



Kent County Council

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# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A229 Loose Road Corridor Maidstone







**Kent County Council**

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**TYPE OF DOCUMENT (PUBLIC) PUBLIC**

**PROJECT NO. 70043445**

**REF. NO. 70043445-REP-009**

**DATE: AUGUST 2019**

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**Kent County Council**

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**A229 Loose Road Corridor Maidstone**

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# QUALITY CONTROL

Issue/revision	First issue	Revision 1	Revision 2	Revision 3
Remarks				
Date	04/10/2018	30/8/2019		
Prepared by	S. Cousens	R.Thompson		
Signature		 Digitally signed by Thompson, Rebekah DN: cn=Thompson, Rebekah, ou=Cardiff (1 Capital Quarter), email=Rebekah.Thompson@wsp.com Date: 2019.09.02 08:38:45 +01'00' <b>Thompson, Rebekah</b>		
Checked by	S. Collins	S.Rice (Cousens)		
Signature				
Authorised by	P. Allen	P.Allen		
Signature		 Allen, Peter I have reviewed this document 2019.08.30 19:19:01 +01'00'		
Project number	70043445	70043445		
Report number	70043445-REP-009	70040984-REP -009		
File reference	\\uk.wspgroup.com\central data\Projects\700434xx\70043445 - A229 Loose Road Corridor\D Design & Analysis\EqIA	\\uk.wspgroup.com\central data\Projects\700434xx\70043445 - A229 Loose Road Corridor\D Design & Analysis\EqIA		

# CONTENTS

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<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHEME</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	SCHEME BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT	1
1.2	LOCATION OF THE SCHEME	1
1.3	SCHEME OBJECTIVES	3
1.4	NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT	3
1.5	CONSULTATION	3
<b>2</b>	<b>LEGISLATION</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	WHAT IS EQIA	6
3.2	METHODOLOGY	6
<b>4</b>	<b>LOCAL SOCIAL PROFILE</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION	10
4.2	PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC PROFILE	10
4.3	COMMUNITIES IN PROXIMITY TO THE SCHEME	14
4.4	FACILITIES IN PROXIMITY TO THE SCHEME	14
4.5	PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING FACILITIES	16
4.6	COMMUNITY FACILITIES	18
<b>5</b>	<b>EQUALITY IMPACT SCREENING OUTCOMES</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>26</b>
6.1	INTRODUCTION	26
6.2	AGE	26
6.3	DISABILITY	29
6.4	GENDER (INCLUDING PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY)	30



6.5	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TABLE	31
6.6	MITIGATION AND MONITORING	32
6.7	NEXT STEPS	33
7	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>34</b>
8	<b>DATA SOURCES</b>	<b>35</b>
<hr/>		
	<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>36</b>
<hr/>		

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## ***TABLES***

Table 1: Protected Characteristics Covered within an Equality Impact Assessment	4
Table 2: Proposed Equality Impact Assessment Structure	8
Table 3: Ethnicity Profile of Kent and England/Wales	10
Table 4: Percentage of People Belonging to Specified Faiths in Kent and England/Wales	11
Table 5: Age Profile in Kent and England/Wales	12
Table 6: Gender Profile in Kent and England/Wales	13
Table 7: Equality Impact Screening	22
Table 8: Flair School of Dance student information	29
Table 9: Equality Impact Assessment	31

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## ***FIGURES***

Figure 1: Scheme Location	2
Figure 2: The Three Stage EqIA Process	7





# **1. INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHEME**

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## **1.1. SCHEME BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 1.1.1. WSP has been appointed by Kent County Council (KCC) in partnership with Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), to prepare the outline design and environmental studies for the A229 Loose Road Corridor Maidstone Improvement Scheme, known hereafter as the 'Scheme'.
- 1.1.2. The Scheme is designed to address existing traffic congestion and improving journey time reliability along the A229 Loose Road and along the A274 Sutton Road. The Scheme objectives are identified below in Section 1.3.
- 1.1.3. Feasibility designs have been completed for four separate junction upgrades. The four junctions sit within a corridor on the A229 between Sheals' Crescent and Anglesey Avenue (Figure 1). The corridor has been incorporated into 'one scheme' to demonstrate the overall benefits that would be achieved, collectively, once construction works are completed (Kent County Council, 2017).
- 1.1.4. Funding has been secured through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and indicative estimates have been calculated for each junction improvement from the £8.9m total allocation (Kent County Council, 2017). The Scheme is planned to be delivered by 2021.
- 1.1.5. This report presents the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) of the Scheme.

## **1.2. LOCATION OF THE SCHEME**

- 1.2.1. The proposed Scheme is located to the south of Maidstone and extends from Sheal's Crescent in the north to Loose Bowls Club at the south (Figure 1).



### **1.3. SCHEME OBJECTIVES**

1.3.1. The objectives and anticipated benefits (Kent County Council, 2017) of the Scheme comprise the following:

- Upgrade A229 Loose Road Corridor at four junctions;
- Accommodate increased traffic volume on A229 Loose Road;
- Ease congestion;
- Improve traffic flow into Maidstone;
- Unlock Economic Growth and Job Creation opportunities;
- Enable the delivery of housing development;
- Improve Air Quality and/or Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions; and
- Incentivise skills and apprentices.

### **1.4. NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT**

1.4.1. The A229 Loose Road corridor suffers from congestion at several key junctions along the road (Maidstone Borough Council, 2016). This road and their associated junctions form part of the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package which was agreed at the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board in 2015.

1.4.2. The Maidstone Integrated Transport Package consists of a package of transport interventions aimed at reducing congestion and easing traffic movements at pinch point locations within Maidstone. The project currently includes Three Phases with the improvements to the A229 Loose Road Corridor being Phase Three of the project plan.

1.4.3. The junctions are as follows:

- A229 Loose Road at the junction with the A274 Sutton Road, known as “The Wheatsheaf” junction;
- A229 Loose Road at the junction with Cripple Street/Boughton Lane;
- A229 Loose Road at the junction with Armstrong Road/Park Way; and
- A229 Loose Road between Armstrong Road and Sheal’s Crescent;

### **1.5. CONSULTATION**

1.5.1. Public Consultation is planned to take place at the end of the outline design phase in approximately December 2018. Proposed consultation specific to protected groups is outlined in Section 4.6.1.

1.5.2. The KCC Diversity Team has reviewed the EqlA Screening document for the Scheme and have agreed the content of this EqlA for the outline design stage.

1.5.3. The purpose of the EqlA is detailed in Section 3.

## 2. LEGISLATION

- 2.1.1. The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010 and brought together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into a single Act. The Act provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals that share defined "protected characteristics" and advance equality of opportunity.
- 2.1.2. Those "protected characteristics" which identify the vulnerable groups who may be disproportionately impacted upon or discriminated against are outlined in Table 1. Protection extends to those who are perceived to have these characteristics or who suffer discrimination because they are associated with someone who has that characteristic, e.g. cares for someone with a disability.

**Table 1: Protected Characteristics Covered within an Equality Impact Assessment<sup>1</sup>**

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS	PEOPLE AND ASPECTS INCLUDED
Gender	Men, women, married and single people; parenting, caring, flexible working and equal pay concerns.
Religion or belief	People who have a religious belief; people who are atheist or agnostic; people who have a philosophical belief which affects their view of the world or the way they live.
Age	Children (0-16), young people (17-25), working age people (15-64) and elderly people (65 and over).
Disability	People with physical, mental, sensory, visible or hidden impairment (e.g. cancer, HIV, dyslexia).
Race	People from various ethnic groups, as for the Census categories, e.g. White British, Chinese, British Asians, Travellers, Gypsies, Roma, those who are of Caribbean origin, people of mixed heritage, White Irish communities, and people of other nationalities who reside in Britain.
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual and bisexual men and women, gay men and lesbians.
Gender reassignment (Transgender/transsexual)	Anyone who is proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their sex.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Pregnant women and new mothers – protection against maternity discrimination (including as a result of breast feeding).

