to guarantee its delivery.



Photo credit: National Highways

8.1 STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Figure 7 - Strategic Road Network proposals



M2 JUNCTION 1

LOCATION: CRAVEHAM – EASTERN SIDE OF THE DISTRICT, CLOSE TO THE BOUNDARY WITH MEDWAY COUNCIL.

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junction avoids delays for the Strategic Road Network, to maintain the planned benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing and KCC's proposed bifurcation strategy which concerns the A2/M2 strategic road corridor.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to establish the capacity shortfall at Junction 1 and the primary drivers of that over future years. National Highways should at a minimum complete the assessment of scheme options to inform planning of future Road Investment Strategies and identify any dependency associated with development growth pressures.

A282 JUNCTION 1A (M25) CAPACITY

LOCATION: DARTFORD – ON APPROACH TO DARTFORD CROSSING OVER THE THAMES.

Strategic aims:

- To reduce the disruptive effect of the Dartford Crossing traffic and delays on local traffic in Dartford.
- Enable the A282 Junction 1a to fulfil its role for local movement on the A206, addressing severance caused by the Dartford Crossing approach.
- To reduce the incidences of congestion and therefore its contribution towards poor air quality.

What needs to happen?

The challenges are current, associated with existing cross-river traffic and the performance of the Dartford Crossing. Options need to be developed for the design of works to achieve the strategic aims and full funding found to deliver them. The timing of the works needs to be carefully planned around the Lower Thames Crossing project's delivery programme.



M2 JUNCTION 4 CAPACITY

LOCATION: MEDWAY, ON THE BORDER WITH MAIDSTONE BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junction avoids delays for the Strategic Road Network, to maintain the planned benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing and the bifurcation strategy which concerns the A2/M2 strategic road corridor.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to establish the capacity shortfall at Junction 4 and the primary drivers of that over future years. National Highways should commence the project lifecycle process to inform planning of future Road Investment Strategy activity and any dependency associated with development growth pressures.

M2 CORRIDOR CAPACITY

LOCATION: MEDWAY TO SWALE, FROM JUNCTION 4 TO JUNCTION 7 OF THE M2

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the corridor avoids delays for the Strategic Road Network, to maintain the planned benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing and the bifurcation strategy which concerns the A2/M2 strategic road corridor.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to diagnose the capacity shortfall based on planned changes to the wider road network and growth impacts over time. National Highways should at a minimum complete the 'Options Phase' to inform planning of future Road Investment Strategy activity and any dependency associated with development growth pressures.

A2 BRENLEY CORNER (M2 JUNCTION 7) CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

LOCATION: SWALE BOROUGH, EAST OF FAVERSHAM

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junction avoids delays for the Strategic Road Network, to maintain the planned benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing and the bifurcation strategy which concerns the A2/M2 strategic road corridor.
- To ensure the junction avoids delays for the strategic and local road network associated with future traffic levels, including from development growth.
- To ensure safety at the junction is improved and supports achievement of KCC's and National Highways Road Safety strategies.
- To improve local connectivity through the junction area for all types of travel.

What needs to happen?

The scheme needs to be progressed within the third investment cycle of the Road Investment Strategy, achieving planning consent and ready for construction by the end of the cycle in 2030. This will enable the scheme to be delivered and open in time for the completion of the Lower Thames Crossing.



Photo credit © N Chadwick (cc-by-sa/2.0)

A2 SOUTH CANTERBURY ACCESS

LOCATION: CANTERBURY, BETWEEN A2 WINCHEAP INTERCHANGE AND A2 BRIDGE INTERCHANGE

Strategic aims:

- To improve journey times and reduce delays from congestion by enabling more direct access to the A2 from southern Canterbury.
- To reduce the requirement for traffic joining the A2 London-bound and leaving the A2 coast-bound to use less suitable local rural roads and undertake multiple junction movements.
- To support traffic from the strategic road network to access public transport for onward journeys into historic city of Canterbury.
- To support growth in the Canterbury area by reducing the traffic burden on the existing junctions which lack all-movement purpose built on and off slips.

What needs to happen?

The scheme needs to be designed and funded for delivery, with necessary approvals from National Highways. The scheme needs to provide an effective link to the local road network to achieve all the intended benefits.

A2 DOVER ACCESS / DUKE OF YORK AND WHITFIELD IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: DOVER DISTRICT, BETWEEN A2 LYDDEN HILL JUNCTION TO A2 DUKE OF YORK JUNCTION

Strategic aims:

- To increase resilience on the A2 corridor to the Port of Dover, supporting the bifurcation strategy and delivering national economic benefits by enabling international trade and travel.
- To relieve congestion on the approach to the Port of Dover, avoiding disrupting local traffic for the benefit of the quality of life of Dover residents, businesses and visitors.
- To improve the safety of the Strategic Road Network into Dover.
- To ensure the local road network and its junctions with the A2 are able to efficiently serve travel from the existing community and increased travel demand from local growth sites.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to resume planning and design of options and set out a plan for when delivery will occur, subject to any necessary planning consents being obtained. We propose that National Highways should target planning approval in the third Road Investment Strategy cycle which runs from 2025-2030, with delivery in the following cycle running from 2030-2035. The required works to the local road junctions need to be designed and co-ordinated to support local growth and cater for potential long term delay in delivery by National Highways.

INTERNATIONAL HAULAGE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

LOCATION: COUNTYWIDE, WITH A FOCUS ON THE APPROACHES TO THE CHANNEL CROSSING TERMINALS OF DOVER AND EUROTUNNEL

Strategic aims:

- To increase resilience on the M2/A2 and M20/A20 road corridors to the Port of Dover, to support the KCC bifurcation strategy.
- To relieve congestion on the approach to the Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel rail terminal at Folkestone, to support international trade and travel and avoid disrupting local traffic for the benefit of the quality of life of Kent residents, businesses, and visitors.
- To reduce the need for traffic management on-highway, including a permanent solution to remove the need for Operation Brock, by ensuring suitable vehicle management facilities exist across the corridor including at the international terminals.
- To ensure that international traffic is kept to the correct routes to reduce disruption and disturbance in local communities in Kent.

What needs to happen?

We will continue to work with the government in developing and assessing traffic management interventions, from on-the-ground infrastructure through to digital communications and applications. This is to help ensure changes to border controls and goods checks are delivered smoothly and effectively. These efforts will include establishing increased capacity to manage and process traffic off the road network, including at the international terminals.

We will work through Transport for the South East to ensure the burden of requirements for lorry facilities are shared across the region. We will continue to work with the existing HGV parking providers to support them in obtaining funding when opportunities arise from government to improve existing welfare facilities.

M25 – M26 – A21 JUNCTION – EAST FACING SLIPS

LOCATION: SEVENOAKS DISTRICT, NORTH WEST OF SEVENOAKS TOWN AT M25 JUNCTION 5

Strategic aims:

- To reduce traffic volumes along the A25 associated with west to east movements from the M25 to the M26 (for the M20), with requisite improvements to road safety, air quality and junction performance given significant growth along this corridor.
- To remove heavy traffic from inappropriate rural roads through villages such as Seal, Kemsing, Oxted and Halstead.

What needs to happen?

Given past work and lack of progress, it is proposed that the scheme be kept under review, to identify any new imperative and critical new drivers for the scheme's case which would justify National Highways reconsidering options.

A21 ENHANCEMENT

LOCATION: TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH, A21 ROUTE BETWEEN PEMBURY AND LAMBERHURST

Strategic aims:

- To reduce traffic congestion and delay and ensure the route can accommodate growth within southern Kent and East Sussex.

What needs to happen?

There needs to be a clear plan by National Highways for how planning and optioneering can take place, setting a clear timescale for progressing the scheme through the Road Investment Strategy. As the only trunk road route from Tunbridge Wells towards Hastings, this scheme would enhance the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury dualling that opened in September 2017.



Photo credit © N Chadwick (cc-by-sa/2.0)

M25 JUNCTION 3

LOCATION: SEVENOAKS – SWANLEY INTERCHANGE – JUNCTION WITH THE M20 AND A20

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junction avoids delays for the Strategic and Local Road Networks, especially at times of incident at the Dartford Crossing.
- To ensure the junction can serve travel from the existing community and increased travel demand from local growth sites.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to establish the capacity shortfall at Junction 3, including working with promoters of local growth sites to determine potential options to address constraints. As a short-term measure, the lane markings need to be reviewed and improved.

FURTHER TRUNKING THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

LOCATION: MAIDSTONE DISTRICT, A229 BETWEEN M20 JUNCTION 6 TO M2 JUNCTION 3; AND A249 BETWEEN M20 JUNCTION 7 AND M2 JUNCTION 5

Strategic aims:

- To obtain national recognition of the high volume of local and longer distance traffic using the routes, the criticality of their role in enabling strategic movement of traffic within and through Kent.
- To ensure that the roads receive long term and sustained investment for their maintenance, renewal, operation and upgrade as part of the national Road Investment Strategy delivered by National Highways, including delivery of National Highway policy aims concerning safety and the environment.

What needs to happen?

The Department for Transport needs to determine whether trunking of the routes should proceed, and we will support National Highways in any remaining business case development it may need to undertake to complete the trunking process. The A229 improvement scheme that we are developing remains necessary for delivery and must proceed regardless of which highway body is responsible for the road (see our Local Road Network proposal for the A229).



8.2 LOCAL ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS

This section details each network-wide proposal concerning the Local Road Network, which are the roads that we manage. These proposals, that we would deliver in our capacity as the local highway authority, are designed to ensure that we can best fulfil our network management duty and respond to the variety of pressures on our local roads, ranging from new housing development through to the interface with the Strategic Road Network. The proposals also concern how we can best utilise our highway assets to ensure that the shift to electric vehicles is facilitated by better access to on-street charging infrastructure for as many people as possible.

MAINTAINING THE ROAD NETWORK

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE.

Strategic aims:

- To deliver our Highways Asset Management Plan and achieve safe and reliable journeys to be made around and through the county.
- To reduce the backlog of maintenance work over a long-term sustained period.
- To ensure our highways network enables Kent's businesses and residents to complete the journeys they need to support a growing economy and improving quality of life.

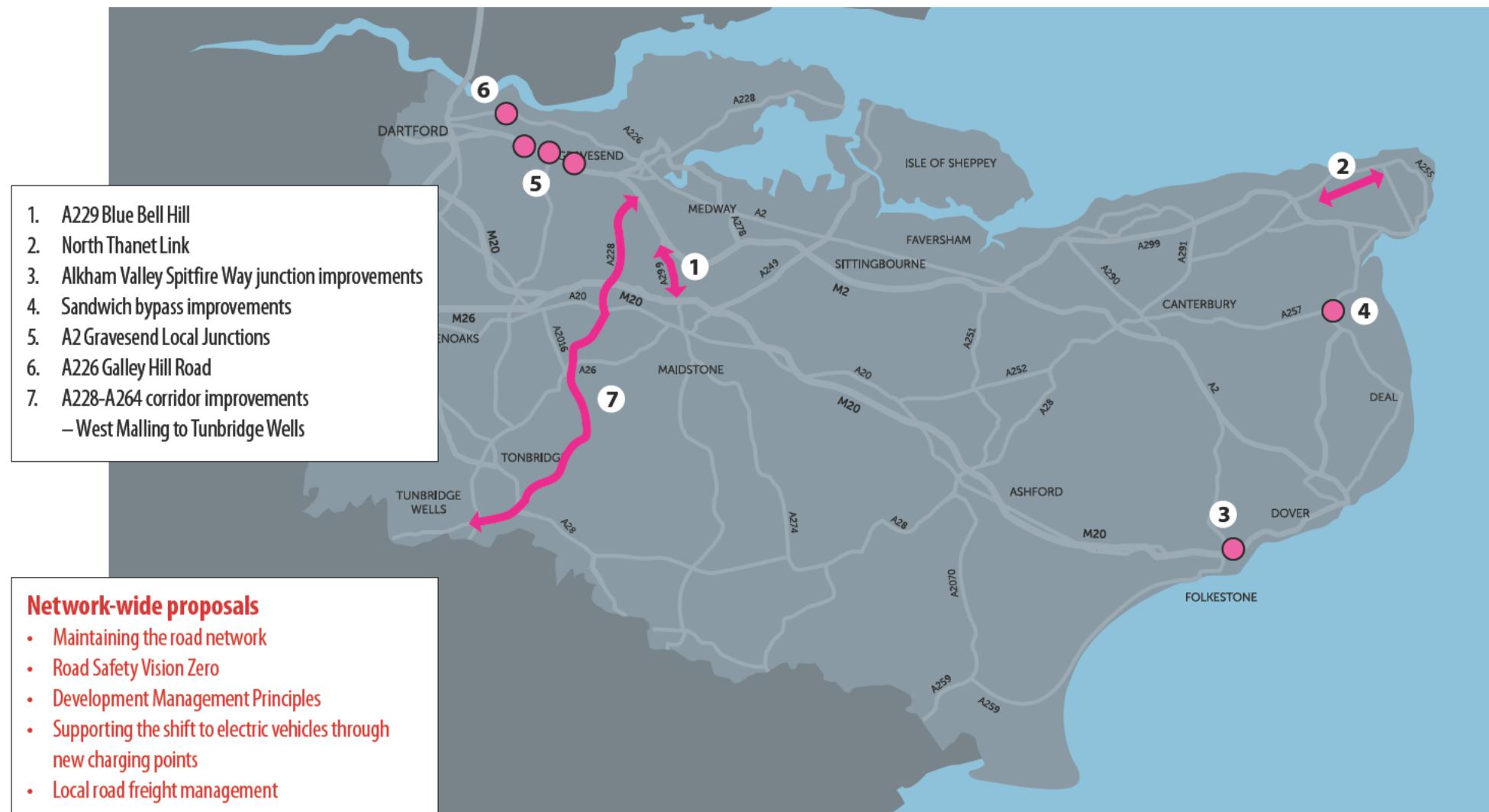
What needs to happen?

We need to secure funding over the next decade equivalent to c.£1 billion, to further improve the condition of our managed highway network and reduce the backlog of maintenance work.



8.2 LOCAL NETWORK PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Figure 8 - Local Road Network proposals



ROAD SAFETY VISION ZERO

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE.

Strategic aims:

- To take a safe system approach, which understands that people make mistakes and therefore aims to ensure these mistakes do not cause a death or life changing injury.
- To improve safety in collaboration with Kent's local communities.
- To improve the quality of life by making Kent's highways safer for whatever choice of travel is used.

What needs to happen?

We will continue to deliver our Vision Zero strategy, implementing changes to our network and evaluating their impact, whilst working with local communities to explore their road safety concerns. Many of the proposals in our Local Transport Plan will have a role to play, with the new investment they bring providing opportunities to build safe systems into their design and operation. The more funding we can secure from government, the more we will be able to act.



A229 BLUE BELL HILL

LOCATION: MAIDSTONE BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To improve the reliability of journey times and reduce congestion so that this critical route between the M2 and M20 can accommodate growth in traffic from new land uses and the Lower Thames Crossing's impact on the routing of traffic.
- To make best use of the existing road network, by enhancing it to deliver better outcomes for road safety, public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, and air quality.
- To ensure the effects of the Lower Thames Crossing on traffic movements are addressed on Blue Bell Hill and its junctions.

What needs to happen?

The scheme needs to be funded by the government so that we can complete its development, planning and construction, subject to the necessary planning consents. A scheme to address capacity on this vital link is needed regardless of whether the Lower Thames Crossing is delivered.



NORTH THANET LINK

LOCATION: THANET DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To improve the local road network resilience, capacity and reliability to help support development of new land uses and to manage seasonal traffic peaks associated with the visitor economy to the coast and other attractions.
- To improve access to the Manston airport site.
- To improve road safety and provide new pedestrian and cycle links and offer new public transport route opportunities.
- To improve access to Manston Business Park.

What needs to happen?

The government needs to swiftly determine whether the scheme should proceed following our submission of its business case. We will then require further funding from the government to undertake the remaining stages of scheme development and construction, subject to the necessary planning consents.



ALKHAM VALLEY SPITFIRE JUNCTION

LOCATION: FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junction can cater for local traffic between Hawkinge, Folkestone and Dover, whilst meeting the needs of Port-bound traffic resulting from diversions during traffic management events.
- To improve road safety and provide new pedestrian and cycle facilities as necessary as part of any junction improvements.

What needs to happen?

Development of a scheme and its future delivery will be dependent on monitoring of the junction which will inform potential solutions and the timescales required. A potential scheme for the junction needs to be considered alongside a wider objective to encourage traffic between Folkestone and Dover to use the A20, which is designed for heavy volumes of traffic through the North Downs National Landscape area (formerly called an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), rather than the Alkham Valley Road.

SANDWICH BYPASS

LOCATION: DOVER DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junctions along the bypass can accommodate the impact of local development and its effect on growing traffic volumes.
- To ensure that the corridor as a whole has sufficient capacity to realise the benefits of any junction upgrades and to provide reliable and safe journeys along its length.

What needs to happen?

Surveys and computer models of the junctions and stretch of road are required to determine the extent of works needed. The delivery and funding of the schemes will be influenced by the timing of consented development at Discovery Park, which would deliver improvements for the A256-A257 junction.

GRAVESEND LOCAL JUNCTIONS

LOCATION: GRAVESEND BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junctions for access to and from the A2 can accommodate the impact of local development and strategic changes to the road network, such as the Lower Thames Crossing.
- Where works occur, to deliver improvements to safety for all road users including better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to evaluate the junctions and monitor their performance as part of assessing the impact of the new Lower Thames Crossing, which KCC can use to identify options that meet the strategic aims and other objectives that arise over the course of this work. Consideration needs to be given to phasing the works, taking account of the timeframe for delivering of the Lower Thames Crossing and any disruption that may cause in the area.

A226 GALLEY HILL ROAD

LOCATION: DARTFORD BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To improve east-west journey times for trips across the Swanscombe, Ebbesfleet and Northfleet areas.
- To reduce pressure on the remaining network and enable a return of bus and Fastrack routes along the road corridor.
- To consider if improvements can be made to pedestrian and cycling links in the solution for this stretch of highway.

What needs to happen?

KCC will complete the development of the options for this stretch of road and share those with the government. Given the scale of the challenge to reinstate the road, we expect to need financial support to implement a solution for this important part of the road network.

A228-A264 CORRIDOR BETWEEN WEST MALLING TO TUNBRIDGE WELLS

LOCATION: TONBRIDGE AND MALLING AND TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To ensure the corridor delivers reliable journey times and sufficient capacity to meet the needs of its users and from future land uses along the corridor.
- To co-ordinate the design of interventions along the corridor to ensure they work effectively together, across District boundaries, to meet user needs.
- To find opportunities to deliver improvements for public transport, road safety and walking and cycling along the corridor.

What needs to happen?

An A228-A264 corridor plan needs to be developed by KCC, to ensure that the site-specific pressures, arising in part from local growth are addressed in a co-ordinated way to deliver a sum greater than its parts. KCC should develop proposals within a single continuous programme for the corridor for development and delivery subject to securing developer and government funding. This should include a further review of the case for a Colts Hill bypass.

LOCAL ROAD FREIGHT MANAGEMENT

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To support effective management of HGVs across the local road network to mitigate impacts on local communities, whilst ensuring Kent's businesses and their freight and logistics needs are supported.
- To support the private sector led delivery of new parking capacity and welfare facilities, subject to the merits of each specific proposal that comes forward through the planning system.
- To promote the use of alternatives to road haulage to reduce the burden on Kent's local roads, such as rail and water-borne freight.

What needs to happen?

We already undertaken substantial activity to address the issues caused by HGVs on our local road network and gather evidence to support the need for interventions and mitigations. To support our future work, we will consider whether the aims and actions detailed in the Kent County Council Freight Action Plan need to be updated to take account of current trends and challenges on our network.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To ensure Local Planning Authorities and developers work effectively with KCC to effectively design development and local transport so as to reduce its pressure on the existing road network and embed sustainable travel from the start.
- To implement an infrastructure-first approach to secure initial improvements to the whole transport system to reduce pressure on the road network.
- To recognise the uncertainty in how occupants of new developments will travel by assessing a range of outcomes and ensuring the right mitigations are implemented in response to observed impacts.

What needs to happen?