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/equality-and-diversity/equality-impact-assessments>



2.1.3. Section 149 of the Act provides for a Public Sector Equality Duty. This requires that public bodies such as KCC, in the exercise of their functions, give "due regard to the need to":

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This includes:
  - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to protected characteristics;
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people; and
  - Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Foster good relations between people who share protected characteristic and those who do not. This includes:
  - Tackling prejudice;
  - Promoting understanding; and
  - Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

2.1.4. This duty also applies to private sector companies when carrying out functions or services on behalf of public sector bodies.

2.1.5. KCC's Equality Impact Analysis / Assessments Policy (KCC, 2007) states:

*KCC uses Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) to capture and evidence our analysis on the impact of our decisions and policies on the people of Kent. This helps us to meet various elements of our Public Sector Equality Duty.*

*Equality analysis helps us to demonstrate that "due regard" has been paid to our Equality duties before any decisions are made. This includes Officer Decisions under delegated authority. The decision maker must have seen the equality analysis and be aware of any potential negative impacts before any decisions are made. KCC evidences the "due regard" duty through an Equality Impact Assessment/Analysis (EqIA).*

## 3. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

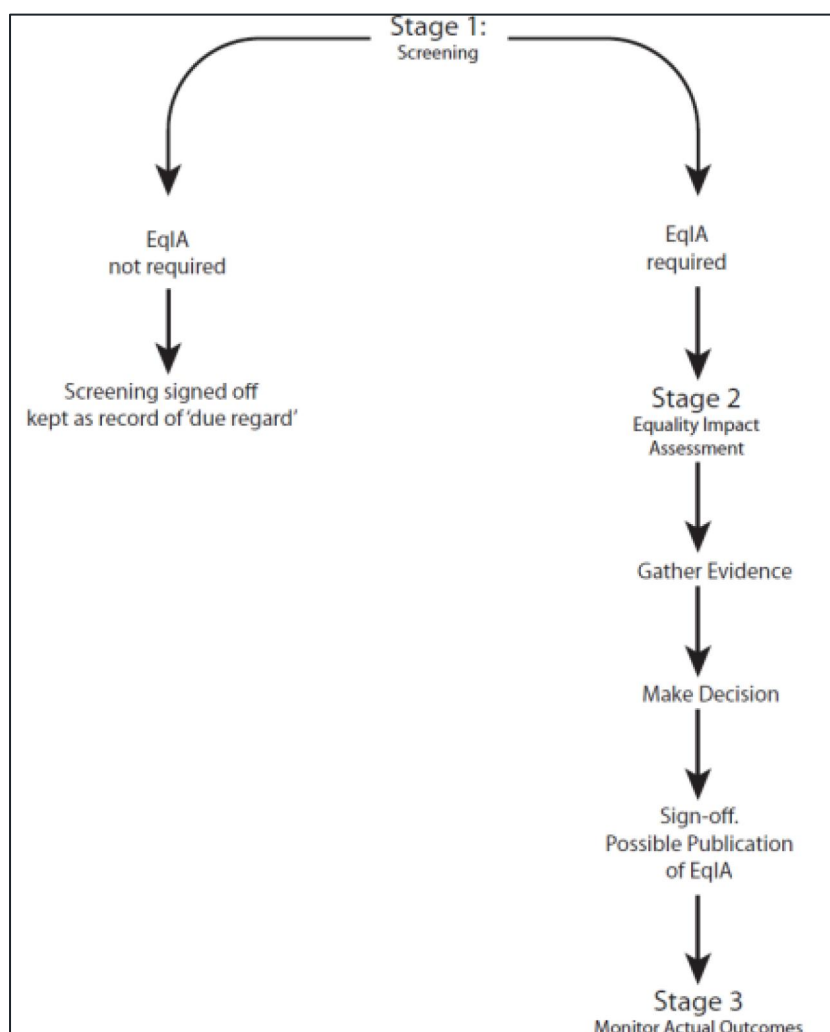
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### 3.1. WHAT IS EQIA

- 3.1.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) considers the impact of a project or policy on persons or groups of persons who share characteristics which are protected under section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 ("protected characteristics") and might also include others considered to be vulnerable within society such as low income groups. It is an information gathering tool which enables decision makers within public bodies to implement their equality duty under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.1.2. An EqIA guides decision makers and designers to:
- Consider the effects of existing and proposed policy or practice on people who share a "protected characteristic"; and
  - Identify opportunities to improve equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination.
- 3.1.3. An EqIA should be carried out before making decisions, to inform and shape the outcomes. They should be updated throughout the decision-making process as necessary, as policy or practices are developed.
- 3.1.4. There are three stages to an EqIA; screening, full assessment and outcome monitoring. The screening stage (as detailed in Section 5) determined which protected characteristics are likely to experience disproportionate impacts, and therefore require consideration within the EqIA. This took into account the nature of the public function being exercised and available information on users and impacts. This document represents the assessment on those groups identified.

### 3.2. METHODOLOGY

- 3.2.1. Highways England has developed guidance to the EqIA process (Highways England, 2011). This guidance has been adopted as current industry practice for highway sector schemes. This guidance sets out the three key stages involved in an EqIA as depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: The Three Stage EqlA Process**

- 3.2.2. This methodological framework has been used to inform the approach for the EqlA Screening of the A229 Loose Road Corridor improvements.
- 3.2.3. The key objective of the initial screening exercise was to identify which (if any) of the protected characteristics could experience direct or indirect disproportionate impacts (either positive or negative), thereby setting out whether or not a full EqlA is necessary.
- 3.2.4. The screening exercise is a process by which the following issues are considered:
- Whether there is evidence to suggest that any of the protected characteristics have particular sensitivities or needs in relation to the Scheme;
  - Whether there are existing inequalities or access barriers to services or developments which need to be considered; and
  - Whether there are particular community groups or stakeholders representing protected characteristics who have expressed interest or concerns about the proposed Scheme.
- 3.2.5. In order to complete the screening phase, the following actions were undertaken:

- An initial review of existing baseline information to gather data and understand the communities which may be affected by the proposed Scheme. This includes review of previously published documents, Census 2011 data and information held by the local authority; and
- Identification of the priority groups and sensitive receptors to be considered within this assessment, which have the potential to experience disproportionate impacts as a result of development of the proposed Scheme.

3.2.6. A summary of the results of the screening assessment is provided in Section 5 and Section 6 of this report.

### STUDY AREA

3.2.7. The EqIA Screening was based on the following study areas:

- Protected Characteristic Profile – census data and other publicly available information has been gathered for the administrative area of Kent County Council to provide a baseline of the demographic of the area for the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010); and
- Sensitive receptors – within the local vicinity of the Scheme (detailed in Section 4.4).

## 3.3. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.3.1. This document represents the EqIA for the Scheme and assesses the level of impact the development may have on those protected groups (Table 2) for which the screening document identified as having the potential to be disproportionately affected.

3.3.2. Table 2 below forms the basis of the assessment structure where either a high, medium or low negative or positive impact for each of the protected characteristic groups (based on professional judgement in the absence of set guidance) will be assigned (as defined in the Future Managed Motorways Concept EqIA criteria).

**Table 2: Proposed Equality Impact Assessment Structure**

Protected Group	High negative impact	Medium negative impact	Low negative impact	High/Medium /Low Positive Impact
Age	<b>Extent:</b> Likely to affect the well-being of most or all people from	<b>Extent:</b> Likely to affect the well-being of many people from the	<b>Extent:</b> Likely to affect a small number of people from one or more equality groups	Assessment criteria proposed to follow that for negative impacts in terms of
Disability				
Gender				



Protected Group	High negative impact	Medium negative impact	Low negative impact	High/Medium /Low Positive Impact
Gender identity/ Transgender	the specified equality group.	specified equality group.	<b>Duration:</b> Short-medium term	extent, duration and reversibility.
Race	<b>Duration:</b> Long term.	<b>Duration:</b> Medium term	<b>Reversibility:</b> Likely to be	
Religion and Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Pregnancy and Maternity				
Marriage and Civil Partnerships				

## 4. LOCAL SOCIAL PROFILE

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### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

4.1.1. A local social profile has been compiled from publicly available data to provide context for the assessment. This comprises information on the following:

- Protected characteristic groups;
- Local communities; and
- Sensitive receptors, local community facilities and public transport.

### 4.2. PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC PROFILE

4.2.1. Data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) has been gathered on the following protected characteristics from Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Race;
- Religion or belief;
- Gender; and
- Sexual orientation.

4.2.2. Certain protected characteristics, including gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity have not been included in the assessment due to a lack of publicly available data at the time of writing. Although not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the social profile also includes data on deprivation as it provides a measure of a combination of social-economic metrics.

#### ETHNICITY AND RELIGION PROFILE

4.2.3. The percentage of each ethnicity as measured by ONS, and as outlined in the 2011 Census for the county of Kent and England/Wales, is presented in Table 3.

4.2.4. The ONS 2011 Census information indicates that the majority of the population within Kent is classified as White British (89.1%), slightly higher than England and Wales (80.5%). This shows that Kent is less ethnically diverse than England and Wales.

**Table 3: Ethnicity Profile of Kent and England/Wales**

ETHNIC GROUP	KENT		ENGLAND/WALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British	1,303,558	89.1%	80.5%
White: Irish	10,239	0.7%	0.9%

ETHNIC GROUP	KENT		ENGLANDWALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	4,685	0.3%	0.1%
White: Other White	52,620	3.6%	4.4%
Mixed / multiple ethnic group	22,107	1.5%	2.2%
Asian / Asian British*	47,614	3.2%	7.5%
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	16,216	0.3%	3.4%
Other ethnic group	6,701	0.5%	1.0%
Total not 'White: British, etc.' (i.e. BAME)	160,182	10.94%	19.5%
Total not 'White'	92,638	6.32%	14.1%
All People	1,463,740	100%	100%

\* Now includes Chinese, which was previously a separate category; ^ not possible to separate out as Gypsy or Irish Traveller was a new category in 2011

4.2.5. The 2011 Census data indicates that the majority of the population (62.5%) within Kent is identified as Christian, while the next largest group identifies as having no religion (26.75%). Table 4 provides a profile of the religion or beliefs held within Kent and England and Wales.

**Table 4: Percentage of People Belonging to Specified Faiths in Kent and England/Wales**

RELIGION	KENT		ENGLANDWALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
Christian	915,000	62.5%	59.3%
Buddhist	6,802	0.5%	0.4%

RELIGION	KENT		ENGLAND/WALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
Hindu	10,943	0.7%	1.5%
Jewish	1,777	0.1%	0.5%
Muslim	13,932	0.95%	4.8%
Sikh	10,545	0.7%	0.8%
Other	6,145	0.4%	0.4%
No religion	391,591	26.75%	25.1%
Not stated	10,805	7.3%	7.2%

## AGE PROFILE

- 4.2.6. The ONS 2011 Census data shows that the percentage of the population over 45 is lower in Kent (5.2%) when compared to England and Wales (42%). A detailed age profile is provided in Table 5 however, it should be noted that the age profile in the county as a whole may not be reflective of the EqIA study area.

**Table 5: Age Profile in Kent and England/Wales**

AGE RANGE	KENT		ENGLAND/WALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
0-4	21,978	16.4%	6.2%
5-7	7,044	5.3%	3.4%
8-9	4,198	3.1%	2.2%
10-14	9,445	7.1%	5.8%
15	2,263	1.7%	1.2%
16-17	6,044	4.5%	2.5%
18-19	9,310	7.0%	2.6%

AGE RANGE	KENT		ENGLANDWALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
20-24	24,857	18.6%	6.8%
25-29	19,350	14.5%	6.8%
30-44	22,332	16.7%	20.5%
45-59	5,364	4.0%	19.4%
60-64	661	0.5%	6.0%
65-74	627	0.5%	8.7%
75-84	224	0.2%	5.6%
85-89	14	0.0%	1.5%
90+	8	0.0%	0.8%

## GENDER

- 4.2.7. The percentage of males (all ages) to females (all ages) in Kent is similar to the national averages in 2011, as outlined in Table 6.

**Table 6: Gender Profile in Kent and England/Wales**

AGE RANGE	KENT		ENGLANDWALES
	Number in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011	Percentage of total population in 2011
Male	57,232	48.5%	49.2%
Female	60,724	51.5%	50.8%

## DISABILITY

- 4.2.8. A total of 1,206,702 or 17.6% of people in Kent are living with a long-term health problem or disability, slightly lower than the national average of 17.9%. A smaller proportion of people in Kent (45.3%) with a long term health problem or disability find that their condition limits their day to day activities a lot more than the national average (47.5%).

### 4.3. COMMUNITIES IN PROXIMITY TO THE SCHEME

4.3.1. The nearest communities within the area surrounding the Scheme comprise residential dwellings at:

- Maidstone (located towards the north of Loose Road);
- Tovil (located towards the north west of Loose Road);
- Loose (located to the south of Loose Road);
- Shepway (located to the east of Loose Road);
- Willington (located to the east of Loose Road);
- Parkwood (located to the south east of Loose Road);
- Boughton Monchelsea (located to the south of Loose Road);
- Loose (located to the south of Loose Road); and
- Dean Street (located to the west of Loose Road).

4.3.2. The area surrounding the Scheme is mainly residential and commercial comprising residential developments, shops and community facilities such as schools and nursing homes. Vulnerable residents, employees and users of community facilities in this area have the potential to be affected disproportionately by the Scheme.

4.3.3. Likely journeys to take place by vehicle on Loose Road include:

- Journeys to and from Maidstone, via the A229, are likely to be made by residents to access secondary schools, health facilities, retail facilities and places of worship; and
- Journeys from residents located in residential dwellings travelling to primary schools and local facilities.

### 4.4. FACILITIES IN PROXIMITY TO THE SCHEME

- The nearest facilities comprise:
  - Convenience Stores and Service Facilities:
    - Sainsbury’s Local (on Loose Road, 84m from the junction with Boughton Lane);
    - Tesco Express (on Loose Road, 127m from the junction with Sheal’s Crescent);
    - Maidstone Cemetery (on Sutton Road, 205m from the junction with The Wheatsheaf);
    - Ashley Gardens Care Centre (on Sutton Road, adjacent to Willington Street);
    - Morrissions and Morrissions petrol station (on Sutton Road, 400m from Willington Street Junction); and
    - Willington Street Post Office (on Willington Road, 320m north of Willington street Junction).
  - Medical Facilities
    - Payden’s Pharmacy (on Loose Road at the junction with Boughton Lane);
    - Maidstone South Ambulance Community Response Post (on Loose Road, 106m from the junction with Boughton Lane); and