Further to our existing Developer Contributions Guidance, we reiterate that we will deliver with district planning authorities a 'decide and provide' (also known as 'vision and validate') approach to planning and site development. This approach supports achieving a greater choice of transport modes to help reduce traffic generation onto the existing highway network whilst also addressing impacts that do require mitigation. This will be delivered by ensuring planning agreements for sites make provisions for uncertainty in transport impacts by applying a monitor and manage approach.



LOCAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- Improving access to Electric Vehicle Charging Points across rural and urban areas, particularly areas where the market is least likely to address and where inequality to access could arise.
- To support, and potentially accelerate the transition to electric vehicles to fulfil the national Decarbonising Transport strategy.
- To support delivery of better air quality across Kent by providing the charging infrastructure that enables vehicles with zero tailpipe emissions.

What needs to happen?

We will deliver a long term programme of on street electric vehicle charging sockets once the required funding is in place and procurement completed, working with private sector charge point operators to ensure satisfactory delivery across our highway estate. We will monitor and engage with the market as new technology and opportunities arise.



8.3 PUBLIC AND SHARED TRANSPORT NETWORK PROPOSALS

In this section, each network-wide proposal concerning the public transport network is explained. We do not operate the public transport network in Kent, with the exception of the Fastrack system for which we specify and manage the contract alongside the subsidy we provide for supported bus services. Almost all bus services are privately run whilst the rail network is currently operated by the private sector through contracts with government or by the government's own company.

Our highways are important assets that enable bus operators to provide their services effectively and for rail users to reach the station. Our roads are important for other potential future forms of shared transport that are being trialled.

As the Local Transport Authority, we have a role in representing the views and interests of our constituents concerning bus and rail services. We have secured funding in the past to improve both the bus and rail networks and we anticipate that there could be new funding opportunities in the future, so we have set out priorities for how public transport and shared transport could evolve to meet the ambition and outcomes of our Local Transport Plan.

KENT'S BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

Our BSIP is a comprehensive and long-term plan detailing how the county's bus network could be improved. It covers infrastructure (such as bus stops, bus priority and real time information) and proposes an indicative future timetable all subject to the funding we receive to deliver it. Due to its size, we cannot repeat the full BSIP here but more information about our plans for buses is available at kent.gov.uk.

The strategic aims set out below are a re-iteration of those established in the KCC Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), which we have begun delivering with funding from government.

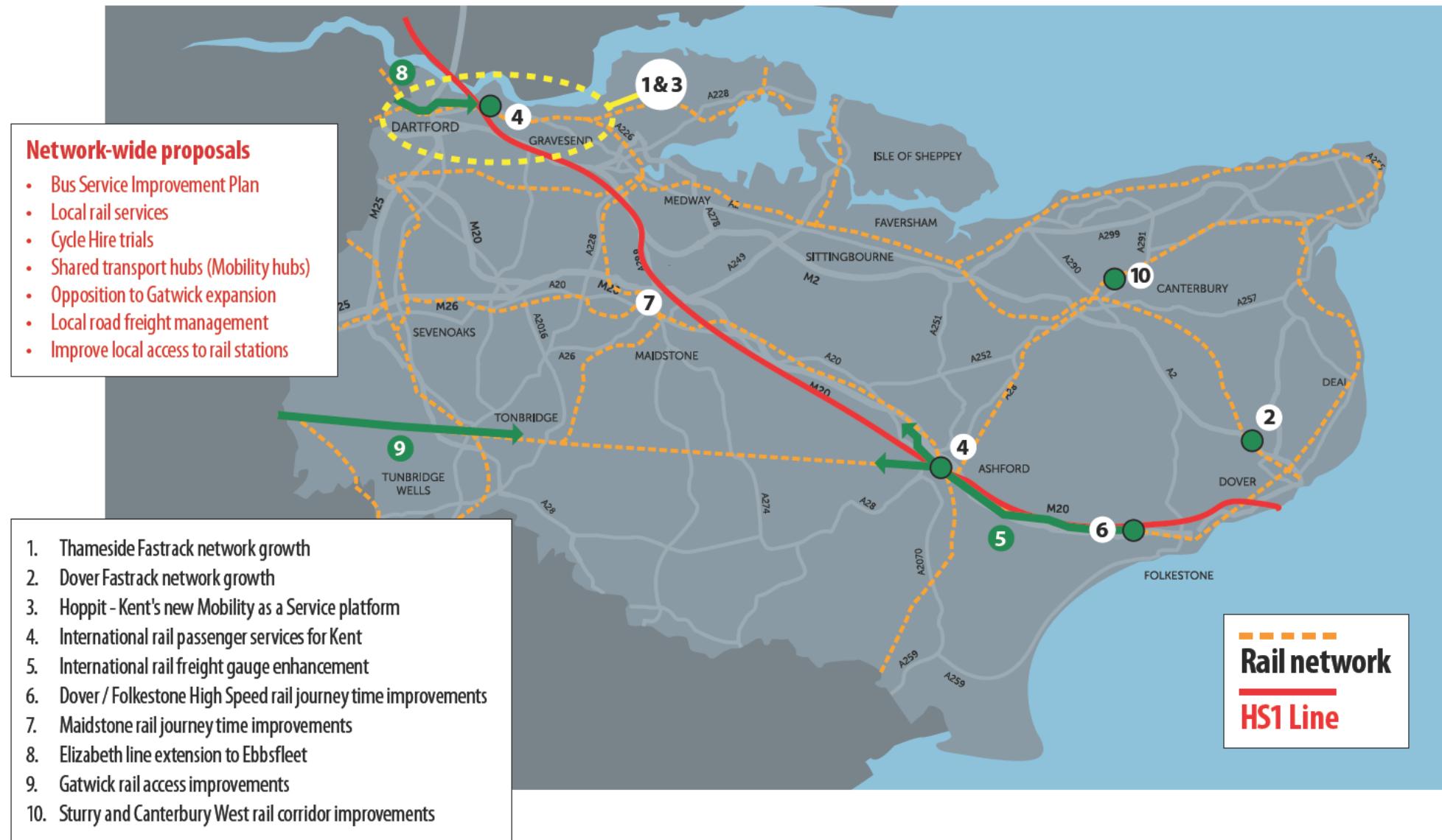
- To place the customer at the heart of everything we do through an established passenger charter, to help us work with operators on customer's behalf.
- Put buses at the centre of decision making in respect of new road schemes, planning and developments, and support bus operators and services in KCC's role as the highway authority.
- To Improve the quality and accessibility of public transport information and services, including flexible and better value ticketing options.
- Consider and embrace innovative transport solutions such as Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) models as possible alternatives to the private car, make use of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) where appropriate, and continue to support the community transport sector in Kent.

What needs to happen?

The KCC BSIP needs to be further funded by government beyond March 2025. We have set out a detailed program of investment into all aspects of bus services, working in partnership with local authorities and the bus operators. The total estimated cost of those improvements over the period of 2025/26 to 2028/29 is £240m – equivalent to £60m per year. Stabilising and improving bus networks across the county will need KCC to demonstrate that buses are a strategic priority on all parts of its road network, to help operators in improving journey times, service reliability and reducing the cost of their operations.

8.3 PUBLIC AND SHARED TRANSPORT NETWORK PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Figure 9 - Public and shared transport network proposals



KENT THAMESIDE FASTRACK

LOCATION: GRAVESEND AND DARTFORD BOROUGHS

Strategic aims:

- To build on the success of the current Fastrack network by identifying how it can serve communities in the future by delivering bus transit oriented development along new routes.
- To increase access to fast, reliable and zero carbon (at the tail pipe) public transport.

What needs to happen?

We will develop plans for where the Fastrack network in north Kent could be extended based on an assessment of corridor options and their relation to local growth proposals and make the case for funding to deliver our preferred option(s).



KENT DOVER FASTRACK

LOCATION: DOVER DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To serve the Whitfield Urban Extension and connect it to Dover town centre and rail station.
- To increase access to fast, reliable and zero carbon (at the tail pipe) public transport.

What needs to happen?

We will develop and seek to deliver network extensions of Dover Fastrack by working with Dover District Council and developers to ensure Fastrack access is at the heart of the Whitfield urban extension and future local development that it could serve where the opportunity exists to integrate bus priority for the network.



'HOPPIT' – KENT'S NEW MOBILITY AS A SERVICE (MaaS) PLATFORM

LOCATION: THAMESIDE FASTRACK AREA, WITH POTENTIAL FOR COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To improve the range of travel choices and access to those, to make it easier to make journeys.
- To make easier use of public transport and future shared transport, by providing a service that can manage and pay for multiple fares and charges.
- To improve access to travel information and journey planning, to help users make informed choices suited to their needs or preferences.

What needs to happen?

Subject to the funding we can secure, we will aim to further develop and deliver a MaaS platform trial, called 'Hoppit' to evaluate its effectiveness, alongside learning from other MaaS roll-outs across the UK (such in the Solent Future Transport Zone). We will work to find opportunities more widely in Kent to apply the 'Hoppit' MaaS platform. Subject to the outcomes of the initial 'Hoppit' MaaS Ebbsfleet pilot, KCC will explore establishing a county-wide 'Hoppit' MaaS platform phased by Enhanced Bus Partnership areas with potential to also expand to Medway.

CYCLE HIRE PILOTS IN DEVELOPMENT AREAS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To evaluate the potential for cycle hire to form part of the transport mix in appropriate locations in Kent.
- To improve access to cycles to take advantage of cycle routes and infrastructure in place in the county.
- To realise the health benefits of cycling and support improved air quality in urban areas.
- To increase choice and meet the needs for those who cycling is a preferred means of travel but who do not have easy access to cycles.

What needs to happen?

KCC will work with developers and district councils on the delivery of planned cycle hire schemes and monitor their impact. Performance of the pilots will assist KCC with any future consideration of cycle hire schemes in new developments and existing communities.



SHARED TRANSPORT HUBS (KNOWN AS MOBILITY HUBS)

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To evaluate the potential for shared transport mobility hubs to form part of the transport mix in appropriate locations in Kent in the future.
- To improve access to shared transport, including car clubs, public transport, cycle hire, etc.
- To increase choice and meet the needs of those for whom ownership of private transport is more difficult.

What needs to happen?

KCC will work with developers and district councils on the planning of mobility hub networks where they are proposed. It is anticipated that hubs would be

deliverable first in new developments, funded and delivered by development, which provides the opportunity to learn lessons and evaluate their suitability for other parts of Kent.

Where proposals do come forward in Kent, KCC proposes that those are anchored around electric car hire clubs given motorised travel is the most common type of transport in the county. These should be located to form part of a hub with existing public transport access points. Any mobility hub proposals in Kent should seek to achieve ComoUK accreditation.

Subject to implementation of a Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform in Kent, mobility hubs should be operated and managed so that their use is purchasable through the MaaS platform.



Photo credit: CoMoUK

OPPOSITION TO GATWICK EXPANSION

LOCATION: TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH AND SEVENOAKS DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To oppose a second runway at Gatwick Airport due to risk of noise disturbance and its impact on the quality of life for residents of Kent.

What needs to happen?

The decision about whether Gatwick Airport can be expanded will be taken by the government. We will continue to set out clearly our concerns and work with the Airport and other stakeholders to explore if there are mitigations that can avoid adverse effects on our residents from the noise of being overflown.



Photo credit: Jan Rosalino

GATWICK RAIL ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To better connect the county to the international gateway of Gatwick Airport.
- To reduce reliance on the busy road network.
- To make the impact of growth at Gatwick Airport more sustainable.

What needs to happen?

We will work to progress the strategic advice for Gatwick Airport rail services to Kent (published by Network Rail in 2024) with the aim of increasing the prospect of bringing a service into operation. We will make representations on Gatwick Airport growth through the planning process to ensure that new rail access is considered as a mitigation and to reduce pressure on the road network.

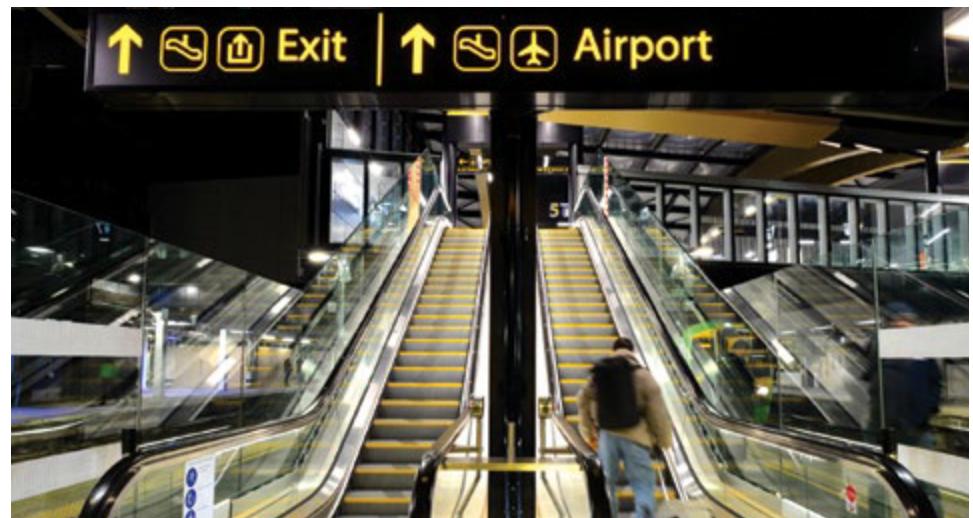


Photo credit: Network Rail

INCREASING RAIL FREIGHT FOR INTERNATIONAL GOODS MOVEMENTS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To reduce the burden of haulage traffic on Kent's roads and communities by making better use of the rail network for freight transport between Europe and the UK.
- To support the decarbonisation of transport to deliver the government's Decarbonising Transport strategy – CO2 emissions per tonne of cargo delivered by rail can be 76% lower than by road, whilst also creating 10 times less particulate matter and 15 times less Nitrogen Oxides.
- For the rail freight network to be planned and managed in a coordinated manner across the regions of England.

Changing rail gauges would enable containerised loads to fit through tunnels in Kent and serve the Midlands and the North. As Network Rail stated in 2023¹, "Gauge clearance of the classic routes to W12 is still the rail freight industry's firm aspiration for the longer term and will be needed for anything like the extent and diversity of market enjoyed by Channel Tunnel rail freight in the late 1990s to ultimately return."

What needs to happen?

KCC will work to provide its rich intelligence about the impact of road freight haulage on the county to Network Rail and the government so that they can fully consider this in determining whether to make the necessary investments in the rail freight network. KCC will work within Transport for the South East to ensure that the benefits to the region and other Sub-national Transport Bodies can be promoted.



Photo credit: Getlink Ltd

¹ See Network Rail published report *International Rail Freight: Opportunities for Growth*, February 2023 at www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/International-Rail-Freight-Opportunities-for-Growth.pdf

MAIDSTONE RAIL MAINLINE JOURNEY TIME IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: MAIDSTONE BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To better connect the county town across Kent and beyond.
- To encourage growth in use of a fully electrified, carbon-efficient rail network
- To help reduce traffic on the town's road network.
- To reduce the time it takes to make journeys on train to provide a more attractive service to prospective passengers.

What needs to happen?

A series of improvements are proposed below, that the rail industry and government should seek to deliver through the current specification of services, future replacement of rolling stock across the domestic and high speed rail fleets, and any further reforms to the management and delivery of services.

- Maidstone's county town status recognised through the return of a 3rd peak High Speed rail service.
- Establish the case for further High Speed services to Maidstone West.
- The Charing Cross via London Bridge service provided over the whole week.
- Avoid any worsening of journey times for services between Maidstone and Ashford if a new station is built on the route to serve development.
- Establish the case for reinstatement of direct services between Maidstone and Canterbury.
- Re-establish services across the week to Tonbridge, to better connect Maidstone with Tunbridge Wells.

ELIZABETH LINE EXTENSION TO EBBSFLEET

LOCATION: DARTFORD AND GRAVEHAM BOROUGHS

The strategic aims for this proposal were made to government in 2021 as part of a Strategic Outline Business Case and are remain the aim at this time. They are:

- Support ambitious and sustainable housing growth and regeneration in the north Kent corridor.
- Support employment growth, intensification and productivity.
- Deliver an uplift in the quality and capacity of public transport to address current and future travel demands in the corridor.
- Support climate change and zero carbon goals and targets and environmentally sustainable growth.
- Improve connectivity from the corridor to key strategic and international gateways.
- The proposal must be affordable and have realistic funding prospects.

What needs to happen?

Government have been considering the business case that the partnership submitted. A decision by the government is needed about whether any of the options in the business case should be progressed and, if so, provide funding for the appropriate transport authorities to progress more detailed planning, design, and an outline business case. Any scheme will need to be funded by the government given the very high cost of extending the Elizabeth line.

DOVER AND FOLKESTONE HIGH SPEED RAIL ENHANCEMENTS

LOCATION: DOVER, FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE AND THANET DISTRICTS

Strategic aims:

- To better connect east Kent coastal communities by reducing their journey times to west Kent and London, focused on getting Dover within an hour of London.
- To enable the High Speed rail network to support the growth of east Kent by ensuring that future rolling stock caters for the service opportunities that could be delivered.
- To support levelling up of the priority 1 areas of Thanet, Dover and Folkestone and Hythe by maximising the advantages of the High Speed 1 rail link.

What needs to happen?

The rail industry and government will need to fund and develop the business case for the associated enhancements to determine the requirements from future rolling stock replacement. We will support that process and ensure the case reflects the challenges and opportunities faced by the local communities in east Kent.



CANTERBURY WEST AND STURRY STATION IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: CANTERBURY DISTRICT

Strategic aims:

- To take advantage of signalling upgrades along the rail corridor through Canterbury West to support delivery of regeneration and improvement of the station and its local surroundings.
- To take advantage of signalling upgrades along the rail corridor through Canterbury West and Sturry to deliver a reduced need for closure of the levelling crossing, to reduce highways congestion, improve journey times and improve air quality by reducing queuing and idling traffic.

What needs to happen?

We will work with Canterbury City Council and the rail industry in their development of proposals, to obtain the necessary funding to deliver the schemes.



INTERNATIONAL RAIL SERVICES FOR KENT

LOCATION: DARTFORD (EBBSFLEET) AND ASHFORD BOROUGH

Strategic aims:

- To obtain a resumption of international rail services stopping at Ebbsfleet and Ashford International stations.
- To support the economic opportunities and prosperity of business sectors and improve the quality of life for Kent residents who have based decisions on where they locate owing to the ability to travel with ease internationally on the rail network.

- To ensure that the Kent stations are managed and maintained to a standard that enables them to be brought swiftly back into operation for international rail operators.
- To ensure the public funding invested in the international rail stations is delivering the intended benefits to the county and country's economy.

What needs to happen?

KCC will develop the public-interest case for international rail services stopping in Kent to help support decision makers in securing future services at Kent's stations. KCC will also ensure the case for Kent can be pitched to potential new international rail service operators.



Photo credit: Eurostar Ltd

LOCAL RAIL SERVICES

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- An approach to planning and delivery of rail services and infrastructure that is more balanced towards the needs within Kent and less focused on services to and from London so as to better connect towns across Kent.
- To substantially grow use of the rail network by making service frequencies far more attractive across the whole week, exploiting the high number of stations that means Kent has some of the best access to the rail network nationally.
- To enable the almost entirely electrified rail network in Kent to make a far higher contribution towards realising reductions in carbon emissions.
- To learn lessons from the National Bus Strategy and use of government funding to lower travel costs including through targeted local initiatives.

Status: Examples of the system providing very low frequency services are:

- Canterbury to Faversham / Sittingbourne – 1 train per hour (tph)
- Sittingbourne <> Sheerness – 1 train per hour (tph)
- Maidstone <> Ashford / Dover / Folkestone – 1 train per hour (tph)
- Ramsgate <> Dover – 1 train per hour (tph)
- Canterbury <> Dover – 1 train per hour (tph)

What needs to happen?

The rail network needs to move towards providing half hourly services on every mainline across the whole week to drive growth in its use. The fares pricing structure and cost of using services must be addressed, drawing lessons from the approach taken for the bus network. This includes the potential for offers on fares to support rail travel for local events.