- Loose Medical Centre/ The Mote Medical Practice (on Boughton Lane, 27m from the junction with Loose Road).
- Care Facilities:
  - Loose Court (Assisted Living Residence, on Rushmead Drive, 385m from the junction with Boughton Lane);
  - The Oast (Assisted Living Residence, on Plains Avenue, 228m from the junction with Armstrong Road and Park Way); and
  - Magnolia House nursing home (on Cripple Street, 89m from the junction with Boughton Lane).
- Schools and Education:
  - Little Stars Pre-School (on Stagshaw Close, 622m from the junction with Sheal's Crescent);
  - Maidstone Grammar School (on St Philip's Avenue, 230m from the junction with Sheal's Crescent);
  - South Borough Primary School (on Loose Road 126m from the junction with Sheal's Crescent);
  - Smarties Nursery (on Stagshaw Close, 528m from the junction with Sheal's Crescent);
  - Kumon Maths and English Study Centre (on Melrose Close, 473m from the junction with Boughton Lane);
  - Maidstone Day Nursery & Pre-School (on Boughton Lane, 508m from the junction with Loose Road);
  - New Line Learning Academy (on Boughton Lane, 641m from the junction with Loose Road);
  - Five Acre Wood School Academy (on Boughton Lane, 595m from the junction with Loose Road);
  - Loose Primary School (on Loose Road, 990m from the junction with Boughton Lane); and
  - Senacre Wood Primary School (located off Wolley Road, 500m north east from Willington Street Junction).
- Recreation facilities:
  - Maidstone YMCA (on Melrose Close, 473m from the junction with Boughton Lane);
  - Loose Road Bowls Club (on Loose Road, 28m from the junction with Boughton Lane);
  - PhysioFit Kent (on Boughton Lane at the junction with Loose Road);
  - Maidstone Skatepark (on Armstrong Road, 344m from the junction with Loose Road);
  - South Park (park and garden) (on Armstrong Road, 160m from the junction with Loose Road);
  - Allotments on Carlton Gardens and Old Loose Hill (on Carlton Gardens, 1,770m from the junction with Sutton Lane and on Old Loose Hill, 1,240m from the junction with Boughton Lane);

- Maidstone Leisure Centre (on West Park Road, 864m from the junction with Sheal's Crescent);
- Flair School of Dance (held at the New Line Learning Academy on Boughton Lane, 641m from the junction with Loose Road);
- King George V Recreation Ground (on Loose Road, 985m the junction with Boughton Lane); and
- The Wheatsheaf pub between Loose Road and Sutton Road junction.

## 4.5. PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING FACILITIES

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

- 4.5.1. The Scheme is at the early stage of the design process and, as such, it is not yet known if any bus stops will be temporarily affected by the works during construction or permanently during the operational phase. The construction and operational phases of the Scheme therefore may have the potential to disproportionately affect certain vulnerable groups; in particular the elderly, the young and women (including pregnancy and maternity) who are likely to use public transport regularly (Department for Transport, 2015).
- 4.5.2. The following bus stops on Loose Road have the potential to be affected by the Scheme:
- Sheal's Crescent; (buses: 5, 12, 13, 24, 27, 28, 59, 82 Park Wood Shuttle, 89, 589 and T12 servicing Sandhurst, Park Wood, Grafty Green, Coxheath, Tenterden, Hollingbourne, Headcorn southbound. All buses travelling north go to Maidstone);
  - Armstrong Road; (buses 5, 12, 13, 24, 27, 28, 59, 82 Park Wood Shuttle, 89, 589 and T12 servicing Sandhurst, Park Wood, Grafty Green, Coxheath, Tenterden, Hollingbourne, Headcorn southbound. All buses travelling north go to Maidstone);
  - Plains Avenue; (buses 5, 12, 13, 24, 27, 28, 59, 82 Park Wood Shuttle, 89, and T12 servicing Sandhurst, Park Wood, Grafty Green, Coxheath, Tenterden, Hollingbourne, Langley, Marden and Headcorn);
  - The Wheatsheaf; (buses: 5, 14, 27, 28, 59, 89, 641, 642, 643 and T12 servicing Coxheath, Sandhurst, Marden, Crafty Green, Cranbrook, and Linton);
  - Fire Station (buses 5, 14, 27, 28, 59, 89, 589, 641, 642, 643 and T12 servicing Maidstone, Sandhurst, Coxheath, Marden, Crafty Green and Cranbrook southbound. All buses travelling north go to Maidstone); and
  - The Swan (buses 5, 14, 27, 28, 59, 89, 589, 641, 642, 643 and T12 servicing Sandhurst, Coxheath, Marden, Crafty Green and Cranbrook southbound. All buses travelling north go to Maidstone).

The following bus stops on Sutton Road have the potential to be impacted by the scheme:

- Sutton Road; (buses: 12,13,24,59) servicing Hollingbourne, Tenterden and buses; 641,642 and 643 servicing Maidstone;
- Wallis Avenue; (buses:642 and 82 Park Wood Shuttle) servicing Park Wood; and



- Sutton Road, near the Wheatsheaf buses: 12, 13, 24,59 and 82 Park Wood Shuttle).

4.5.3. There are no railway stations or railways within the Scheme boundary and immediate vicinity. Maidstone West railway station is the nearest and is located approximately 1 km to the north west.

## **PEDESTRIANS**

4.5.4. There are no designated Public Rights of Way on Loose Road in the development corridor. The following Public Rights of Way, footways and permissive paths are in near proximity or the immediate vicinity of the Scheme, and vulnerable users of which have the potential to be disproportionately affected:

4.5.5. Near proximity:

- There is a public footpath (KMX40) (83m long) from Holtye Crescent to West Park Road to the east of Loose Road; and
- There are two public footpaths (KB21/2 and KB21/3) (130m and 89m long) from Postley Farm to Redstart Avenue to the east of Loose Road.

4.5.6. Immediate vicinity:

- There is a pavement on both sides of Loose Road corridor between Sheal's Crescent at the north of the development corridor and Loose Bowls Club at the south;
- There is a pelican crossing across Loose Road and Boughton Lane at the Boughton lane junction;
- There is a pelican crossing on Loose Road just north of the junction with Sutton Road and Cranborne Avenue;
- There are pelican crossings across Armstrong Road and Park Way at the junction with Loose Road and a further crossing across Loose Road just north of the junction;
- There are pedestrian refuge islands on Loose Road both north and south of the junction with The Farrows;
- There are three pedestrian refuge islands on Loose Road between Wheatsheaf Close and the junction with Sutton Road and Cranborne Avenue; and
- There is a Public Right of Way between Sutton Road following Sutton Heights heading north through the wooded area between the residential properties on Wellington Street and Graveney Road (located approximately 120m from Wellington Street Junction).

## **CYCLISTS**

4.5.7. There are no National Cycle routes within the Scheme boundary or which will be affected by the Scheme.

4.5.8. There are cycle lanes on both the north and southbound lanes of Loose Road between the Ambulance Station and approximately number 356 Loose Road. The cycle lane on the northbound carriageway continues to approximately number 343 loose Road. No further cycle lanes have been identified so it is assumed that cyclists use the road with no segregation where there is no cycle lane provided.

## 4.6. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

4.6.1. There are a number of community facilities which are situated within or adjacent to the Scheme and vulnerable users using these facilities have the potential to be disproportionately affected. The following facilities have been identified:

### MEDICAL FACILITIES

4.6.2. The following medical facilities were identified within or adjacent to the Scheme:

- The Loose Medical Centre, Payden's Pharmacy and PhysioFit Kent are located just off Loose Road on Boughton Lane at the southern end of the proposed improvement works;
- The Mote Medical Practice Branch Surgery is located on Cripple Street, just off Loose Road at the southern end of the proposed improvement works; and
- The Maidstone South Ambulance Community Response Post is located on Loose Road at the southern end of the proposed Scheme.

### SCHOOLS/ EDUCATION

4.6.3. The following schools and education facilities were identified within or adjacent to the Scheme:

- The South Borough Primary School (300 pupils) is located on Loose Road at the northern end of the proposed improvement works;
- The Smarties Nursery and Little Stars Pre-School are located on Stagshaw Close, 115 metres (m) and 230m respectively from Loose Road, accessed via Postley Road, at the northern end of the proposed improvement works;
- The Maidstone Grammar School (1232 pupils) is located on Barton Road approximately 190m from Loose Road at the northern end of the proposed improvement works;
- The Five Acre Wood School (309 pupils), New Line Learning Academy (570 pupils) and Maidstone Day Nursery & Pre-school are located approximately 350m to the east of Loose Road and are accessed via Boughton Lane;
- The Loose Primary (654 pupils) School is located on Loose Road approximately 900m to the south of the proposed development works;
- The Maidstone South Kumon Math and English Study Centre is located within the Maidstone YMCA on Melrose Close, approximately 210m from Loose Road at the southern end of the development works; and
- There are two schools within proximity to Sutton Road comprising Discovery Day Nursery and Tree Tops Primary Academy located approximately 300m south from Sutton Road.