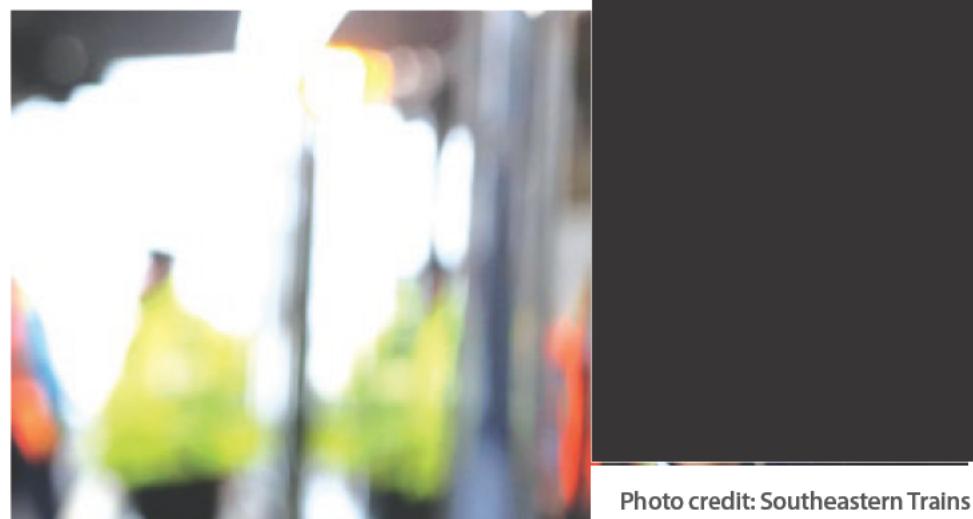


Photo credit: Southeastern Trains

IMPROVE LOCAL ACCESS TO RAIL STATIONS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- Enable use of the rail network by removing barriers to its access at stations.
- To help provide more choice for journeys by catering for different means of access to and from the station for rail journeys.

What needs to happen?

The rail industry should set out its current ranking of station priorities for Kent to provide clarity on when changes could be forthcoming. This will enable local stakeholders, including ourselves, to work with the rail industry to understand what actions can be taken to support a delivery of improvements at locations across the county.

8.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND OTHER FORMS OF NON-MOTORISED TRAVEL PROPOSALS

In this section we have set out our proposals for walking, cycling and other non-motorised travel (including equestrianism and wheeled transport like mobility aids). The proposals are focused on further improving the networks we have so that they become increasingly easy, attractive, and safe to use, helping to encourage active journeys. Active journeys have the highest range of benefits and are the most accessible form of transport. They improve health, reduce noise, air pollution and carbon emissions, add footfall back to high streets, reduce wear and tear to the road network, and increase the propensity to use bus and rail transport which in turn helps to make those services more popular and improve the range and quality provided by operators in the future.

KENT CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To make clear about where our priorities are for improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling across the county.
- To establish a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements that we can seek funding for, contributing towards delivery of the national strategy led by Active Travel England.
- To complement district-led Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) to find opportunities where infrastructure investment can deliver benefits for both short distance trips within a neighbourhood, and form part of a long distance continuous network across the county.

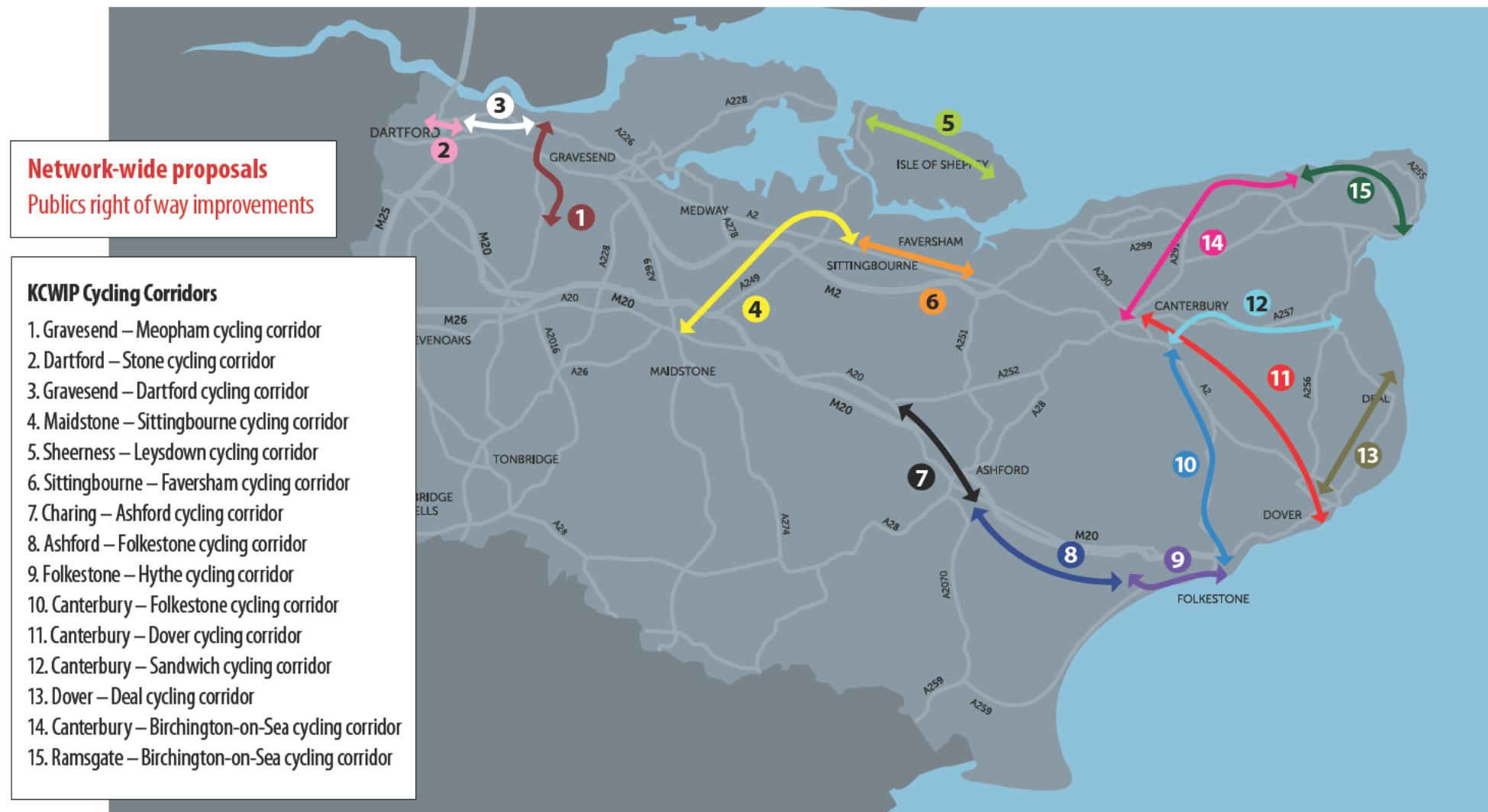
What needs to happen?

A draft Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) has been developed, setting out 15 cycling corridors and 15 walking zones where we could focus future planning and design work to make the case for funding. Each of the corridors and zones are indicative and the final route options will be determined when proposals are subject to development, design and consultation. For example, the corridor on the Isle of Sheppey could include parts of the Sheppey Light Railway Greenway, subject to design and consultation with local communities.

To do this, we will seek the funding necessary to further develop the KCWIP and its proposals to improve infrastructure in the corridors and zones it details. We have set out in the district sections of this LTP how our KCWIP proposals would complement proposals in the existing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) that have been produced by the district and borough councils across Kent. We will continue to work with stakeholders, including the districts and borough councils, to develop and deliver LCWIPs and we will consider potential new priorities that may emerge for incorporation into our county plan.

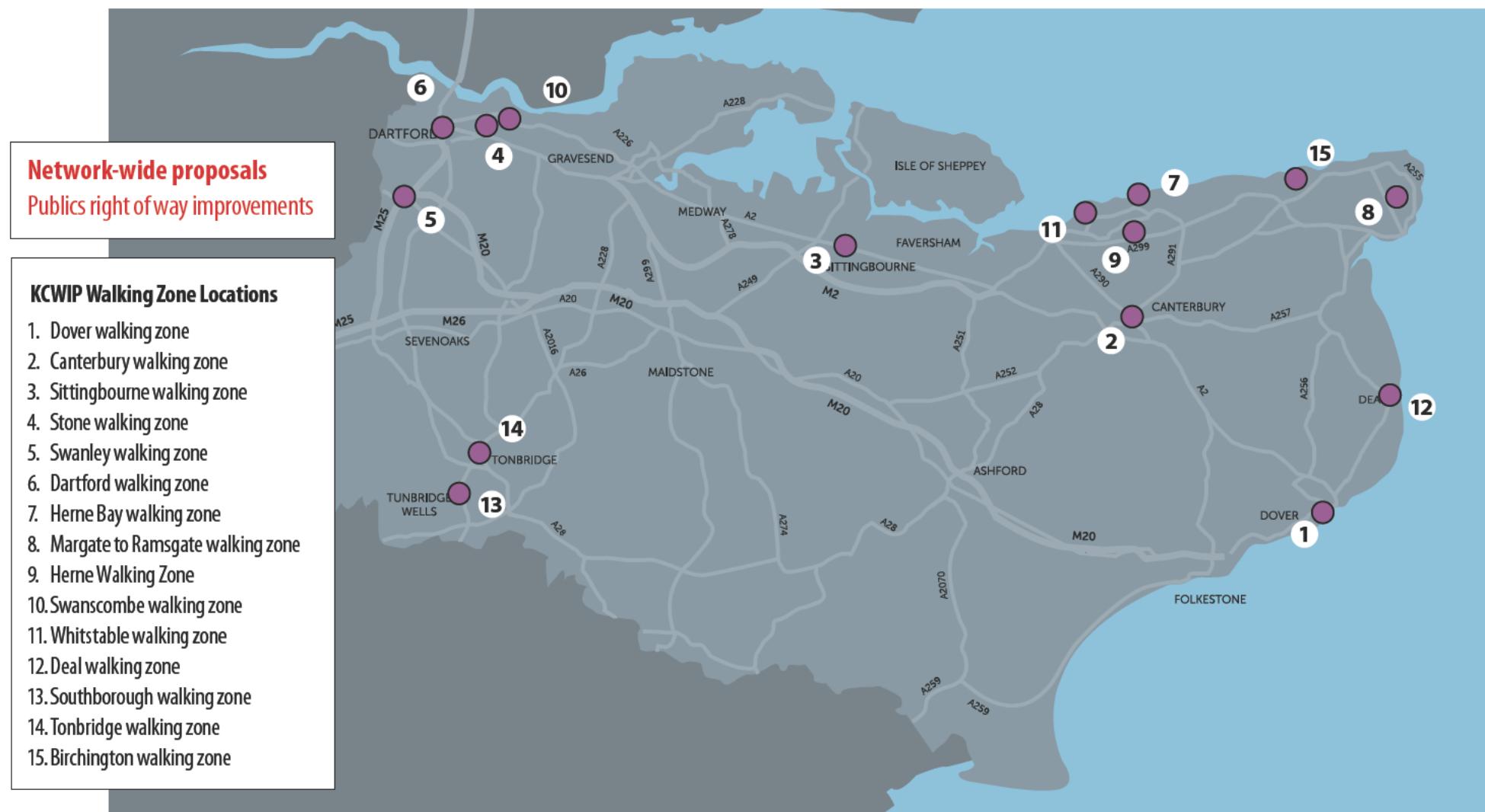
8.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND OTHER FORMS OF NON-MOTORISED TRAVEL PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Figure 10 - Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan priority corridors



8.4 WALKING, CYCLING AND OTHER FORMS OF NON-MOTORISED TRAVEL PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Figure 11 - Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan priority zones



PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

Strategic aims:

- To provide a high quality, well-maintained Public Rights of Way network, that is well used and enjoyed.
- Encourage active lifestyles by providing essential links within urban and rural communities to support safe walking, cycling, wheeling and riding.
- To have a well-maintained network that evolves to meet the needs of a growing Kent.

What needs to happen?

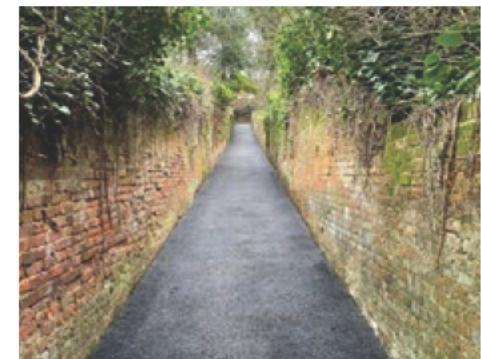
Delivering the wide-ranging and detailed actions in the KCC Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan to exploit the network and deliver better journeys and access across our urban and rural communities will need further funding to be secured. We need at least £26m over the next 10 years to undertake structural improvements to the existing network. When we undertake planning and design of detailed proposals for the corridors set out in the KCWIP, options for making best use of and upgrading Public Rights of Way will be part of our approach.

Figure 12 – Improvement scheme to an existing public right of way

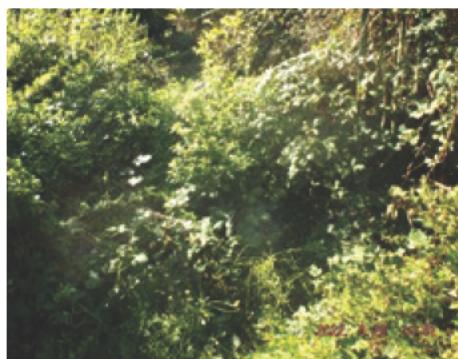
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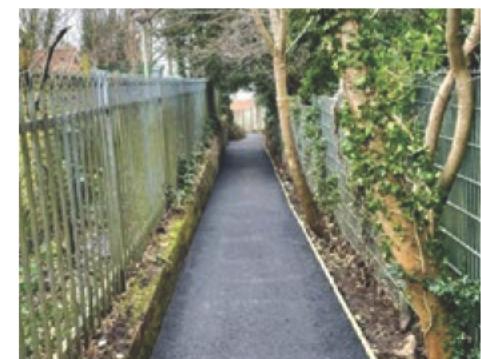
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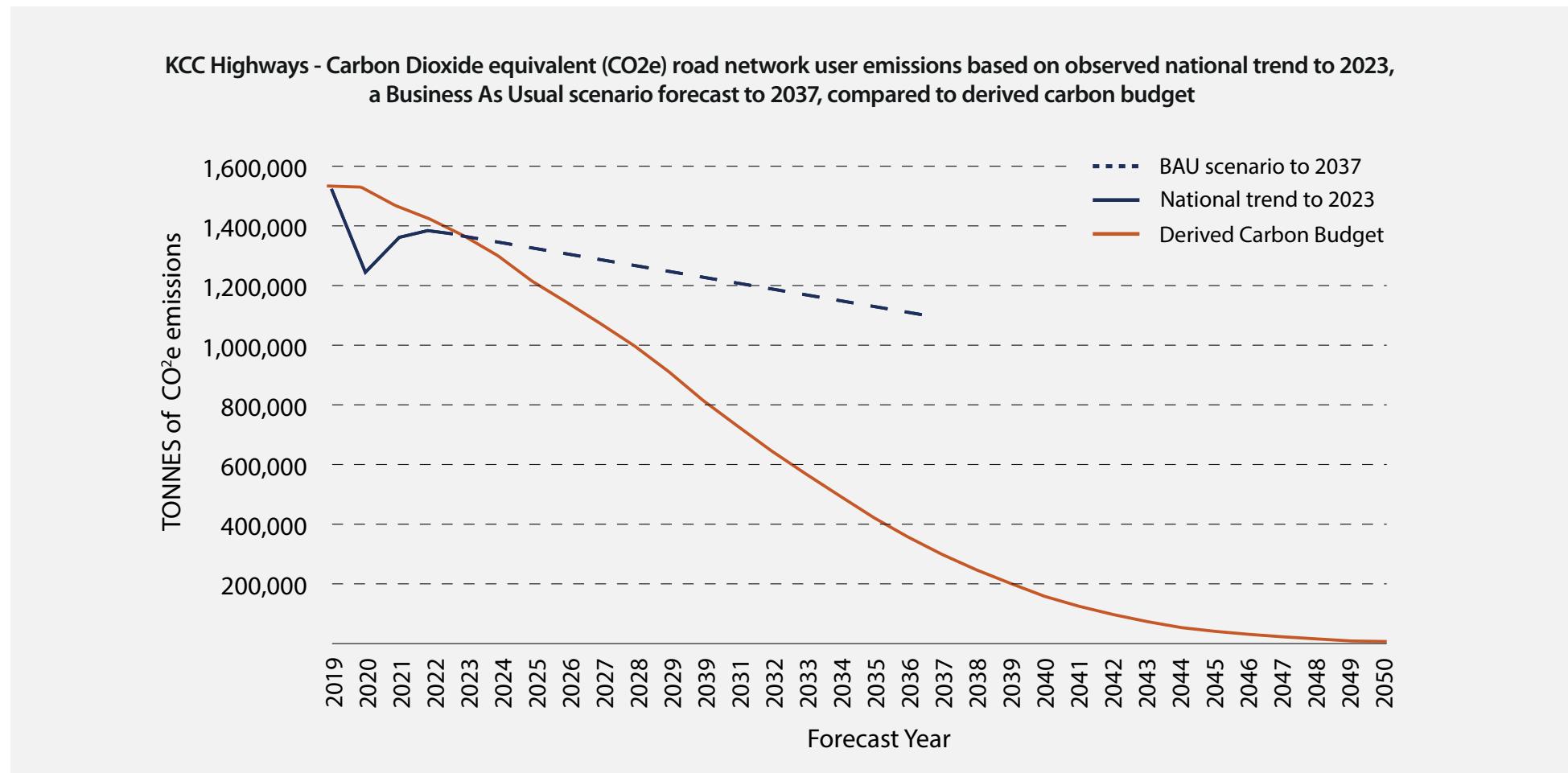


9. CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS

In 2019 we recognised the climate emergency and committed to continuing to use our resources and align our policies to address it. This commitment has continued, with *Framing Kent's Future*. Our Council Strategy 2022-2026 widening

our focus to include turning the curve on transport emissions and road pollution. Although the horizon year for our plan is 2037, our carbon assessment looks ahead to 2050 to align with the national net zero policy.

Figure 13 - Estimated and forecast Carbon Dioxide Equivalent emissions from transport activity on the Kent County Council managed road network.



9. CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS CONTINUED

We estimate that vehicles on the KCC-managed road network are producing around 1.35 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) a year based on national observed traffic up to the end of 2023. This estimate considers the number of electric vehicles in use, based on national averages produced by government. We have looked ahead at what the level of emissions from vehicles using our road network might be if we assume that we continue with our day-to-day investment on the network. This is called our “business as usual” (BAU) scenario. In our BAU scenario, the proposals in our new Local Transport Plan are assumed not to have been implemented.

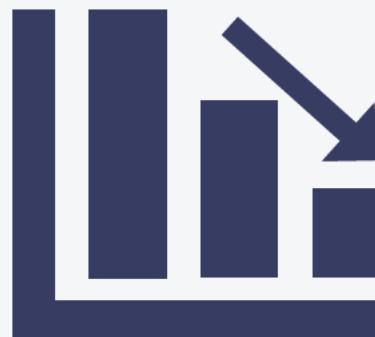
Figure 13 shows carbon dioxide equivalent emissions on the KCC-managed road network over time, with observed data to 2023 followed by our BAU scenario. Also shown is the quantity of emissions from our network that would be permitted based on the national carbon budget.

The carbon budget is a pathway to net zero in 2050 that is set at the national level by government and so we have calculated what it might mean for transport emissions at the county level. It is designed to keep emissions to a level that reduces the likelihood of average global temperatures increasing above two degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. More detail on the national carbon budget and its pathway is available from the Government’s Committee on Climate Change and its published sixth Carbon Budget.

Figure 13 shows that Kent’s emissions fell significantly during the Covid period (as they did nationally), which means that emissions to the end of 2023 have met the carbon budget requirements. This is due to restrictions on travel that were in place but also the increase in zero emission vehicle ownership. However, our BAU scenario shows an increasing and significant gap between our forecast emissions and the lower level required to meet the derived carbon budget up to 2037.

This is a forecast based on national trends that may or may not be reflective of the situation in Kent. We will need to carefully monitor actual emissions over time to assess more accurately what this gap might be, for example using Kent-specific traffic data and electric vehicle ownership data. Nevertheless, our forecast remains an informative guide as to the potential rate of decarbonisation for road-based transport under our BAU scenario.

CARBON EMISSION REDUCTION - OPPORTUNITIES



- Road safety vision zero
- International haulage traffic management
- Local road freight management

- Development Management principles
- Supporting the shift to electric vehicles
- Rail freight gauge enhancements
- Maidstone mainline journey time improvements
- Gatwick access improvements
- International rail passenger services for Kent
- Local rail services
- Improve local access to rail stations
- Bus service improvement plan
- Thameside Fastrack network growth
- Dover Fastrack newtwork growth
- Mobility as a Service

COMPARED TO

CARBON EMISSION INCREASE - RISKS



- Lower Thames Crossing

- M2 Junction 1 capacity enhancement
- A282 (M25) Junction 1A capacity enhancement
- M2 Junction 4 capacity enhancement
- M2 Junction 7 capacity enhancement
- South Canterbury A2 Junction
- A2 Dover Access capacity, and Duke of York and Whitfield roundabouts interim capacity
- M25 - M26 - A21 east - facing slips
- M25 Junction 3 improvements
- A21 enhancements

Figure 14 - Potential impact of the Local Transport Plan proposals on transport sector carbon emissions

9. CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS CONTINUED

You can find more detail on how we have forecast future carbon emissions in our Supporting Evidence Base published alongside this plan.

The key things to note are that we have accounted for:

- A growing population.
- An increase in the use of electric vehicles based on prescribed government assumptions.
- The planned changes to the highway network that are funded and committed for delivery (as were detailed at the time of our work based on KCC's Budget book for 2022/23 and by National Highways).
- The trend in emissions, assuming they follow the national trend reported to 2023.

The proposals in this LTP are not all developed enough to know with high accuracy what their effect on carbon emissions could be but we do know that making major changes to the road network that add capacity and reduce journey times often lead to new trips being made. This creates an upward pressure on carbon and risks increasing the gap between Kent's emissions and the carbon budget target - see Figure 15.

We have therefore considered whether the individual proposals have potential to reduce or increase carbon emissions so we can understand the balance of our plan - see Figure 14. We have looked at their opportunities and risks, but not all proposals have a clear likely impact towards either reducing or increasing emissions. For the full reasoning behind the conclusions reached on each proposal please see the Supporting Evidence Base.

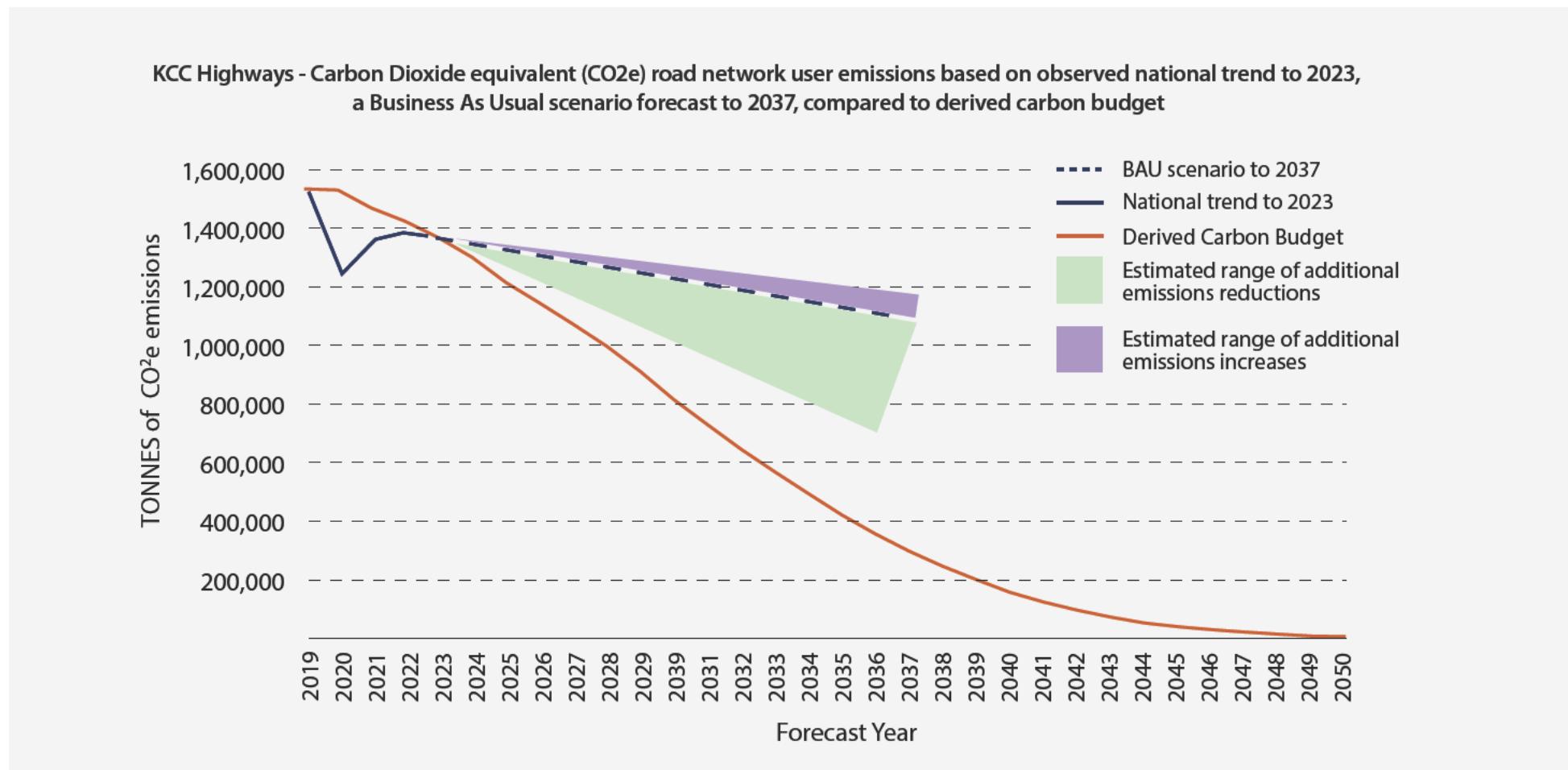


9. CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS CONTINUED

As our proposals are developed, their contribution to carbon emissions will become clearer but at this point our future carbon trajectory is uncertain. We consider that the potential for emissions to be substantially higher than our current forecasts is unlikely because there are well-established push factors bearing down

on emissions now, driven by the legislated electric vehicle sales targets and future ban on sales of new petrol and diesel vehicles. These mean that the vehicle fleet will become increasingly low emission, which limits the extent that increasing vehicle mileage could lead to increased tailpipe emissions.

Figure 15 - Future uncertainty concerning transport carbon emissions



9. CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS CONTINUED

What does this mean for our Local Transport Plan?

Our plan has a range of proposals that can make a positive contribution to reducing emissions if we and other delivery bodies are able to secure the funding needed to deliver them.

Private cars are the largest generator of carbon emissions but are an important part of how millions of journeys in Kent are made. In a county with dispersed low density communities, private vehicle use will remain an essential part of the transport mix. Our plan recognises this and it's why getting more access to public charging sockets is an important part of the long-term approach to reducing emissions. Our proposals also make it easier to choose to use alternatives, like trains and buses, that would lead to reductions in emissions. If those improvements can be delivered soon, then the impact could be greater and make transport's contribution to staying within the national carbon budget easier. This approach is aligned with the government's transport decarbonisation plan, *Decarbonising Transport: a better, greener Britain*.

By striking the balance across the transport mix, we think our plan can continue to deliver improvements that fulfil our wider ambitions and outcomes, whilst also furthering efforts to reduce carbon emissions from transport.





DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

ASHFORD

Ashford experiences unique impacts associated with international connectivity from Kent's proximity to mainland Europe. The outskirts of Ashford town host an inland border facility for processing goods vehicles' cargoes, and the town has an international rail station with potential for rail services to destinations across Europe. This connectivity has been an important advantage that has enabled some large businesses with international footprints to operate from Ashford.

Growth is currently focused on Ashford town, including urban extensions of residential developments and town centre commercial development. Some of the transport infrastructure needed to accommodate this growth is not yet delivered, awaiting funding from developers. The Borough Council is beginning work to review the Local Plan and consider delivery of growth sites up to 2042 – its current Local Plan horizon is to 2030.

Tenterden is the second largest town in the district and relies on road network connections both via private car and bus. Smaller villages to the north and south of Ashford town are connected into Ashford by the road and rail network. The high-speed rail link at Ashford has made the town and surrounding area an attractive location for commuting to the capital.

As our proposals indicate – the focus for Ashford is in ensuring the rail network continues to provide domestic, local and also international connectivity, and that the road network is upgraded to support growth from development and the pressures of international traffic on the M20 corridor. Within Ashford town and out towards areas across the borough and beyond, there are local transport improvements that could be developed and delivered if funding becomes available.

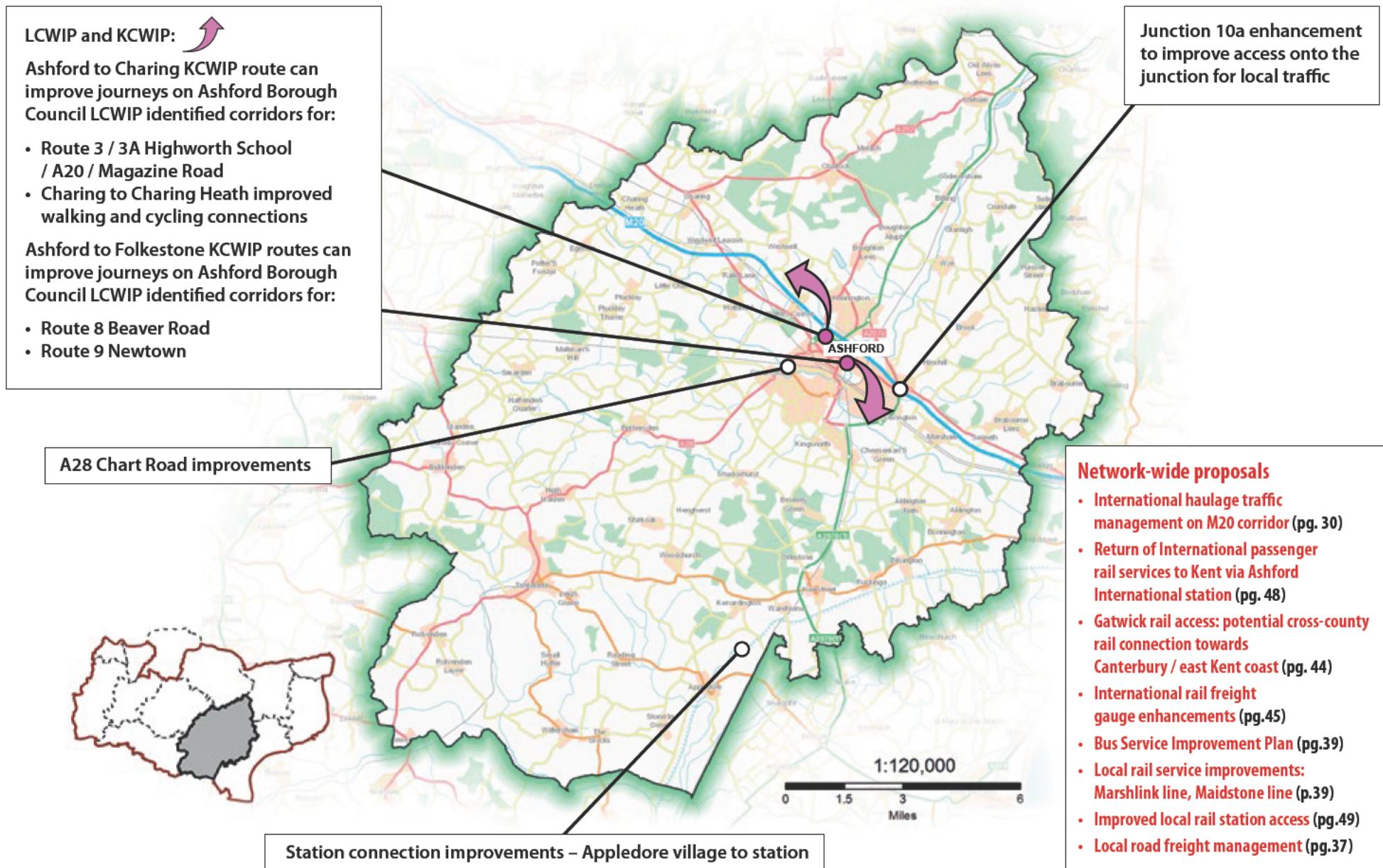


Ashford International Railway Station



Tenterden High Street

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



CANTERBURY

Canterbury district includes varied places, from popular coastal towns to the historic city of Canterbury and small rural villages. The visitor economy is particularly important to the district both from its international and domestic connectivity.

The city is also home to the county's universities: the University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University and the University for the Creative Arts. The universities bring a unique culture to the city and a population that can be more willing to utilise public and shared transport as well as walking and cycling networks. International students also add to the market for international connections by rail and air. This added passenger market can help make the case stronger for improvements that would benefit everyone in the district.

The focus of growth is on the outskirts of Canterbury, meaning the city will substantially grow in area and new journeys into the centre will be longer. Further potential growth sites are also under consideration by the new Local Plan, meaning the city will spread further still. Good connections for these new suburbs into the centre and to the nearby A2 corridor will be important to avoid deterioration in traffic conditions and reduce the burden on the ring road around the historic city.

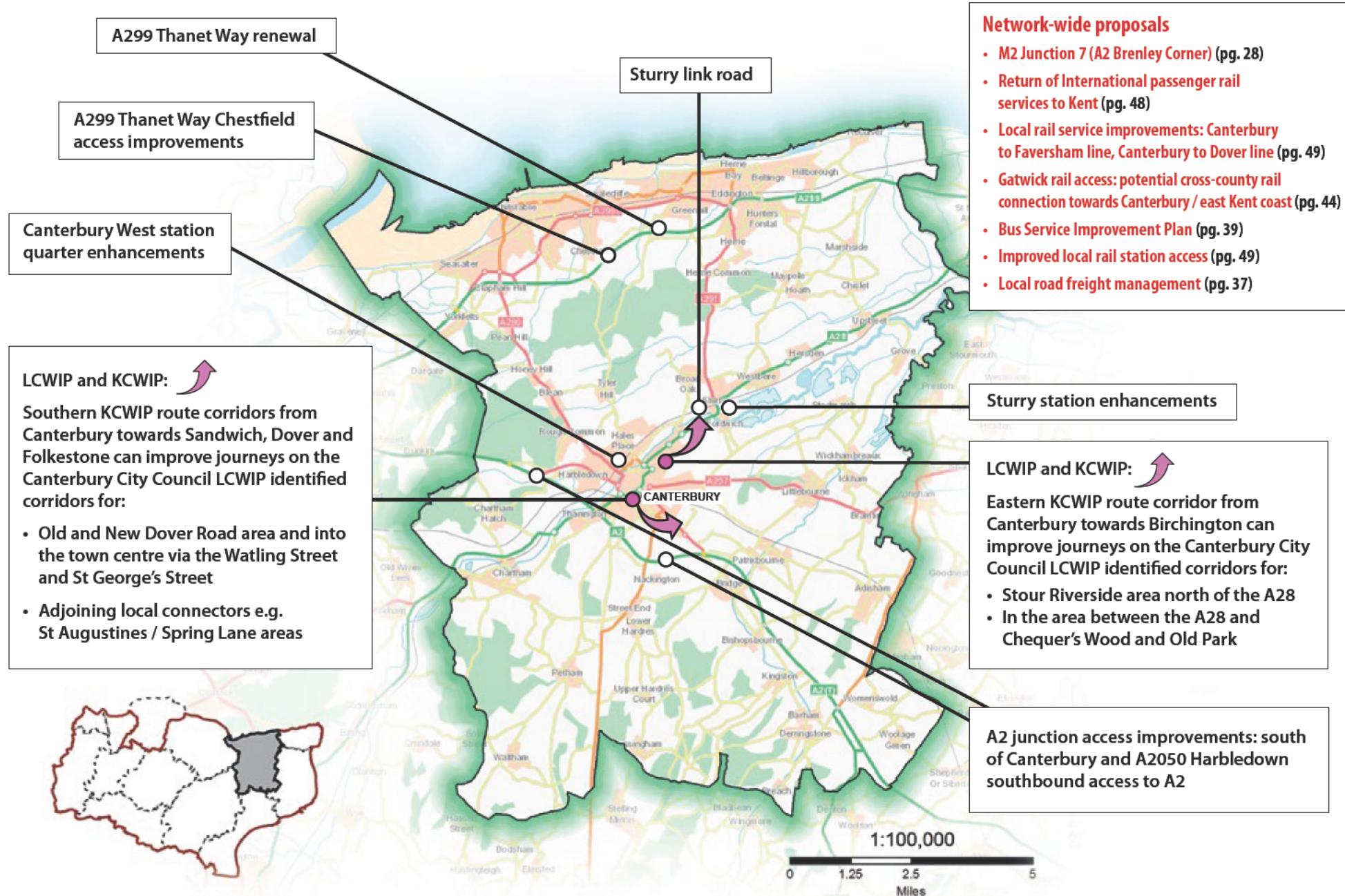
The city has the advantage of being relatively flat and increased efforts have been made between us and the City Council to invest in walking and cycling to improve the visitor experience and support its UNESCO world heritage status. The opportunity to compound the benefits of recent investment are recognised through the complementary proposals within this plan. For example, some existing bus priority is in place around the city centre and the City Council has identified further improvements to better connect new developments, which our Bus Service Improvement Plan can support the delivery of.

Coastal towns in the district are growing southwards as new development is built. The east-west road corridor of the Thanet Way is essential for enabling local traffic to circulate in the district and reducing traffic within the seafront town centre areas, helping to support the coastal amenities and culture that residents and visitors seek. Ensuring those routes can perform is recognised in our proposals.



Canterbury Town Centre

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



DARTFORD

Dartford's transport system is dominated by its position on the periphery of London, with the borough being dissected by two major corridors of the SRN, including the critical Dartford Crossing of the Thames. The heavy use of these strategic routes and their proximity to the local communities in the borough, generates challenges which this LTP sets out proposals to address.

The borough has seen some of the highest growth in the country through both housing and commercial development over the last two decades, and also hosts most of the large new Ebbsfleet Garden City. The growth in the area has enabled public transport to be integrated into new developments, with the Kent Thameside Fastrack network serving the heart of residential and commercial development areas, reducing some of the impact of general traffic on the road network. The continued expansion of, and improvements to, the Fastrack network alongside improvements to other bus services is key to the sustainable growth of the borough.

The Borough Council has developed a LCWIP that aims to improve cycling and pedestrian journeys across Dartford, Stone, Greenhithe and other urban areas. The initial phases of transport improvements to the town centre have been delivered, including an enhanced public realm to encourage regeneration. More opportunities exist for improvements to local transport to support the future growth of Dartford town centre.