4.6.4. The Pupil numbers provided are from the Schools Guide website (2018) which uses 2017 National School Census Data.

### LEISURE FACILITIES

4.6.5. The following recreation facilities were identified within or adjacent to the Scheme:

- Loose Road Bowls Club is located on Loose Road at the northern extent of the proposed works;
- Maidstone Skatepark, Maidstone Hockey Club and South Park (park and garden) are located on Armstrong Road, approximately 350m and 150m from Loose Road respectively, at the northern end of the development works;
- There are allotments on Old Loose Hill, approximately 1km to the south west of the Scheme;
- Maidstone Leisure Centre and Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club are located approximately 600m to the east of Loose Road at the northern end of the Scheme;
- Flair School of Dance is located approximately 500m to the south east of Loose Road at the southern end of the Scheme;
- King George V Recreation Ground is located approximately 900m to the south of the Scheme; and
- Maidstone YMCA is located approximately 190m to the west of Loose Road at the southern extent of the Scheme. The YMCA hosts Loose Road Sports and Community Centre which contains a fitness suite, crèche, dance studio, all weather football pitches, pre-school, café, kid's activities and meeting room hire. Adult activities hosted at the YMCA include badminton, basketball, football, cricket, football pitches, over 60's sessions, fitness classes and ante natal courses. Children's activities include birthday parties, roller skating, holiday club, craft workshops, dance, kickboxing, cheerleading and basketball. The YMCA also hosts disability sessions for curling, indoor football, dance and boccia.

## **CARE FACILITIES**

4.6.6. The following care facilities were identified within or adjacent to the Scheme:

- Magnolia House Nursing Home is located on Cripple Street, just off Loose Road at the southern extent of the development works. Magnolia House is a care home providing accommodation for up to six people who require personal care and who have a learning disability. The home is wheelchair accessible;
- Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust/ The Oast is an assisted living residence on Plains Avenue, just off Loose Road in the middle of the development extent. The Oast provides accommodation for a maximum of 28 elderly residents and has wheelchair access; and
- Loose Court is a 41 bedroom care home, Loose Court treats elderly people with dementia, physical disabilities and sensory impairments.

## **PLACES OF WORSHIP**

4.6.7. There are a no places of worship that fall within the Scheme boundary.

4.6.8. The closest place of worship is The Vine Church located approximately 350m from Loose Road on Boughton Lane, the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnessess located 500m north of Sutton Road, and Christ Church, Park Road, Maidstone located 350m south from Sutton Road.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

4.6.9. The A229 Loose Road is the main conduit from the south into Maidstone central business district. Maidstone town centre hosts many employers including retail

facilities, museums, hotels, supermarkets, courts and a prison, and the A274 Sutton Road converges with the A229 approximately 1.5km south of Maidstone facilitating traffic movements from Shepway, Willington and Parkwood

- 4.6.10. In addition to Maidstone town centre and the employment provided by the medical, education, leisure and care facilities listed in the sections above, there are many employers in closer proximity to the Scheme. South Park Business Village and Fountain Enterprise Park are home to many businesses. These are located on Enterprise Road, accessed via Armstrong Road, approximately 350m from Loose Road, at the northern end of the Scheme. These include Arriva, Michael James Insurance Services Ltd., Hug-Many Ltd., Bradley Bishop Estate Agents, Jem Fruits, DG Solutions (window supplier), Stones Accountancy Ltd., Brokertech, Cunningham Lindsey Ltd., BT Business Phone Systems, NCS Technology Ltd., Bohen bathroom renovators and DVSA Maidstone Driving Test Centre. Many other businesses are located in the business parks listing accounting, telecom services, business services, engineering, IT, estate management and travel agencies as their core business.

### **COMMUTERS**

- 4.6.11. When travelling by car, commuters from the residential dwellings either side of Loose Road are likely to use the Scheme area of Loose Road to travel to work in Maidstone or the businesses located in the business parks off Armstrong Road. In addition, commuters from Loose and Linton are likely to travel to Maidstone using Loose Road. 2011 Census data found that the top five destinations for people commuting from Maidstone were Tonbridge and Malling, Medway, Tunbridge Wells, London and Ashford with almost a quarter of out-commuting residents working in London (ONS, 2011).
- 4.6.12. There are many bus routes that commuters are likely to use to travel into Maidstone. Information on local bus stops and their routes is provided in Section 4.5.
- 4.6.13. Sutton Road has many bus stops along its entirety, with the majority of businesses being situated on Sutton Road, therefore those travelling by bus have several options along Sutton Road of where they may like to stop/travel from. Those commuting by car from the residential areas adjacent to Sutton Road are likely to travel towards Maidstone using Sutton Road before converging with A229 Loose Road.

## 5. EQUALITY IMPACT SCREENING OUTCOMES

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### EQI SCREENING OVERVIEW

- 5.1.1. The EqI Screening assessment was completed for the A229 Loose Road Corridor at outline design phase, taking into account the baseline information outlined in this document. The screening assessment is presented in [Table 7](#) and supported by the rationale provided in the following sections.
- 5.1.2. This EqIA has been prepared for the Scheme at outline design phase has been completed on the basis of the conclusions of the EqI Screening. It is recommended that the rationale for the EqI Screening and subsequent conclusions of the EqIA are reviewed and updated if necessary at the detailed design phase.
- 5.1.3. On completion of the EqI Screening, it was identified that key elements of the Scheme which could disproportionately affect vulnerable groups within the study area are as follows:
- Scheme development and design considerations:
    - Amendments to public transport facilities, such as bus stops;
    - Changes to crossing points and public realm design;
    - Improvements in walking, cyclist and horse riding (WCAH) facilities;
    - Improved access to healthcare facilities; and
    - Impacts on physical accessibility to rural and community facilities, due to increases in PRow length.
  - Construction considerations:
    - Pedestrian or community severance due to disruption caused by construction works;
    - Temporary changes to the road or footpath;
    - Diversions and changes to key routes;
    - Temporary changes to public transport facilities; and
    - Noise, dust, light and environmental impacts associated with the Scheme have the potential to impact on health and wellbeing of the local populations.
- 5.1.4. The KCC Diversity Team has reviewed the EqI Screening document for the Scheme and have agreed the content of this the EqIA for the outline design stage. Therefore, on the basis of the sensitive receptors outlined above, the EqIA Screening identified that a full EqIA should be carried out for the following protected characteristic groups:
- Gender (including pregnancy and maternity);
  - Age; and
  - Disability.

**Table 7: Equality Impact Screening**

Protected Group	Impact		
	Negative Impact	Positive Impact	Unknown
Age	Yes during construction	Yes during operation	
Disability	Yes during construction	Yes during operation	
Gender (including pregnancy and maternity)	Yes during construction	Yes during operation	
Gender identity/ Transgender			Yes until consultation with KIMS Hospital has been undertaken
Race	No	No	
Religion and Belief	No	No	
Sexual Orientation	No	No	
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No	No	

## AGE

- 5.1.5. Road disruption during construction may impact on school students and education escorts travelling to the local schools and pre-schools. Students and education escorts will also benefit from positive impacts of eased congestion during operation.
- 5.1.6. Medical facilities in the vicinity including Loose Medical Centre and the Mote Medical Practice are likely to be used by older and younger people. As these facilities are directly accessed via the Scheme area, these groups may be adversely affected by congestion and possible diversions during construction of the new junctions but may also benefit from the road improvements and eased congestion during operation.
- 5.1.7. There are many care facilities in the vicinity of the works such as The Oast and Loose Court which specialise in the care of elderly people. As these facilities are directly accessed via the Scheme area, the residents from these facilities may be adversely affected by increased congestion, noise and dust from the works and



possible diversions during construction. There is the potential for this group to benefit from reduced congestion and the potential noise and air quality improvements during operation.