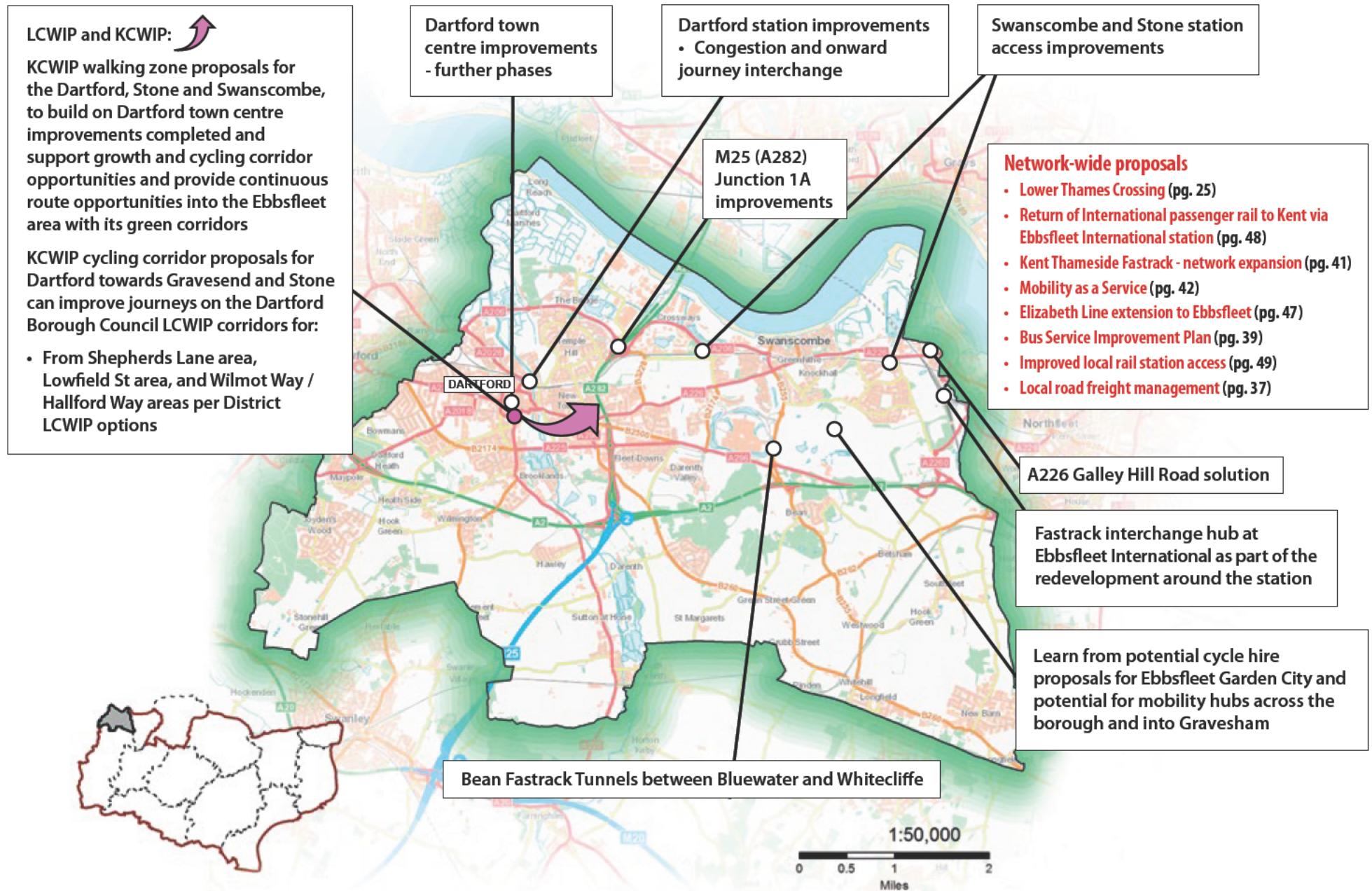
Dartford as a whole is relatively well served by rail, although some services in the peaks have returned to being crowded and journey times can sometimes be long. Growth in the borough will add weight to the case for improving the facilities and access at local stations, and an extension of the Elizabeth Line to Ebbsfleet remains a long term aim. The continued uncertainty of whether international rail services will return to stopping at Ebbsfleet International is damaging for business investment and growth opportunities in the area, as well as on the quality of life for residents in the borough and more widely.

Our plan's proposals for the borough reflect the opportunities to further improve the existing transport networks, alongside potential new and innovative approaches to transport as part of the Ebbsfleet Garden City. Our approach concerns ensuring that opportunities from the Garden City are learned from and that their benefits can be spread across the wider north Kent area where appropriate.



Approach to Dartford Crossing

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



DOVER

Dover has a nationally significant transport challenge given the Port of Dover, which provides the UK's fastest water-borne crossing to Europe. The Port enables trade of c. £150 billion of goods each year, carried by two million freight vehicles. The Port provides employment opportunities to the area and supports over 20,000 jobs more widely.

Port-related traffic has a major influence on the town and wider district, with both the A2 and A20 trunk roads terminating at the Port's entrance. Peaks during the holidays and at times of disrupted cross-Channel flows cause disruption, and the A2 in particular is of a poor quality and requires improvement on the approach to Dover. Ensuring the impact of traffic to and from the Port is well-managed and that alternatives to road transport exist is essential so that local community can travel when they need to for school, their jobs, or to enjoy their leisure time.

The proposals in our plan to address this strategic challenge would need to be delivered within Dover to deliver this outcome, as well as proposals for the wider Strategic Road Network across the rest of the county, such is the scale of the challenge.

Aside from the challenge of the Port, the district is growing with expansion of the Whitfield area supported by a new Fastrack network with dedicated new highway leading towards the town centre and rail station. Dover serves as an example of how, with careful planning, new development in other districts could deliver transport-oriented development with bus priority to offer improved travel options.

New homes are also being delivered in smaller towns and villages such as Aylesham, Deal, Sandwich and at the Discovery Park science park area alongside employment uses. The rail network serves several of these locations and along the coast it hosts the High Speed (HS1) rail service which provides fast connections to north Kent and London.

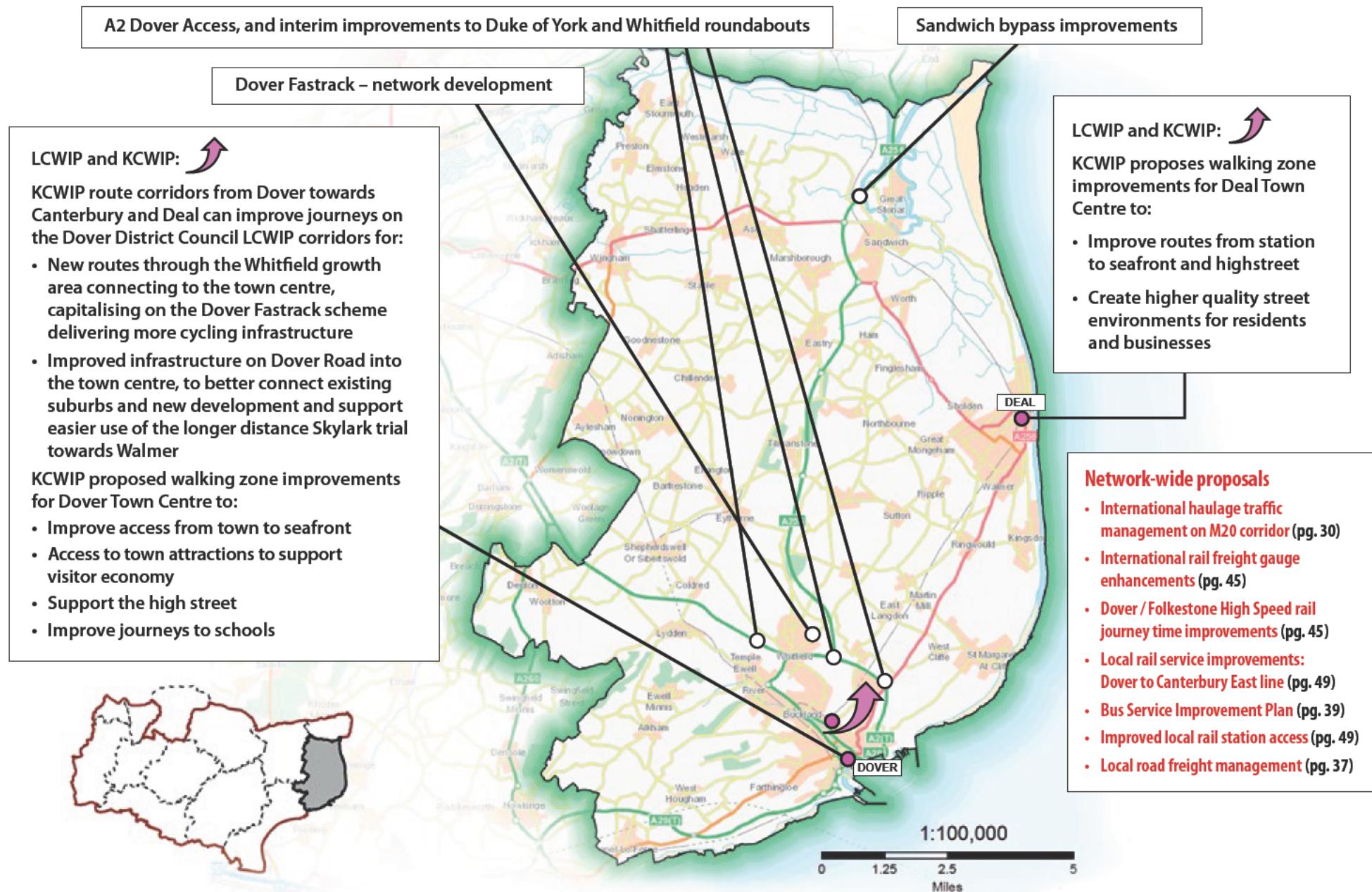
The District Council is preparing a LCWIP, which will help us to deliver improvements that make short journeys easier to do. At the same time these improvements will help to build a larger continuous network that supports the corridors identified in our KCWIP. Our proposals seek to make further improvements in addition to those already delivered or planned through former schemes such as the Market Square, and existing Levelling Up Funded projects.



Port of Dover

Photo credit: Dover Harbour Board

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE

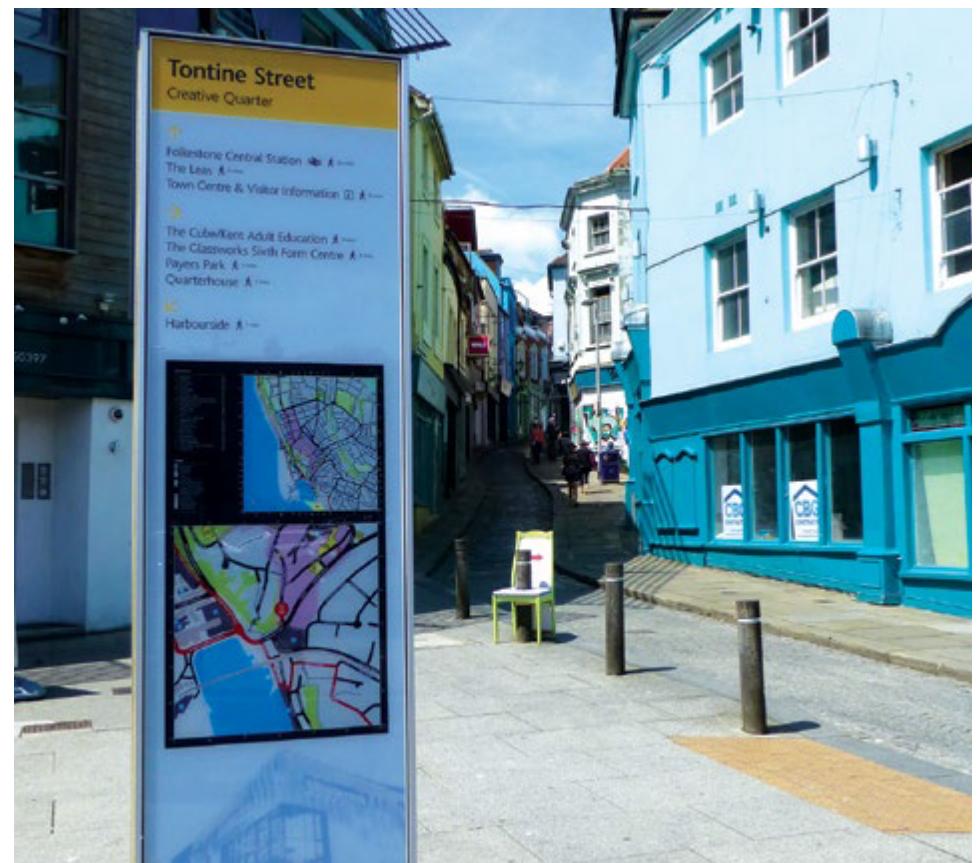
Like neighbouring Dover, the district hosts one of the UK's most important international gateways, with the Channel Tunnel providing the fastest crossing to the continent (just 35 minutes). Folkestone and Hythe's challenge is not just the traffic impacts associated with passenger and freight traffic at Eurotunnel, but the knock-on effects of traffic management for vehicles destined for the Port of Dover. Our plan is focused on a range of proposals to reduce the burden of international traffic on the district and local journeys, including ensuring the Alkham Valley Spitfire Way junction interchange can meet future demands from growth and international traffic diversions.

Otterpool Park, located to the northwest of Hythe, is one of the largest new development proposals in the south east. The new town would provide around 8,500 homes and 9,000 new jobs, capitalising on the fast rail links towards London through a significant upgrade of Westenhanger station to enable full length High Speed rail services to stop at a fully accessible station, as well as the local and strategic road access from the A20 and M20.

Folkestone town is experiencing a renaissance with regeneration efforts by the District Council underway. The long distance road and rail connections towards London have attracted new residents within the flexible working culture that has built up since the pandemic. The district has internationally recognised protected landscapes such as the Romney Marsh and Dungeness, providing coastal attractions for walking and cycling by both residents and visitors. Our plan reflects the cross-boundary opportunities into East Sussex that stakeholders including Transport for the South East have identified. Our comprehensive Bus Service Improvement Plan would provide improvements within the district, helping to further improve choice in local transport.

The proposals in our plan can make a positive contribution to local transport, whilst also having a positive effect by helping to address the impacts of the high

international traffic flows through the district. Partnership working with National Highways and Network Rail will be important to realise some of the proposals for the district.



Folkestone town centre

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED

LCWIP and KCWIP:

KCWIP route corridor towards Canterbury can improve journeys on the Folkestone and Hythe District Council LCWIP corridors for:

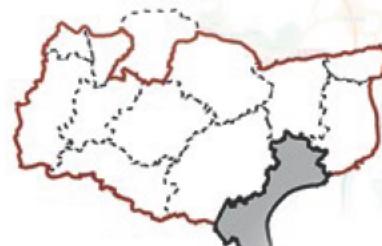
- LCWIP route D in the area around the A259 and A260, potentially including the former Harbour branch line between the town centre and towards Hawkinge

KCWIP route corridor towards Ashford and Hythe can improve journeys on the Folkestone and Hythe District Council LCWIP corridors for:

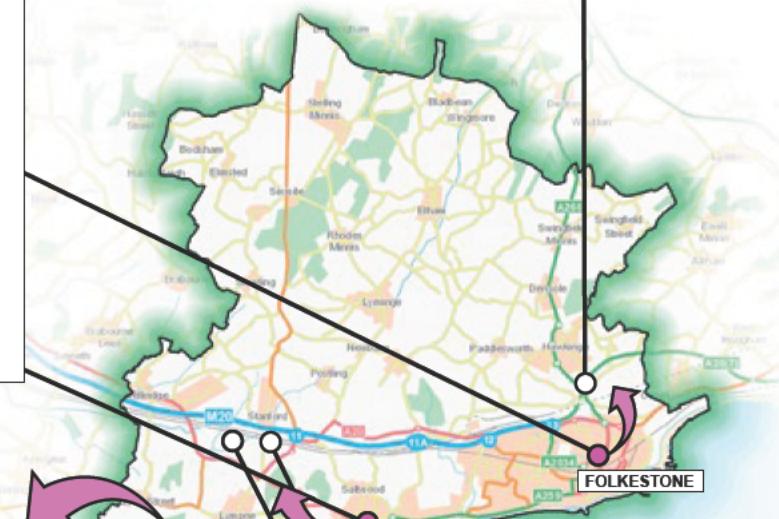
- LCWIP routes within Hythe potentially including E, F, G, H and I, T, Q and R, covering the east-west corridors of the Marine Parade, north-south between there to across Military Canal towards the A259 corridor for route options towards Lympne

Network-wide proposals

- International haulage traffic management on M20 corridor (pg. 30)
- International rail freight gauge enhancements (pg. 45)
- Folkestone / Dover High Speed rail journey time improvements (pg. 47)
- Return of International passenger rail services to Kent via Ashford International station (pg. 48)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (pg. 39)
- Improved local rail station access (pg. 49)
- Local road freight management (pg. 37)



Alkham Valley Spitfire Way junction



Westenhanger station upgrade for High Speed services.
Learn from shared transport such as cycle hire or mobility hubs if implemented for Otterpool Park

Sub-regional active travel strategy proposal for creation of Hythe to Rye and beyond in East Sussex - walk and cycle leisure route via Military Canal



GRAVESEND

The site of National Highway's proposed new crossing of the Thames, known as the Lower Thames Crossing, is to the east of Gravesend. The borough therefore has the potential to play a critical future role in the strategic movements of millions of vehicles across the nation each year, as the crossing will improve access between Kent's international terminals and the Midlands and North of England.

The impact of such a large-scale construction project will need to be balanced alongside the planned regeneration of Gravesend town centre and new development, including the transformation of the Ebbsfleet and Northfleet areas associated with the progress of the Garden City. Gravesend also borders Medway, which needs to accommodate its own growth and some of this may be reliant on the highways and public transport networks within the borough.

The A2 corridor cuts across the district east-west, with north-south routes between Gravesend to the north and the smaller communities such as Sole Street, Meopham and Vigo to the south. Gravesend has the benefit of the Thameside Fastrack network for connections towards Ebbsfleet and Dartford. Rail services provide good east-west connections between those same locations as well as the Kent coast and Medway. The new Thames crossing may provide the opportunity for potential new public transport connections, although KCC continues to seek a long term funding solution for the Gravesend to Tilbury Ferry.

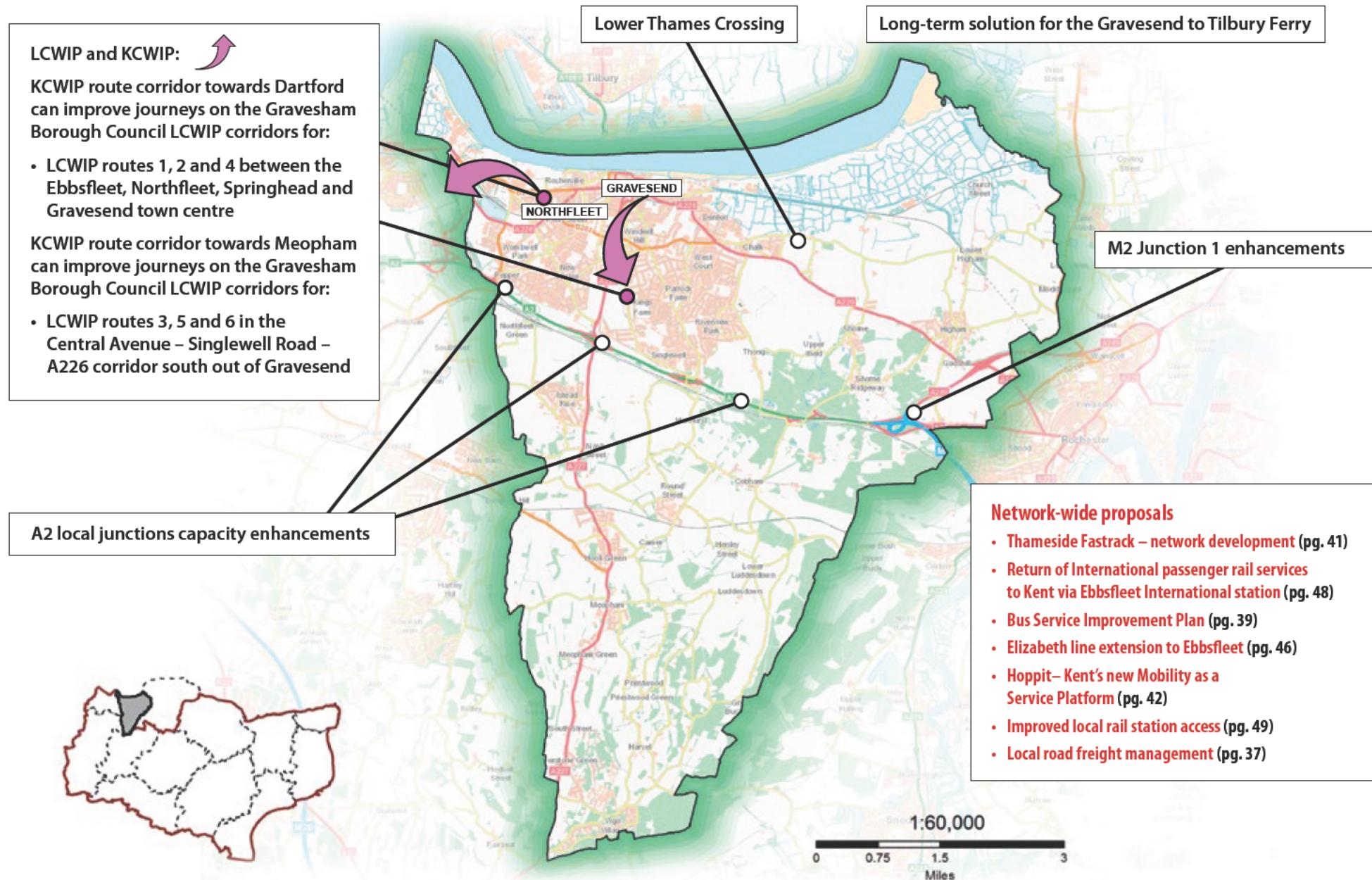
The proposals in our plan aim to ensure that the benefits of the Lower Thames Crossing can be fully realised across the county, as well as seeking appropriate mitigation for the negative impacts arising from the new crossing. Our plan aims to achieve that by ensuring the M2/A2 corridor and access on and off of it can cater for the new route options and the growth in travel from new communities and businesses.

Our proposals for Gravesend aim to ensure that the Fastrack network can take advantage of opportunities to expand so that more journeys can be made by fast and reliable public transport. Complementing that, we seek to pilot new and innovative approaches to accessing and paying for transport services through a Mobility as a Service initiative as well as learning from new shared transport options that could be provided within the Ebbsfleet Garden City. Walking and cycling improvements can build on the improved connections being delivered within the Ebbsfleet Garden City, helping to provide a more complete network through north Kent.



Rathmore Road completed improvements in Gravesend

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



MAIDSTONE

Maidstone sits at the heart of the county, at the intersection of busy north-south highway routes in the A229 and A249, and the east-west strategic roads of the M20 and M2. These key highway routes attract much traffic through Maidstone, additional to the local traffic. Maidstone is one of Kent's largest towns with a wide range of destinations for retail, work and services leading to high traffic volumes, queuing and slow journeys through the town and on its approaches (such as the A274 and A20). As a result, narrower residential roads are relied upon for journeys that ordinarily would be made on the main routes.

There are no easy solutions to the congestion in Maidstone – the built up urban environment and topography of the Medway valley create constraints. A rising population will inevitably bring more vehicle ownership and more travel (Maidstone has exceeded the county wide average level of total vehicles since 2017), so congestion will likely remain a long-term challenge. Delivery of our proposals to address these challenges will require substantial funding, not just to be delivered but to be planned and designed in the first place.

The borough is developing a LCWIP, which will complement the county-wide KCWIP by supporting delivery of local schemes that also contribute to longer distance routes. The options for improving walking and cycling will be an important part of helping to reduce reliance on vehicle trips for short distance journeys around Maidstone town.

The Borough Council is building on its economic development strategy, with a focus on improving the town centre further in Maidstone. Further new development is planned, most notably the large Maidstone Barracks site, whilst new garden communities are proposed to the east of Lenham and near Lidsing and Bredhurst. These proposals will need substantial changes to the rail and highway network and the challenge for developers will be getting those delivered such that they do not worsen travel for local and longer distance journeys.

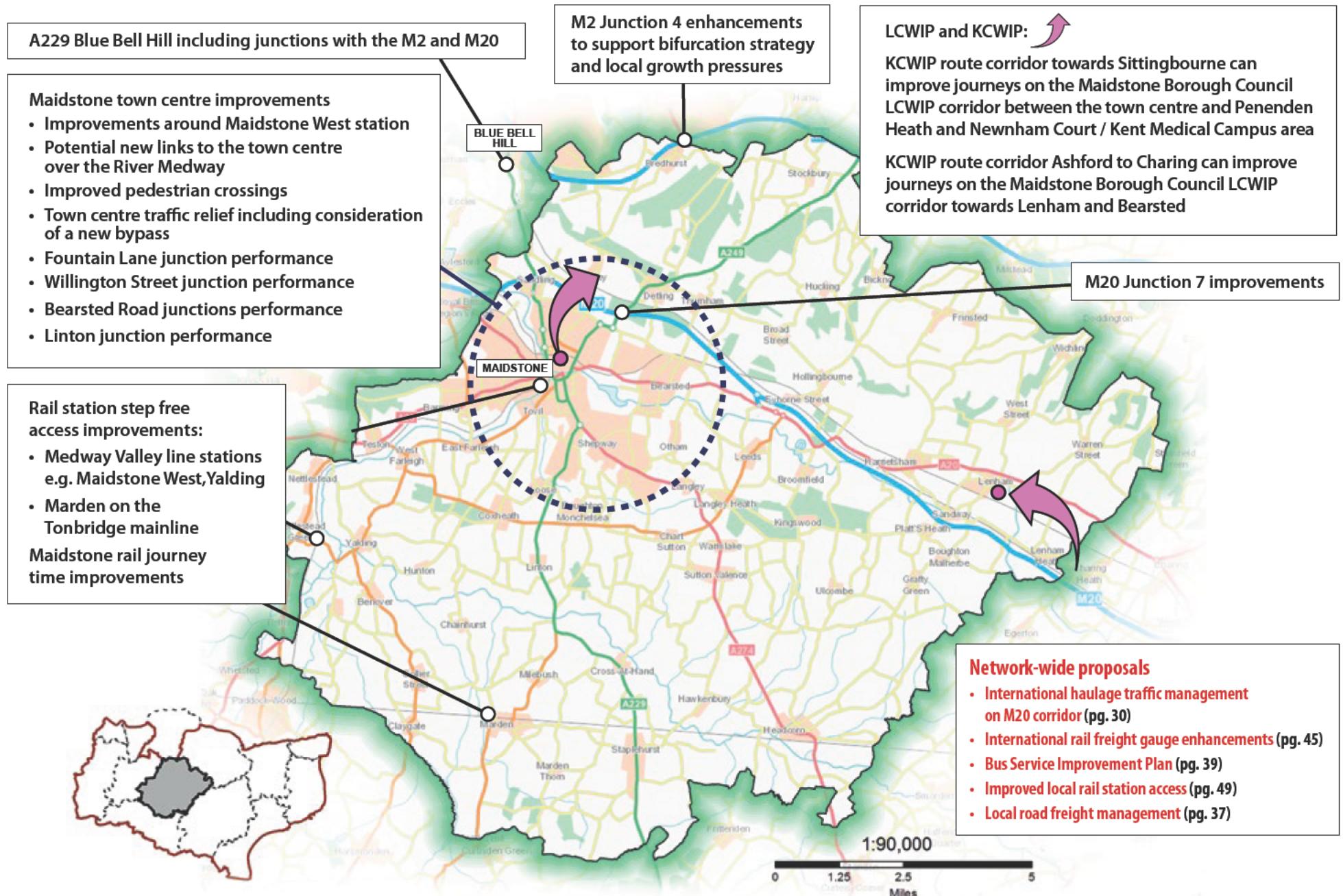
The county town is connected to other towns and villages in Kent by the rail mainline between the Kent coast and London via Ashford, and by the Medway Valley line between Strood and Paddock Wood. The town has some direct High Speed services to London limited to the weekday peaks from Maidstone West. The town has relatively long journey times to London compared to other towns with more frequent and regular High Speed services; however the return of services direct to London Bridge have helped to improve connections.

The borough is also affected by traffic management protocols for the Port of Dover – with Operation Brock reducing road capacity and lowering speeds along the M20 from Junction 8. Our plan sets out proposals to improve international traffic management which would have a positive impact on Maidstone as well as Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe and Dover.



Maidstone Bridge and High Street

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



SEVENOAKS

Sevenoaks district is dominated by the London green belt, as such the urban area is predominantly comprised of two main towns at Sevenoaks and Swanley. Smaller towns at Westerham and Edenbridge are very close to the border with Surrey. The district will grow in the future, but the constraints mean this growth is likely to be focused around Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. This means the existing transport network is unlikely to change substantially and the large rural population will remain reliant on private transport, though we aim to improve bus journeys if we can secure the funding to further deliver our Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The SRN provides north-south and east-west connections, although access to it is not ideal with traffic having to use local routes to make certain movements around Sevenoaks. In contrast the district's rail network is one of the best in the county owing to its proximity to London and routes for East Sussex and Medway / the Kent coast serving its towns. This means that services are high frequency and high capacity, and the district's towns are popular for commuting to London.

Being one of the most westerly districts, the district is closest to London Gatwick Airport and the flight paths generated by the east-west oriented runway and the potential new northern runway. Our plan sets out our proposals to try and protect the quality of life in Sevenoaks district from the noise impacts and disturbance from the airport's flight paths.

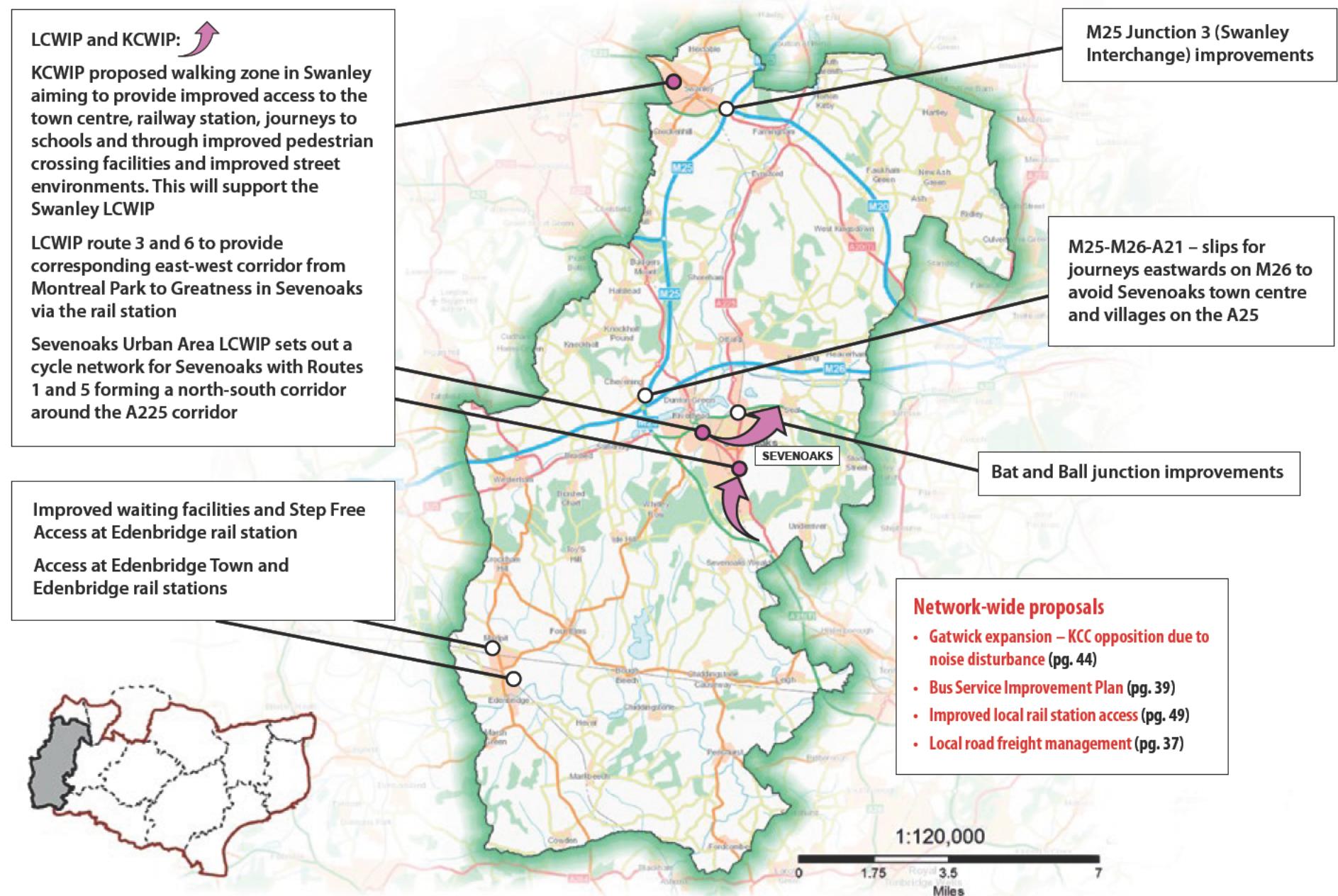
The district has LCWIPs for Sevenoaks and Swanley urban areas, which we have begun delivery of alongside the District Council, and our county-wide plan has complemented these with further priorities to help ensure that urban areas have more opportunities for non-vehicular travel.

Our plan sets out proposals for the district that reflect the constraints associated with the SRN and the prevalence of green belt land. The main opportunities at a local level, aside from the comprehensive Bus Service Improvement Plan we have, are improvements to local travel within Swanley and Sevenoaks as these locations are large enough that relatively short distance journeys are adding pressure to the road network. Our plan's proposals for walking and cycling improvements could increase choices so that people can easily avoid traffic congestion for short journeys.



Swanley Railway Station

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



SWALE

Swale is comprised of the Isle of Sheppey, connected by major road and rail bridges, as well as the large town of Sittingbourne situated on the A2, which leads to Faversham – a further main town at the eastern boundary of the district. The east-west A2 route is a dominant feature, which has become very busy due to the direct connections it provides locally compared to the M2 corridor. With communities situated facing the highway along much of its length, the route suffers from congestion and poor air quality, constraining growth in the area. The rail mainline runs parallel to the A2, serving the main towns along the route.

The Isle of Sheppey is populated mainly across its northern and western sides. Journeys converge onto the A249 or head to the rail stations at Sheerness or Queenborough to reach the mainland, and therefore the availability and performance of these transport routes are critical for enabling journeys to wider Kent. The main road link is managed by National Highways as a strategic road in recognition of its importance for conveying large volumes of traffic as well as trade from Sheerness Docks. The existing rail network provides potential for shifting road-based freight to rail. This will need to be led by the freight and logistics market in coordination with Network Rail but much of the infrastructure is in place already.

Sittingbourne has a constrained road network but continues to experience a rising population as homes and commercial developments are built across the area. Existing investment is delivering upgraded junctions along the A249 to improve access to the SRN, and M2 Junction 5 (Stockbury) is also being transformed by National Highways. Nonetheless, the focus of traffic movement towards the A249 on the western side of Sittingbourne means traffic pressures for the town and its centre, compounded by substantial and growing commercial activity on the northern and eastern sides of Sittingbourne. Plans have existed for new routes

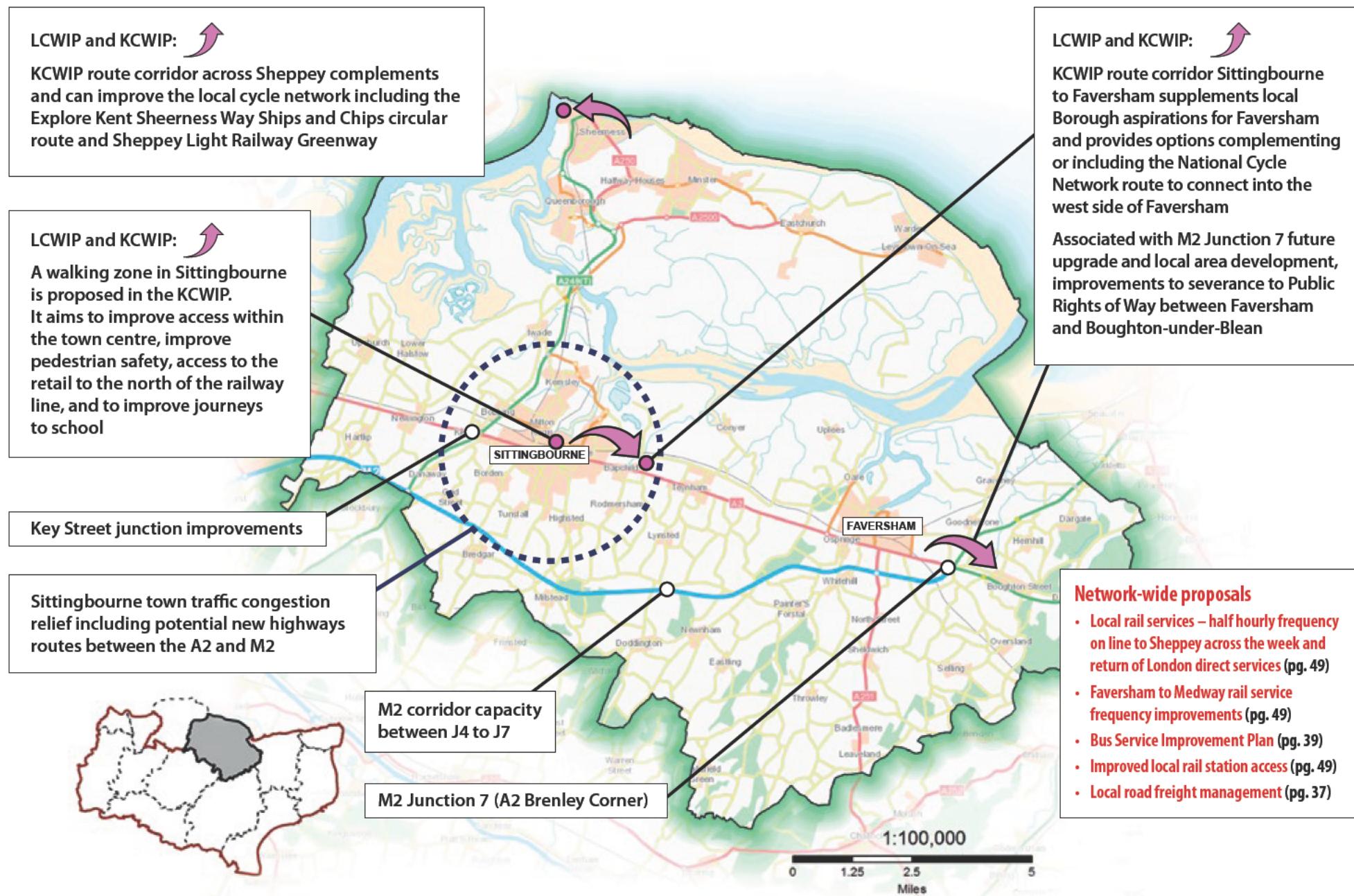
to divert traffic away from the A2 road corridor and these are likely to remain beneficial given the limited remaining options for addressing traffic congestion.

Faversham is benefiting from efforts to deliver walking and cycling improvements with strong local community participation and the support of the Borough Council and us. The Borough has a LCWIP for the town. For the borough more widely, our county-wide KCWIP sets out some further opportunities for walking and cycling improvements.



Faversham Guildhall

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



THANET

Thanet has a series of continuous coastal communities from Ramsgate around to Minnis Bay, whilst the area between is filled with rural fields, villages, Manston Airport, and the industrial and big-box retail area of Westwood Cross. The district is changing though, with new development in the hinterland of these coastal communities set to provide both an increase in population and pressure on the transport links, but also opportunities for new road connections that could improve the ease of travelling for all.

Our proposals, some already in progress, include a new road to provide resilience and additional capacity, as well as investment in the bus network to support the well-used Thanet Loop. Development sites will also provide new link roads, bringing new connections across Thanet for local traffic and public transport. The plans will support future uses of the airport and some of the transport demand that arises from that.

Our previous LTP proposed a new rail station and that has been delivered, at Thanet Parkway. The station provides new access to High Speed and local rail services from the area including the airport, and the growing community at Clifftsend and in the north of Dover district. We will continue to build on its success in this LTP.

The transport improvements we have been able to attract funding for in Thanet are in part a reflection of the area's long-standing economic challenges, recognised by its classification as a Tier 1 authority (i.e. most in need of investment) in the government's Levelling Up programme.

The district has one of the longest continuous off-road cycle routes running along the coastal paths and promenades, and new roads delivered will provide further walking and cycling links. The district is developing a LCWIP that we

will support in its delivery, and we have the complementary KCWIP. Our LTP establishes proposals that address the main road network constraints for future growth in the district, along with opportunities for improving local transport by rail, walking, cycling or bus travel through our Bus Service Improvement Plan.