- 5.1.8. Loose Road Bowls Club, Mote Park Indoor Bowls Club and the allotments on Old Loose Hill are likely to have many older members/attendees who may be affected by increased congestion, noise and dust from the works during construction. Loose Road Bowls Club is accessed directly via the Scheme area so members may also be inconvenienced by possible diversions during construction. There is the potential for this group to benefit from reduced congestion during operation.
- 5.1.9. There are many facilities for younger people in the vicinity of the development including; Maidstone Skatepark, South Park, Maidstone Leisure Centre, Flair School of Dance and Maidstone YMCA (which offers children's parties, roller skating, holiday club, craft workshops, dance, kickboxing, cheerleading and basketball). This vulnerable user group may be affected by congestion, dust and noise during construction of the new junctions but may also benefit from the eased congestion and potential for improved air quality during operation.

## **DISABILITY**

- 5.1.10. Magnolia House provides care for those who require personal care and have a learning disability, Loose Court treats elderly people with dementia, physical disabilities and sensory impairments and The Oast provides accommodation for elderly residents and has wheelchair access. These care facilities are all located in the vicinity of the Scheme and as a result, residents and visitors might be adversely affected by any congestion during construction. Magnolia House and The Oast are accessed directly via the Scheme area so residents may also be inconvenienced by possible diversions during construction. Access to this facility should be considered during the detailed design of the construction and operational phases to ensure this user group is not disproportionately affected.
- 5.1.11. Five Acre Wood School on Boughton Lane is a District Special School for children and young people with profound, severe and complex learning difficulties, including Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Access to this facility should be carefully considered during the detailed design of the construction and operational phases to ensure this user group is not disproportionately affected by access, congestion, changes to layout, noise and air quality. Access is not directly affected by the proposed Scheme.
- 5.1.12. The YMCA hosts curling, indoor football, dance and boccia sessions for those with disabilities. Users of this facility may be disproportionately affected by congestion during construction but may benefit from eased congestion during operation.
- 5.1.13. The improvements to Wheatsheaf Junction also include traffic signal and tactile paving which will make crossing the road safer for all travellers. Those who are visually impaired will also benefit from improved infrastructure. Vegetation removal is also proposed to widen paths and visual splays, which during the operation of the scheme will benefit disabled users or those with impaired mobility to allow more space on the pavement and may reduce fear felt by pedestrians by moving them further away from the road.



- 5.1.14. It is recommended that specific consultation is undertaken with drivers with disabilities groups to identify levels of uptake and more clearly determine potential impacts on this group.
- 5.1.15. There is an opportunity to advance equality by engaging and consulting on the Scheme design with users of facilities with disabilities. The design should be mindful of future user groups of the road including age and disability. Consultation is recommended, but depending on the level of design available it may be more meaningful to undertake this at detailed design.

### **GENDER (INCLUDING PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY)**

- 5.1.16. The National Travel Survey (DfT, 2016) states that more men are likely to cycle meaning they could be more likely to be affected by any delays or disruption to cycle routes during construction in the short term but would experience long-term benefits from improved cycle routes during operation. When available the Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment (WCAH) required under DMRB requirements will be reviewed for the EqIA and it is recommended that a focus group is held for WCAH as part of the consultation.
- 5.1.17. As women make more trips taking children to school than men on average (DfT, 2014), the Scheme has the potential to impact journeys to and from educational facilities including the pre-schools and primary schools in the local vicinity and also those travelling to the secondary schools in Maidstone. As a result, women have the potential to be disproportionately affected by the Scheme.
- 5.1.18. The Pregnancy Mobility Index (van de Pol G, 2006) provides evidence that mobility restrictions suffered by pregnant women (particularly in the later stages of pregnancy) such as chronic back/pelvic/joint pain, pelvic instability, breathlessness and rib pain, differentiate them from the general population. These restrictions can affect mobility in accessing/leaving a vehicle and may also influence their capability and willingness to drive. As antenatal classes are held at the YMCA, those attending may be adversely affected by congestion during construction.
- 5.1.19. The National Travel Survey (DfT, 2016) also highlights that women up until approximately 50 years of age are more likely to make a walking trip than men, with 21% of trips being made for education and education escort and 19% for shopping, both activities which are carried out in higher proportion by women. The schools in the local vicinity indicate that women could be disproportionately affected during the construction phase by closed footpaths and congestion on the roads.
- 5.1.20. Women also make a higher number of trips by local bus service than men (DfT, 2016), meaning they could be disproportionately affected by any temporary or permanent bus stop amendments.

### **GENDER IDENTITY/TRANSGENDER**

- 5.1.21. There is no clear evidence, data or rationale to consider the Scheme will have a disproportionate effect on this group at the outline design stage. This assumption will be reviewed following any consultation and during the detailed design stage.



## **RACE**

- 5.1.22. There is no clear evidence, data or rationale to consider the Scheme will have a disproportionate effect on this group at the outline design stage. This assumption will be reviewed following any consultation and during the detailed design stage.

## **RELIGION AND BELIEF**

- 5.1.23. There is no clear evidence, data or rationale to consider the Scheme will have a disproportionate effect on this group at the outline design stage. This assumption will be reviewed following any consultation and during the detailed design stage.
- 5.1.24. Although there are churches within the local area (as described in Section 4.5.7), it is anticipated that access to these locations will not be inhibited. Therefore, no disproportionate impact is predicted on the elderly or on those of the Christian faith.

## **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

- 5.1.25. There is no clear evidence, data or rationale to consider the Scheme will have a disproportionate effect on this group at the outline design stage. This assumption will be reviewed following any consultation and during the detailed design stage.

## **MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS**

- 5.1.26. There is no clear evidence, data or rationale to consider the Scheme will have a disproportionate effect on this group at the outline design stage. This assumption will be reviewed following any consultation and during the detailed design stage.

## **SUMMARY**

- 5.1.27. To conclude, both men and women might be disproportionately affected by different aspects of the Scheme in the short term during construction although there is the potential for positive benefits in the long term depending on the Scheme design. Older and younger people and those with disabilities have the potential to be adversely impacted by the Scheme during construction but also could benefit from the improved access to care and medical facilities during operation.
- 5.1.28. On the basis of the potential impacts that have been outlined above, the Screening identified that a full EqIA should be carried out during the outline design stage for the following protected characteristic groups:
- Gender (including pregnancy and maternity);
  - Age; and
  - Disability.
- 5.1.29. Actions to be undertaken as part of the EqIA include:
- A review of the WCAH assessment;
  - Engagement with the medical facilities, schools, recreation facilities and disability groups during consultation, particularly Five Acre Wood School; and
  - It is recommended that a focus group is held for WCAH as part of the consultation.

## 6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1. In line with the recommendations of the Eql Screening (Section 5), this EqlA assesses the potential effects of the Scheme on the following protected groups:
- Age;
  - Disability; and
  - Gender (including pregnancy and maternity).
- 6.1.2. The level (detailed in Table 9) of the following impacts have been considered for each protected group, and the justification for the level of impact is outline in sections 6.2 to 6.4 below:
- Scheme development and design considerations:
    - Amendments to public transport facilities, such as bus stops;
    - Changes to crossing points and public realm design;
    - Improvements in walkers, cyclist and horse riding (WCAH) facilities;
    - Improved access to healthcare facilities; and
    - Impacts on physical accessibility to rural and community facilities, due to increases in PRoW length.
  - Construction considerations:
    - Pedestrian or community severance due to disruption caused by construction works;
    - Temporary changes to the road or footpath;
    - Diversions and changes to key routes;
    - Temporary changes to public transport facilities; and
    - Noise, dust, light and environmental impacts associated with the Scheme have the potential to impact on health and wellbeing of the local populations.
- 6.1.3. A summary of the consultation undertaken to undertake the assessment is provided in Appendix A.