Ramsgate Harbour

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED

Network-wide proposals

- New link roads delivered as part of local development to maximise connectivity and capacity benefits of the North Thanet Link and support the delivery of a new 'Inner Circuit' route in the district (pg. 35)
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (pg. 39)
- Improved local rail station access (pg. 49)
- Local road freight management (pg. 37)

LCWIP and KCWIP:

KCWIP route corridor Canterbury to Birchington and Birchington walking zone, aiming to deliver improvements and wayfinding to cycle routes from Birchington seafront to the rail station, and town centre, including improved rail station facilities

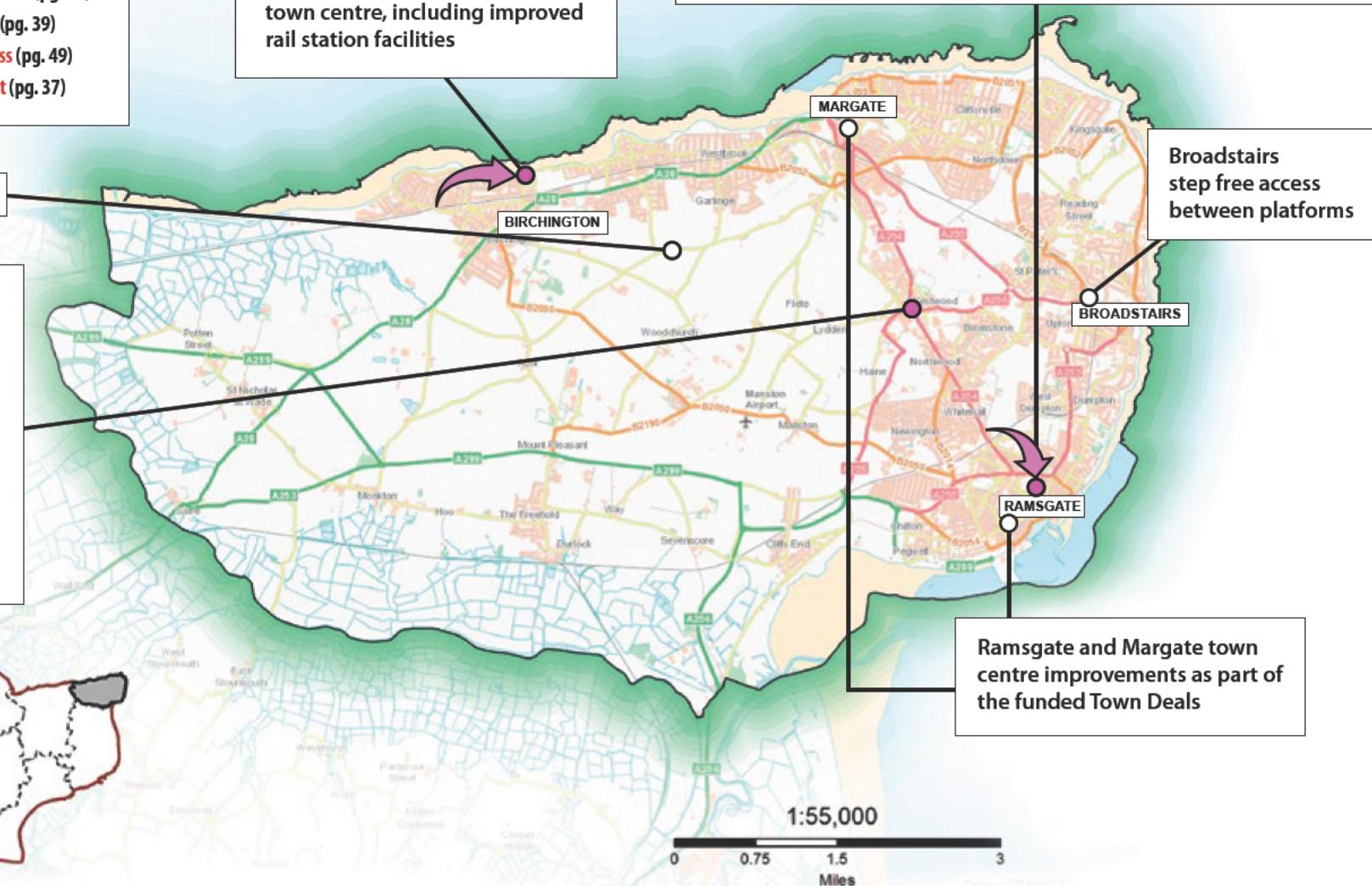
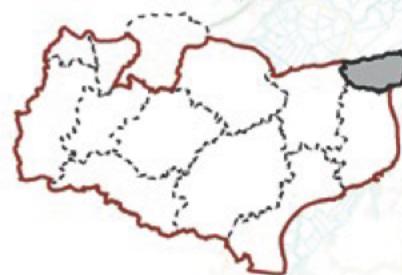
LCWIP and KCWIP:

KCWIP route corridor Birchington to Ramsgate, aiming to deliver improvements to sections of the coastal route and to make use of new links from development to improve access on the corridor between Margate and Ramsgate including through the Public Rights of Way network

North Thanet Link Road

LCWIP and KCWIP:

KCWIP walking zone in Westwood, aiming to improve the walking environment for new communities to the commercial centre, and encourage walking journeys between commercial sites



TONBRIDGE AND MALLING

Tonbridge and Malling stretches from Medway towards Tunbridge Wells with the A228 – A264 road corridor acting as the main spine of the transport network between these locations and linking to the M20 and M2 motorways. The A227 provides a parallel north-south route from Tonbridge towards Gravesham. The borough has substantial green belt and rural areas, with the main built-up areas being Tonbridge and its nearby villages, and King's Hill and the Aylesford area towards the north of the borough.

The A228 is also paralleled by the Medway Valley rail line, which can provide rail services between Tonbridge and Strood via Aylesford and Maidstone. The service has changed since the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, being curtailed for most the day to Paddock Wood. Tonbridge town has a high volume of services from a variety of routes, providing fast journeys to central London – both the city and west end – and these also provide east-west connections towards Surrey and the east Kent coast. The borough also has east-west connections from the Maidstone mainline.

Due to the borough's proximity to other major urban areas, such as Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone, Paddock Wood and Medway, the future pressure on its road network arises as much from wider changes to land uses beyond its boundary as from within.

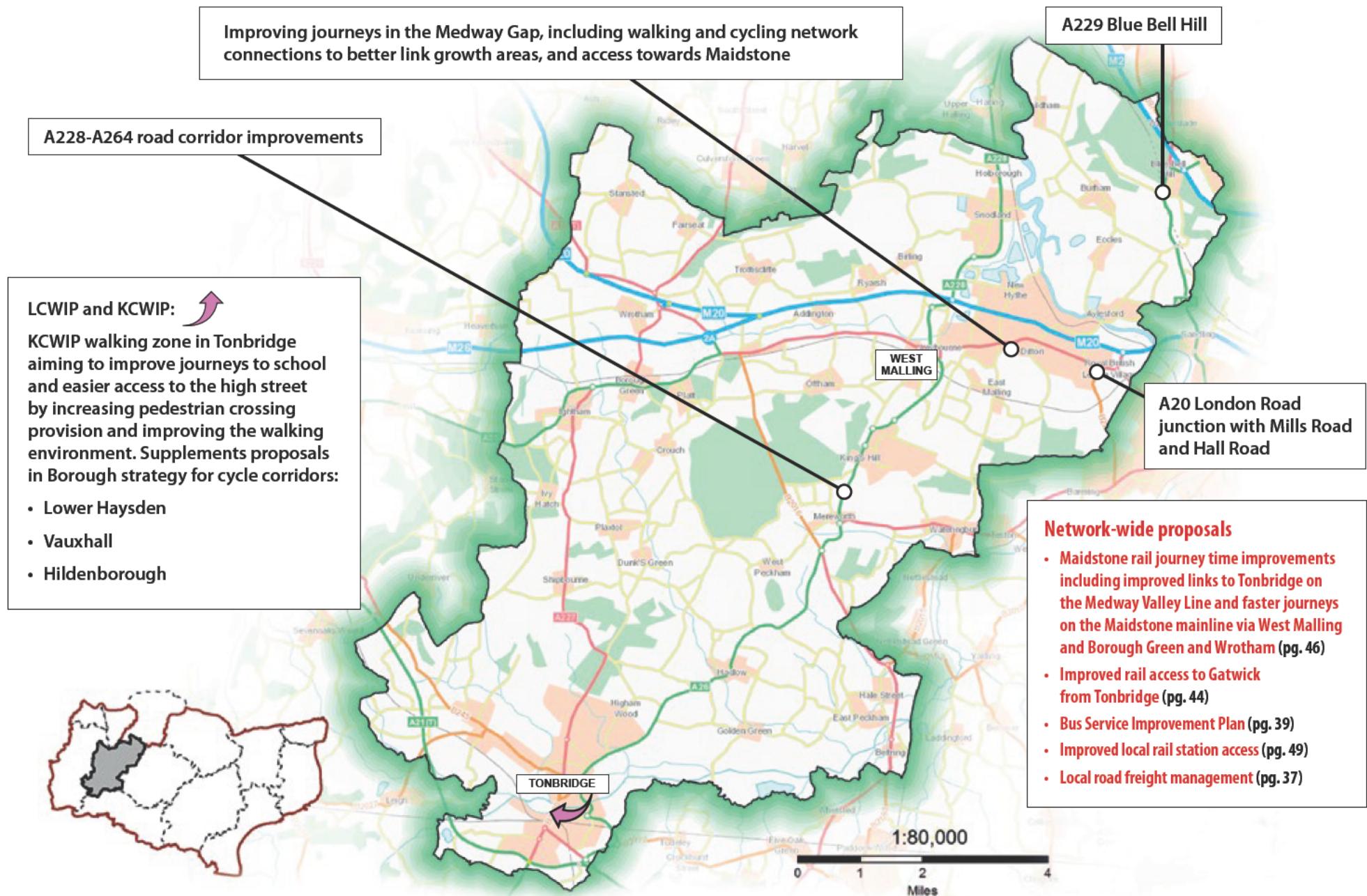
The road network through the urban areas of Tonbridge, Leybourne, Ditton and Aylesford sees congestion and delays at junctions. Schemes have been implemented in some locations across these areas to improve performance of the road network, but the constraints of the built-up area prevent significant changes to the road network. As such, the increasing population will present challenges to reliability and journey times. Providing a wide range of choice and ease of access to public transport and walking and cycling routes will be an option for reducing the pressure on the road network from future traffic levels.

The borough has an adopted cycling strategy , which has proposed a series of cycling routes. These provide options in the Tonbridge, King's Hill – West Malling, Borough Green and A20 corridor towards Maidstone (known as the Medway Gap). Our KCWIP complements the aims for Tonbridge and the Medway Gap proposals by pointing towards options to help reduce reliance on travel along the A20 in the local area via quiet ways through residential areas, and for journeys further on into Maidstone town centre.



Tonbridge High Street

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



TUNBRIDGE WELLS

The borough is largely rural with villages and market towns set within the High Weald National Landscape (formally Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Paddock Wood will be a focus for residential and employment growth through the Borough Council's Local Plan and so the A228 corridor, which skirts the western side of Paddock Wood, will be very important for accommodating new journeys. Development sites will likely provide new links directly onto the corridor.

The A228 leads to the A264 at a busy set of junctions around the Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury. The A264 route, especially into Tunbridge Wells, experiences queueing and congestion that creates overly long journeys for a comparatively short stretch and disadvantages the town centre. Our plan sets out proposals for addressing the pressures along the A228 and A264 corridor arising within the district and more widely. These would be beneficial for bus journeys too, further to the existing plans we have set out in our comprehensive Bus Service Improvement Plan.

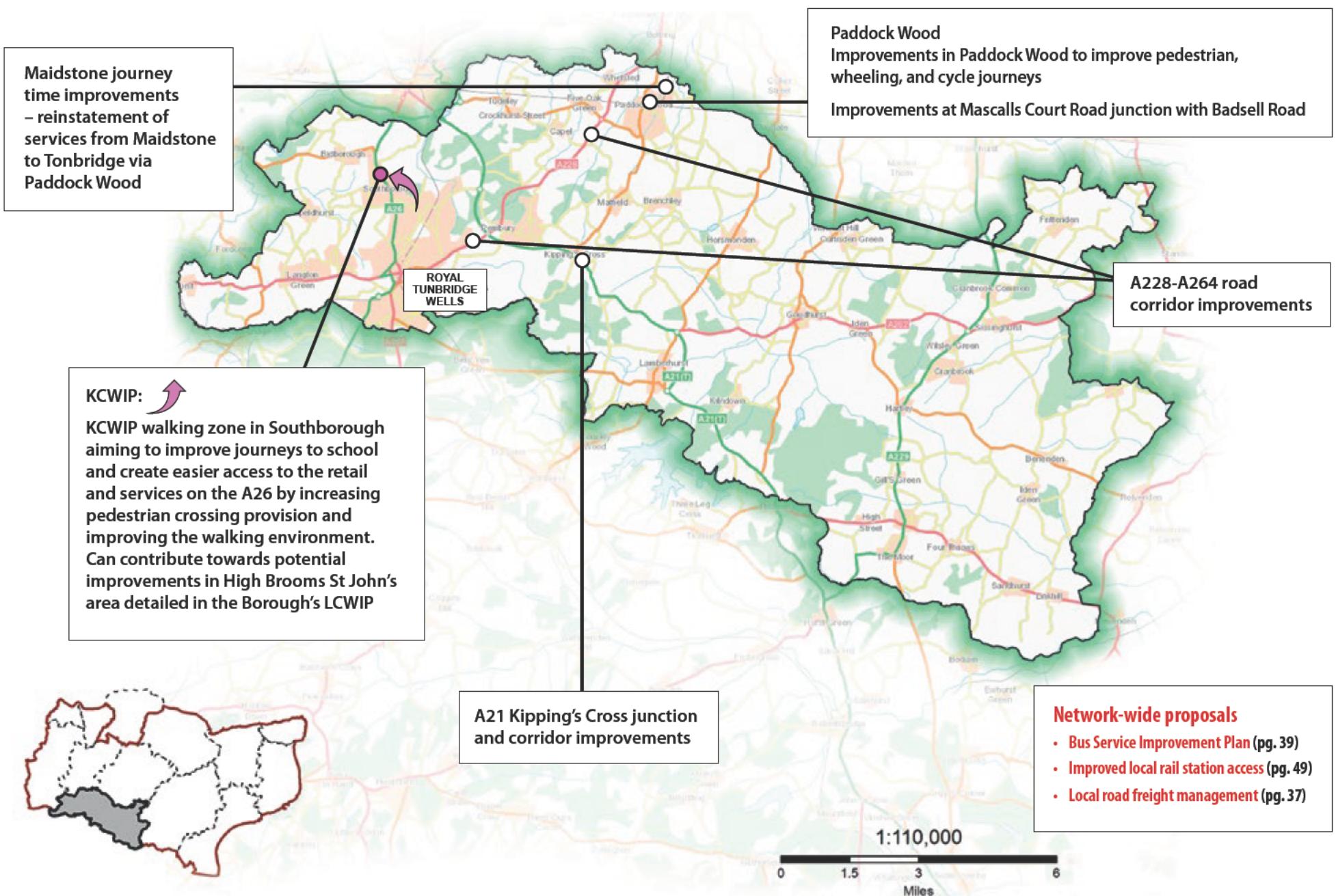
The Borough Council has developed a LCWIP and has been working with us to plan and deliver schemes. Our KCWIP complements this with its focus on the ease and quality of the walking environment in Southborough on the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells.

The main towns in the borough are served by rail lines with frequent services, although the eastern rural areas have no rail network, instead residents travel to stations such as Staplehurst and Etchingham. Connections from the east towards Tunbridge Wells are reliant on the road network and the A21 corridor is designated as part of the national SRN. This designation recognises the important strategic role it provides as the main road corridor carrying high traffic volumes from the coastal area around Hastings towards the M25. The A21 corridor is important for both strategic and local traffic and our plan includes proposals to ensure that the A21 supports the growing number of both in the future.



Public realm improvements at Fiveways, Tunbridge Wells

10. DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS CONTINUED



11. THE FUNDING WE NEED FOR OUR PLAN

One of the key aims of this LTP is to clearly set out what level of funding is needed to invest in our existing highway network, as well as funding new transport infrastructure on both the highway and public transport networks. Our plan will help us, the government and our residents to understand what we can and cannot deliver dependent on the level of funding we receive.

If we want to make substantial progress to deliver our plan's proposals and achieve our ambition and outcomes, we estimate that we will need an additional c.£2.6bn to c.£3.1bn for those transport improvements that we are responsible for delivering.

It is important to note that this is not all the funding we need. The current expected baseline budget set out in our annual budget book (available at kent.gov.uk/budget) details the funding we expect to have for maintenance and other improvements to the network based on existing funding plans and so is not included in this estimate.

Our estimate also excludes the funding required for the improvements that our plan proposes to the SRN and rail network, which would need to be funded through National Highways, the train operators, and Network Rail. If that funding were included, the total investment we estimate is needed for transport as a whole in Kent would be substantially larger. For example, the Lower Thames Crossing alone is expected to cost at least c.£9bn.

We have built our estimate through benchmarking against the cost of schemes we have delivered or already have developed designs for, as well as considering inflation over time. Nevertheless, this is a simplified approach – the true cost of planning, designing, and constructing proposals cannot be known with accuracy until we can work at designing proposals in more detail, which itself requires funding.

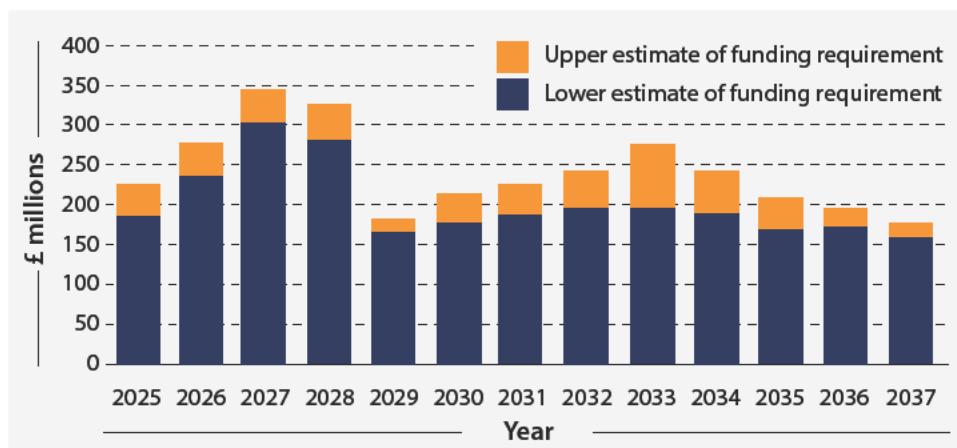
If we average our estimate of the total funding needed over the time period of our Plan, we can say that it equates to between c.£200m to c.£240m per year.

Of this, highway maintenance funding is c.£100m per year, leaving a requirement of c.£100m to c.£140m for our proposals for new or upgraded transport infrastructure.

Although £240m is an annual average up to 2037, we have forecast a peak funding requirement of around £300m in 2027 due to the expected timing of delivery of two major schemes – the A229 Blue Bell Hill and the North Thanet Link – and the Bus Service Improvement Plan initiatives. The timing of these is subject to us achieving the required funding and consents.

As we have developed our LTP, we have also identified some major transport schemes that are currently either being planned by developers (such as for new homes and commercial land uses) or which have been proposed by private transport operators but where there is not a sufficient commercial case for them to fully fund an improvement. These schemes would also provide benefits to existing users of the transport system.

Figure 16 - Additional funding required to deliver Local Transport Plan schemes that are the responsibility of Kent County Council



11. THE FUNDING WE NEED FOR OUR PLAN CONTINUED

However, such development-led schemes have challenges. These include how they are delivered (major schemes are usually led by KCC, National Highways or Network Rail), their potential high cost becoming a barrier to growth, and ensuring new roads are effectively integrated into the existing highway network. We have considered what further funding these schemes may need if we use our role as the Local Transport Authority in securing government funding support for them, alongside the planned funding from the developments. We have acted in this way in the past, such as by supporting delivery of Dover Fastrack by securing government funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

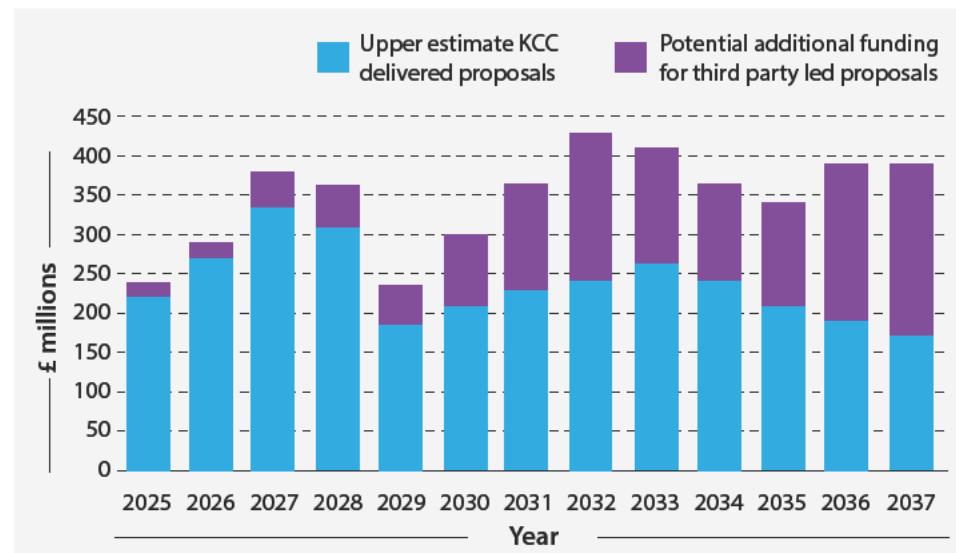
We estimate that the additional cost of these schemes could be between c.£0.9bn to c.£1.4bn, including an allowance for inflation. This would equate to a further c.£100m per year of funding needed and so our annual average funding required (on top of our anticipated usual budget) would be c.£320m per year. In this scenario, there would be a peak funding requirement in 2032 of around £410m.