### 6.2. AGE

#### HEALTH/CARE PROVIDERS

- 6.2.1. Medical facilities in the vicinity to the Scheme, including Loose Medical Centre and the Mote Medical Practice, are likely to be used by older and younger people. Please refer to Sections 5.1.6 and 5.1.7 for potential impacts.
- 6.2.2. There are many care facilities in the vicinity of the Scheme such as The Oast and Loose Court which specialise in the care of elderly people. The Oast provides residential care for up to 28 residents and Loose Court provides accommodation and support for up to 42 people who require personal care including those with dementia, mobility issues and sensory impairments. Please refer to Sections 5.1.10 for potential impacts.

## SCHOOLS/ EDUCATION

- 6.2.3. Engagement with local schools and pre-schools was undertaken to determine whether young people and education escorts will be affected by the development. Information was collated on school catchment areas, where pupils live and school/local bus routes. Pupil numbers provided are from the Schools Guide website (2018) which uses 2017 National School Census Data.
- 6.2.4. South Borough Primary School (300 pupils) is located on Loose Road at the northern end of the proposed improvement works. The School Guide (School Guide, 2018) uses National School Census Data 2017 to produce a heat map demonstrating where current pupils live. The heatmap for South Borough Primary School shows that many pupils live from King Street, north of The Mall, south to The Farrows, just off Loose Road and from Mote Park in the east to the Tesco Superstore in Tovil. This covers the full extent of the proposed works on Loose Road and suggests that pupils and education escorts will be impacted by congestion and any pedestrian facility changes during construction. Positive impacts might be seen during operation if congestion is reduced by the Scheme and if pedestrian facilities are improved.
- 6.2.5. Smarties Nursery and Little Stars Pre-School are located on Stagshaw Close, 115m and 230m respectively from Loose Road, accessed via Postley Road, at the northern end of the proposed improvement works. Pupils and education escorts are likely to be impacted by congestion and any pedestrian facility changes during construction. Positive impacts might be seen during operation if congestion is reduced by the improvement works and if pedestrian facilities are improved.
- 6.2.6. Maidstone Grammar School (1232 pupils) is located on Barton Road approximately 190m from Loose Road at the northern end of the Scheme. The heatmap for Maidstone Grammar School shows that many pupils live in the following areas:
- Maidstone;
  - Loose;
  - Bearsted;
  - Wrotham;
  - Kings Hill;
  - Linton;
  - Hollingbourne;
  - Harrietsham;
  - Sutton Valence;
  - Hawkenbury; and
  - Staplehurst.
- 6.2.7. The nearest train station to the Scheme is Maidstone West, from which pupils will walk via the junction with Barton Road, within the Scheme.
- 6.2.8. The following bus stops on Loose Road serve Maidstone Grammar School; Sheal's Crescent, Heather Drive and Armstrong Road. These stops serve routes from Cranbrook, Maidstone, Sandhurst, Headcorn, Sutton Valence, Crafty Green, Kingswood and Coxheath. Driving directions from the M25 on the school's website do not suggest drivers use Loose Road but congestion caused by the Scheme at the Sheal's crescent junction might spill over into Hastings Road and St Philip's Avenue.

The impact on pupils and education escorts will be reviewed when traffic plans become available.

- 6.2.9. Five Acre Wood School (309 pupils), New Line Learning Academy (570 pupils) and Maidstone Day Nursery and Pre-school are located approximately 350m to the east of Loose Road and are accessed via Boughton Lane. The heatmap for Five Acre Wood School shows that many pupils live south of Maidstone, in Parkwood and Sutton Valence. The school's parent handbook suggests that the majority of pupils travel to school using transport organised by the local authority which utilises taxis, minibuses, small coaches and ambulances. It is likely that pupils travelling from Maidstone will be affected by congestion during construction on Loose Road.
- 6.2.10. The heatmap for New Line Learning Academy shows that many pupils live from the A229 Loose Road junction with the A249 in the north, south east to Parkwood. The nearest bus stops to the school are The Wheatsheaf, Anglesey Avenue, The Swan on the Loose Road, or Mangravet Shops on Sutton Road. The Wheatsheaf and The Swan bus stops have the potential to be affected by the Scheme during construction and in the long term,
- 6.2.11. Loose Primary (654 pupils) School is located on Loose Road approximately 900m to the south of the Scheme. The School Guide heatmap shows that many pupils live from Sheal's Crescent in the north to Loose in the south and towards Parkwood in the east, as a result it is likely that many pupils will be affected by congestion and noise and dust during construction.
- 6.2.12. Maidstone South Kumon Math and English Study Centre is located within the Maidstone YMCA on Melrose Close, approximately 210m from Loose Road at the southern end of the development works. It is likely that pupils and education escorts will be impacted by congestion during construction.

## **LEISURE FACILITIES**

- 6.2.13. Flair School of Dance operates their Loose Centre from the YMCA on Cripple Street on weekdays and from New Line Learning on Boughton Lane at the weekends. Both locations are located off the cross road at the Swan Pub. Classes run every day of the week except Monday and the age of students ranges from 18 months old to adults. 277 students under the age of 17 attend classes across the week. Most students drive or are driven to class and some use the bus, alighting at the Swan bus stop.
- 6.2.14. The owner of Flair School of Dance, expressed concern for young people who attend classes by bus in the evenings, having to walk further in the dark during the winter months if the Swan bus stop is moved further away from the dance school during construction or permanently. It was also highlighted through consultation with the owner that many students are currently affected by congestion on the Loose Road, with students missing classes reportedly due to temporary lights on Loose Road. The Scheme may have a positive impact on students attending the school if congestion is eased in the long term. However, congestion during construction and the relocation of bus stops could adversely affect young people attending the dance school. A summary of pupils attending classes is provided in [Table 8](#) below.

**Table 8: Flair School of Dance student information**

Day	Age Range	Number of students attending	Gender Ratio	Escorts	Transport method
Tuesday	18 months to 10 years	55	76% female	100% female	unknown
Tuesday	Adult	unknown	100% female	N/A	1 person walks, remainder drive
Wednesday	18 months to 15 years	32	62% female	97% female	unknown
Thursday	18 months to 16 years	39	92% female	100% female	Older students use bus
Friday	18 months to 8 years	17	88% female	100% female	100% car
Saturday	18 months to 16 years	77	87% female	90% female	92% car 8% walk
Sunday	5-11 years	Unknown-class begins in September	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown

### 6.3. DISABILITY

6.3.1. Five Acre Wood School (309 pupils) is located approximately 350m to the east of Loose Road and is accessed via Boughton Lane. Five Acre Wood School is an all age (2-19) day district special school for children and young people with a wide range of additional educational needs within the profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties, complex needs, challenging behaviour, sensory impairments and autistic spectrum. The heatmap for Five Acre Wood School shows that many pupils live south of Maidstone, in Parkwood and Sutton Valence. The school's parent handbook suggests that the majority of pupils travel to school using transport organised by the local authority which utilises taxis, minibuses, small coaches and ambulances. It is likely that pupils travelling from Maidstone will be affected by congestion on Loose Road. It should be noted that disruption or delays to journeys could cause these users extra discomfort or anxiety. Consultation with the

school should be undertaken during detailed design, and throughout construction to ensure impacts on pupils are minimised during construction and post construction.