The funding we will need is substantial. If we exclude maintenance funding, the annual requirement of c. £100m to c. £140m is not dissimilar to the funding we secured through the former devolved Local Growth Fund. That funding supported investment of around £66m a year on new transport infrastructure, including the match funding we secured alongside it. Our new LTP's estimate is higher but this also reflects the inflation that has occurred over the period 2015 to 2023, during which the Local Growth Fund was available. New and sustained funding would also address some of the lost confidence and reduced public trust arising from underinvestment in road maintenance and diminished public transport services.

Funding of local transport has been going through a substantial change since 2021. There have been an increasing number of authorities across the country receiving substantial funding settlements through new or devolved local government arrangements or structures.

When considering the scale of transport settlements that some parts of the country have secured from government as part of devolution, we consider it is realistic and proportionate that we should receive funding that is of a similar scale to our estimate of c.£200m to c.£240m a year. If we can secure such a level of funding, then which specific proposals we would deliver first would be dependent on any constraints related to the funding (for example, it might only be available for use on active travel measures) and judged on the contribution to delivery of the outcomes and objectives. We will also work to secure funding from development where proposals mitigate the impact of that. To assess this, we have set out an implementation and prioritisation framework in the Annex to this plan.

Figure 17 - Further potential funding requirement to deliver major schemes currently led by third parties (such as developers)



12. TO CONCLUDE

Our LTP proposes how we would like to achieve improved journeys for all the different parts of the transport system across Kent. It is designed to strike a balance between the investment needed to improve the county's economy and make living and working here better, whilst also preparing our transport networks to meet the environmental challenges and commitments facing the country. Striking a balance across the whole transport mix gives us the opportunity to ensure that journeys are joined up and cohesive, delivering on the government's emerging Integrated National Transport Strategy.

What is clear is that the proposals will require sustained and sufficient funding from government, not just for construction but for their design and development. With such funding, we would also be able to support and drive

progress with partners, such as National Highways and Network Rail, who are responsible for critical parts of the transport network in Kent and who themselves will have a major bearing on our ability to achieve our ambition. Where proposals have an impact across the region, we will work with Transport for the South East to progress them.

We will focus our delivery on the proposals in this LTP, confident that our activity will be contributing to the needs of Kent and supporting national government in the delivery of its own policy objectives. However, we recognise that in the coming years new priorities and proposals may come to the fore and we will adapt to deliver them provided they meet the policy objectives set out in this LTP.

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Air Quality Management Plans	Plans held by District and Borough authorities setting out actions to reduce air pollution to within legal limits.
Bifurcation	The division of the Strategic Road Network route to Dover into two main corridors, comprising the A2/M2 corridor and the M20 corridor.
Borough authorities	Borough authorities are the same as District authorities but cover predominantly urban areas e.g. Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils.
Business-as-usual scenario	This scenario considers what may happen to the volume and nature of travel in Kent if our current funded and committed schemes for transport occur and Kent's population grows.
Carbon pathway	This is the trajectory of future emissions of carbon dioxide equivalent, the trajectory dependent on the scenario considered.
Climate change	Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns.
CO²e	Carbon dioxide equivalent – a metric used to cover all greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. Methane, Nitrous Oxide) by converting greenhouse gas emissions into carbon dioxide using scientific conversion factors.
Department for Transport	The government department that has responsibility for transport policy for local transport and for national networks.
DfT	See Department for Transport.
District authorities	District authorities are the local planning authorities in Kent, of which there are twelve. Some Districts have a formal title of being a Borough.
Equalities Impact Assessment	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan's policies and proposals on people with protected characteristics classed within the Equalities Act 2010, required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
Framing Kent's Future	Kent County Council's strategy covering all its functions for the period of 2022 to 2026.
Gear Change	The Government's vision for Walking and Cycling in England.

Term	Definition
Getting Building Fund	This is the name of a government provided fund to support the economy through infrastructure investment during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Health Impact Assessment	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan's policies and proposals required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
High Speed 1 / HS1	This is the name of the high speed rail link running to London St Pancras International from Kent, via Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International.
Housing Infrastructure Fund	This is the name of a government fund designed to support delivery of housing and the infrastructure housing needs.
Infrastructure Delivery Plans	Plans help by District and Borough authorities setting out proposed infrastructure, including transport, needed to support delivery and mitigate the impact of changes to land use including new development.
KCWIP	Stands for Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Developed by Kent County Council.
LCWIP	Stands for Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Developed by district and borough authorities.
Local Growth Fund	This was a fund government established in 2013, bringing funds from several government departments into a 'single pot' that was provided to Local Enterprise Partnership who had responsibility for determining how the funding should best be spent to meet local needs.
Local Plan	A document held by District and Borough authorities which details policies to manage the use of land and its development.
Local Transport Authority	This is the name for a local government authority, such as a County Council, who has responsibility for local transport policy and delivery based on law which includes the Local Transport Act and Highways Act.
LTP	Stands for Local Transport Plan.
National Highways	The government company which plans, designs, builds, operates, and maintains England's motorways and major A roads, known as the Strategic Road Network (SRN).
Net Zero	This is a target the UK has of reducing its net carbon emission to zero by 2050.

Term	Definition
Network Rail	The government company which plans, designs, builds, operates and maintains England's rail network, aside from those elements managed day to day by the train operating companies.
Public Rights of Way	A right of way is a path that anyone has the legal right to use on foot, and sometimes using other forms of transport. Kent County Council is the responsible authority in Kent for Public Rights of Way.
Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan	This is a statutory plan that Kent County Council must have explained how improvements to the public rights of way network in the authority's area will provide a better experience for its users including walkers, cyclists, horse riders, horse and carriage drivers, people with mobility problems, and people using motorised vehicles.
Securing Kent's Future	This is a Kent County Council corporate budget recovery strategy which aims to address in-year and future years' financial pressures the council is facing.
Strategic Environmental Assessment	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan's policies and proposals required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
Strategic Road Network	The strategic road network comprises the motorways and trunk roads in England.
Sub National Transport Body	An organisation established under or for the purpose set out in The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act, which makes provision for the establishment and constitution of a Sub-national Transport Body for any area in England (outside of Greater London). Sub-national Transport Bodies are designed to address regional, cross boundary transport challenges and opportunities to support the work of Local Transport Authorities and national government within their region.
Transport for the South East (TfSE)	This is the name of the Sub National Transport Body for the region that includes Kent. See Sub National Transport Body glossary entry for further information.
Trunk road	A road designated by National Highways as a route of strategic importance.
Trunking	This is the term used to describe the changing of the status of a locally managed road to a road of strategic importance which will therefore be managed by National Highways.
Vision Zero	Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

ANNEX

IMPLEMENTATION AND PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK

Our Local Transport Plan will be successful if the investments and actions to improve transport that are taken by us year after year have been determined based on the likelihood of their positive impact on the plan's outcomes and objectives. In doing so, the ambition we have set for the future of transport in Kent stands the best chance of being realised.

Our investments and actions are funded from a range of different sources. Those different sources of funding can have specific targeted outcomes that have been set by the funders themselves. For example, the government may establish funding aimed at investment in transport to support new housing delivery. We therefore need to ensure that future transport improvements we seek funding to invest in are going to maintain delivery of our plan's ambition whilst delivering on the aims of funders too. This will help ensure that the actions we take to obtain funding have a lower likelihood of undermining the ambition of our Local Transport Plan.

The next section describes how we will aim to implement our plan and determine what the best options are to deliver the outcomes as we explore options within a proposal.

Assessing the impact of proposals to support prioritisation

The strategic proposals in our Local Transport Plan have been assessed against the outcomes of the plan, using a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) assessment. As new proposals are identified, we will aim to ensure that they are initially assessed on a similar basis, with each proposal considering its likely impact on each outcome at the early stages of its development and optioneering.

A proposal's RAG assessment should aim to be undertaken on the basis of the following guidance in Table A1 for estimating the likely impact.

Table A1 - Red-Amber-Green assessment guidance

Red-Amber-Green Assessment Rating	Guidance for determining rating
RED	Very likely or clear negative impact – proposal is likely to result in changes to the transport system and / or journeys that lead to an increase in impacts that are contrary to the aim of the assessed outcome (and given the type of effects covered within the outcomes' associated objectives).
AMBER	Clear potential for risk of impact but indeterminate at the stage the RAG assessment is undertaken whether the impact is likely to be overwhelmingly positive or negative.
GREEN	Very likely or clear positive impact – proposal is likely to result in changes to the transport system and / or journeys that lead to an increase in impacts that are supportive to the aim of the assessed outcome (and given the type of effects covered within the outcomes' associated objectives).

IMPLEMENTATION AND PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK CONTINUED

Within a proposal, there will be multiple options. Determining which option or options to progress can be undertaken in a variety of ways. For proposals where we will require government funding, we are highly likely to need to follow government transport analysis guidance which already sets out a comprehensive approach to assessing the impact of proposals. More information on that can be found on the Department for Transport website.

Whatever approach is taken, we will aim to maintain consideration of a proposal's options against our Local Transport Plan outcomes. This may include incorporating the specific outcomes or all of them into a multi-criteria assessment framework which may include weightings, depending on what is determined as the best approach given the nature of the proposal and its options.

We will aim to use the approach set out here to inform our optioneering but it should not be taken as the limit of what we will consider on any proposal. Nor should it be interpreted or inferred that there is a pass mark or threshold that any proposal should necessarily achieve in terms of the balance of performance against the outcomes and objectives. The aim is that the approach outlined in this Annex is informative to decision making.

As proposals are further developed, and the outcomes they will impact become clearer, we will aim to include in our assessments the impact on the objectives. The objectives that are relevant may be lifted and incorporated into the overarching objectives for the proposal and be directly assessed. This will help to ensure proposals directly address the Local Transport Plan's outcomes and will supplement the detailed quantified analysis we undertake to meet the government's guidance. It will enable the RAG assessment to be developed further.

When appropriate and when we can achieve the required detailed assessment given the resources available to us, we will aim to analyse the effect of a proposal against the Local Transport Plan objectives on the basis shown in Table A2.

The project managers responsible for developing each proposal will be responsible for determining whether to apply a RAG assessment or use a different type (e.g. a scored system). The RAG assessment itself may be sufficient to enable prioritisation of a selection of options within a single proposal or across a number of proposals, however in some instances the project manager may determine to use further criteria to assist with the prioritisation. The key aim is that consideration of the proposal's contribution towards delivery of the Local Transport Plan is part of the prioritisation process.

Please note that Objective 10 A) is excluded from the implementation and prioritisation framework as it concerns a part of the network which we have no role in the optioneering or delivery of and therefore we will not need to consider the effect of our proposals on the delivery or the impacts of airport expansion.



Table A2 – Red-Amber-Green Assessment Framework for LTP objectives

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
1 A) Achieve the funding necessary to deliver a sustained fall in the value of the backlog of maintenance work over the life of our Local Transport Plan.	The proposal would clearly increase the amount of maintenance required to highways assets, most likely due to increased volumes of vehicles using the assets, increasing the amount of funding needed to achieve the objective.	There is a risk the proposal may increase the amount of maintenance required to highways assets, due to potential but not definite increased volumes of vehicles using the assets, which could increase the amount of funding needed to achieve the objective.	The proposal can improve the condition of highways assets by delivering new investment that upgrades their condition or provides new assets that reduces the usage of existing assets.
2 A) Achieve a fall over time in the volume of people killed or very seriously (life-changing) injured occurring on KCC's managed road network, working towards the trajectory set by Vision Zero for 2050.	The proposal is likely to have a direct effect on increasing the likelihood of fatalities or very serious injuries occurring on the KCC managed road network.	The impact of the proposal on road safety cannot be clearly determined, meaning there is a risk that the likelihood of fatalities or very serious injuries that occur on the KCC managed road network could increase. Due to the impact being unclear, there is therefore also a corresponding possibility that the likelihood may fall.	The proposal is likely to have a direct effect on decreasing the likelihood of fatalities or very serious injuries occurring on the KCC managed road network.
3 A) Increase resilience of the road network serving the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel crossing, by adding holding capacity for HGVs across the southeast region to support establishment of a long term alternative to Operation Brock.	The proposal is likely to increase the volume of traffic or traffic congestion, delays, or unreliability of journey times, or reduce capacity on the M20-A20 corridor such that the impacts of international traffic on Kent could be exacerbated.	The proposal may have an impact on the M20-A20 corridor however it is not clear either whether the impact will be positive or negative, or whether it will be significant enough to have a clear impact on whether international traffic will affect Kent differently compared to without the proposal.	The proposal is likely to decrease the volume of traffic or traffic congestion, delays, or unreliability of journey times, or increase capacity on the M20-A20 corridor such that the impacts of international traffic on Kent could be reduced.

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
3 B) Increase resilience of the road network servicing the Port of Dover through delivery of the bifurcation strategy including improvements to the M2 / A2 road corridor and its links to the M20 and a new Lower Thames Crossing for traffic towards the north, and utilising further non-road freight opportunities.	<p>The proposal is likely to increase the volume of traffic or traffic congestion, delays or unreliability of journey times, or reduce capacity on the M2-A2 road corridor or its connections to the M20 corridor such that the impacts of international traffic on Kent could be exacerbated.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have an impact on the M2-A2 corridor or its connections with the M20 corridor however it is not clear either whether the impact will be positive or negative, or whether it will be significant enough to have a clear impact on whether international traffic will affect Kent differently compared to without the proposal.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to decrease the volume of traffic or traffic congestion, delays, or unreliability of journey times, or increase capacity on the M2-A2 corridor or its connections to the M20 corridor such that the impacts of international traffic on Kent could be reduced.</p>
4 A) International rail travel returns to Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International stations, supported by the infrastructure investment needed at Kent's stations to ensure they provide secure and straightforward journeys across the UK-EU border within the entry exit system.	<p>The proposal is likely to reduce the capability and capacity of the international rail route and its stations in Kent.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have an impact on the international rail route and stations in Kent but whether the impact is likely to be negative or positive is not clear.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to improve the capability and capacity of the international rail route and its stations in Kent.</p>
4 B) There is a reduction in the time it takes to reach international rail stations by public transport compared to conditions in 2023.	<p>The proposal is likely to increase the time it takes to travel on public transport from a built up urban area (given they represent the largest generators of a travel market) in Kent or the wider region to either Ebbsfleet or Ashford International stations.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have an impact on travel times from a built up urban area (given they represent the largest generators of a travel market) in Kent to Ebbsfleet or Ashford International stations, however it is not clear whether it will be positive or negative.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to decrease the time it takes to travel on public transport from a built up urban area (given they represent the largest generators of a travel market) in Kent or the wider region to either Ebbsfleet or Ashford International stations.</p>

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
5 A) Strengthen delivery of our Network Management Duty to deliver the expeditious movement of traffic by using our new moving traffic enforcement powers and modernising the provision of on-street parking enforcement.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on our ability to deliver our Network Management Duty.	The proposal is likely to have an impact on our ability to delivery our Network Management Duty however it is not clear whether it will be positive or negative.	The proposal is likely to have a clear impact on our ability to deliver our Network Management Duty.
5 B) Reduce the amount of forecast future congestion and crowding on highways and public transport that is associated with demand from development by securing funding and delivery of our Local Transport Plan.	The proposal is likely to have a clear likelihood of increasing traffic congestion on highways or increasing crowding on public transport past satisfactory levels.	The proposal is likely to affect congestion on highways or crowding on public transport however it is not clear whether it will be positive or negative.	The proposal would have a clear impact on reducing congestion on highways or reducing crowding on public transport towards toward satisfactory levels.
5 C) The prospects for the future of transport increase across the whole county, with new innovations in transport services having a clear pathway to trial or delivery in Kent.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on delivery of emerging, innovative, or new approaches to transport delivery and operation.	The proposal is likely to affect emerging, innovative, or new approaches to transport delivery and operation however it is not clear whether it will be positive or negative.	The proposal would have a clear positive impact on delivery of emerging, innovative, or new approaches to transport delivery and operation.

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
6 A) Proposals in our Local Transport Plan are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution in providing new, quicker, or more inclusive access to historic and natural environment destinations in the county, with proposals targeting access to such locations where appropriate.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on the time taken or ease of journeys to historic and natural environment destinations in the county.	The proposal is likely to affect the time taken or ease of journeys to historic and natural environment destinations in the county, however it is not clear whether the impact will be positive or negative.	The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact on the time taken or ease of journeys to historic and natural environment destinations in the county.
7 A) Reduce the volume of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions entering the atmosphere associated with surface transport activity on the KCC managed highway network by an amount greater than our forecast "business as usual" scenario. This means achieving a greater fall than those currently forecast of 9% by 2027, 19% by 2032 and 29% by 2037.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact as it is forecast to generate a net-increase in the volume of carbon emissions from road user activity.	The proposal is likely to have an effect on road user activity however it is not clear whether the effects will result in a net-positive or net-negative volume of carbon emissions.	The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact as it is forecast to generate a net-reduction in the volume of carbon emissions from road user activity.

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
7 B) No area in Kent is left behind by the revolution in electric motoring, with charging infrastructure deployed close to residential areas, reducing barriers to adoption.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on access to and the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.	The proposal is likely to have an impact on access to and the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, however it is not clear whether the effect will create an improvement or make conditions worse.	The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact on access to and the delivery of electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
7 C) Proposals are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution in providing lower emissions from transport in Air Quality Management Areas in the county.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on road-based emissions which can affect air quality in Air Quality Management Areas.	The proposal is likely to have an impact on road-based emissions in Air Quality Management Areas, however it is not clear whether the effect will be to reduce emissions or increase emissions.	The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact on road-based emissions which can affect air quality in Air Quality Management Areas
8 A) We will aim to obtain further funding to deliver the outcomes of our Bus Service Improvement Plan (or its replacement) beyond its current horizon of 2024/25. We will ensure that our Local Transport Plan proposals are clearly evidenced in terms of their contribution towards achieving our Bus Service Improvement Plan.	The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on delivering the Bus Service Improvement Plan.	The proposal is likely to have an impact on the bus network and bus journeys, however it is not clear whether the effect will be positive or negative in terms of the impact on delivering the Bus Service Improvement Plan.	The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact on delivering the Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Objective	Red rated effect of proposal	Amber rated effect of proposal	Green rated effect of proposal
<p>8 B) We will identify and support industry delivery of priority railway stations for accessibility improvements and route improvements to reduce journey times and improve reliability.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have a clear negative including worse accessibility at rail stations, longer journey times, or lower reliability of services.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have an impact on rail stations, journeys, and their reliability, however it is not clear whether the impact will be positive or negative.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact including better accessibility at rail stations, shorter journey times, or lower reliability of services.</p>
<p>9 A) We will aim to deliver walking and cycling improvements at prioritised locations in Kent to deliver increased levels of activity towards the Active Travel England target and support Kent's diverse economy, presented in a Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have a clear negative impact on walking and cycling networks or on levels of walking and cycling activity in Kent.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have an impact on walking and cycling networks or activity levels in Kent however it is unclear whether the impact is likely to be positive or negative.</p>	<p>The proposal is likely to have a clear positive impact on walking and cycling networks or on levels of walking and cycling activity in Kent.</p>

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 5

STRIKING THE BALANCE

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