- 6.3.2. Magnolia House is a residential home providing care and support for up to six people with learning disabilities and autism including some people with limited verbal communication. The service is arranged over two floors and is wheelchair accessible. At present, only women live at the property. The facility provides care for people of all ages, and staff and residents utilise bus routes on Loose Road for trips out. The nearest bus stop is the Swan on Loose Road. It is likely that residents travelling to Maidstone will be affected by congestion on Loose Road and any changes to the Swan bus stop in addition to noise and dust during construction. Consultation should be undertaken with the care providers to ensure that the impacts on residents are minimised.
- 6.3.3. There many care facilities in the vicinity of the works such as The Oast and Loose Court which specialise in the care of elderly people. The Oast provides residential care for up to 28 residents and Loose Court provides accommodation and support for up to 42 people who require personal care including those with dementia, mobility issues and sensory impairments. The residents from these facilities may be affected by increased congestion, noise and dust from the works during construction. There is the potential for this group to benefit from reduced congestion and the subsequent noise and air quality improvements during operation.

## **6.4. GENDER (INCLUDING PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY)**

### **HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS**

- 6.4.1. Loose Medical Centre on Boughton Lane holds ante-natal clinics fortnightly on a Tuesday morning. The Pregnancy Mobility Index (van de Pol G, 2006) provides evidence that mobility restrictions suffered by pregnant women (particularly in the later stages of pregnancy) such as chronic back/pelvic/joint pain, pelvic instability, breathlessness and rib pain, differentiate them from the general population. These restrictions can affect mobility in accessing/leaving a vehicle and may also influence their capability and willingness to drive. It is likely that pregnant women attending antenatal classes at Loose Medical centre will be impacted by congestion during construction.

### **SCHOOLS**

- 6.4.2. As women make more trips undertaking education escort than men on average (DfT, 2014), women taking children to many of the local schools will be affected by congestion during the construction phase as outlined in detail in Section 6.2 but will benefit from eased congestion during operation.

### **LEISURE FACILITIES**

- 6.4.3. Flair School of Dance runs their Loose Centre from the YMCA on Cripple Street on weekdays and from New Line Learning on Boughton Lane at the weekends. The majority of students and care providers bringing children to classes are female (see [Table 8](#)). Most students drive or are driven to class and some use the bus, alighting at the Swan bus stop. As outlined in paragraph 6.2.13, the owner of Flair School of Dance, the owner expressed concern for students who attend classes by bus in the

evenings, having to walk further in the dark during the winter months if the Swan bus stop is moved further away from the dance school during construction or permanently. The owner also highlighted that many students and females who take students to classes are currently affected by congestion on the Loose Road, with students missing classes reportedly due to temporary lights on Loose Road. 100% of teachers and teaching assistants at the dance school are female and mostly travel to work by car from Staplehurst, Loose, Willington Street and Hermitage Lane. The Scheme may have a positive impact on female students attending the dance school and the female staff if congestion is eased in the long term. However, congestion during construction and the relocation of bus stops could adversely affect females attending and working at the dance school, particularly those who are pregnant.

## 6.5. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TABLE

6.5.1. The assessment presented in [Table 9](#) assigns either a high, medium or low negative or positive effect for each of the protected characteristic groups.

**Table 9: Equality Impact Assessment**

Protected Group	High negative impact	Medium negative impact	Low negative impact	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact
Age			<p>Likely to affect a small number of elderly people in the short term during construction due to increased congestion.</p> <p>Likely to affect many school age children in the short term during construction due to congestion.</p> <p>Likely to be reversible.</p>	<p><b>Potential for low level positive impact in the long term if consultation is undertaken during detailed design to provide access enhancements to road and pedestrian facilities.</b></p>
Disability			<p>Likely to affect a small number of people with disabilities in the short term during construction due to increased congestion. Likely to be reversible.</p>	<p><b>Potential for positive impact in the long term if consultation is undertaken during detailed design to provide access enhancements.</b></p>



Protected Group	High negative impact	Medium negative impact	Low negative impact	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact
Gender			Likely to affect a small number of those within the protected group due to increased congestion during construction. Likely to be reversible.	<b>Potential for low level positive impact in the long term if consultation is undertaken during detailed design to provide access enhancements.</b>
Gender identity/ Transgender	<b>No impacts anticipated on protected group.</b>			
Race	<b>No impacts anticipated on protected group.</b>			
Religion and Belief	<b>No impacts anticipated on protected group.</b>			
Sexual Orientation	<b>No impacts anticipated on protected group.</b>			
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	<b>No impacts anticipated on protected group.</b>			

## 6.6. MITIGATION AND MONITORING

6.6.1. The following actions are recommended following this EqIA:

- The presence of Five Acre Wood School and the care / residential facilities should be highlighted within the Scheme’s traffic management plan, and construction environmental management plan. These will need to incorporate specific mitigation measures identified in consultation with these establishments.
- It should be noted that emergency services should be consulted with for temporary works if they are to interfere with access, when developing the traffic management plan.
- A communications plan should be put in place that enables closures / diversions of any routes or bus services be communicated directly to these facilities including all community facilities and recreational facilities (, WCAH Groups and Flair School of Dance which are directly impacted by the works to A229 Loose Road).



- 6.6.2. Furthermore, it is suggested that the communications plan for the Scheme is extended to include a database of sensitive receptors to be notified by the Environmental Co-ordinator or the contractor carrying out the works. This would be additional to any statutory notifications required for route closures / diversions. It is recommended that it is the responsibility of the Environmental Co-ordinator or KCC to ensure the list of sensitive facility contacts is kept up to date and correct throughout the duration of construction.

## **6.7. NEXT STEPS**

- 6.7.1. WSP will continue to engage with the education and healthcare providers with whom consultation was previously unsuccessful. In particular, consultation will be undertaken with Five Acre Wood School to ascertain how vulnerable users may be affected.
- 6.7.2. During detailed design, it is recommended that focus groups be held with disability groups, pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport to ensure that the impact of the Scheme is reduced and the maximum positive benefits are reaped from the Scheme. As noted above, the Scheme's traffic management plan should consider Five Acre Wood School, the care / residential facilities and consult with the emergency services on temporary works. Additionally, the communications plan should enable closures / diversions of any routes or bus services be communicated directly to the facilities noted.
- 6.7.3. Further recommendations include;
- Ensure input from EqIA to the Scheme construction environmental management plan to identify opportunities to reduce impacts to protected groups during the construction phase; and
  - Ensure input from EqIA to detailed design to identify opportunities to reduce impacts to protected groups and maximise opportunities for improvements during operation.
- 6.7.4. This EqIA will be updated during the detailed design stage and will incorporate any further information gained from consultation activities which affect the outcome of the assessment.

## 7. SUMMARY

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- 7.1.1. To conclude, low level, reversible negative effects are anticipated in the short term during construction on three protected groups; Age, Disability and Gender. There is potential for positive effects in the long term if opportunities for enhancement or minimising barriers for disability groups, pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport.to access are identified during detailed design.

## 8. DATA SOURCES

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## APPENDIX A

### Summary of consultation undertaken

Facility	Contact	Response	Outcome
PhysioFit Kent	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
South Borough Primary School	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Smarties Nursery	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Little Stars Pre-School	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Maidstone Grammar School	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.

Facility	Contact	Response	Outcome
Five Acre Wood School	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
New Line Learning Academy	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Asquith Maidstone Day Nursery & Pre-school	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Loose Primary	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Loose Road Bowls Club	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	Further email sent 04/09/2018. No response received.
Flair School of Dance	Email sent on 19/07/2018	Flair School of Dance provided detailed information on the number of pupils per class, their gender and mode of transport used to attend classes. The owner welcomed the works providing disruption is minimised as congestion is already an issue. Flair Scholl of Dance welcomed further consultation.	N/A

Facility	Contact	Response	Outcome
Loose Court	Email sent on 19/07/2018	No response.	N/A
Maidstone South Kumon Math and English Study Centre	Email sent on 01/08/2018	No response.	04/09/2018
Maidstone Leisure Centre	Online enquiry submitted 19/07/2018	No response.	N/A
Maidstone YMCA	Online enquiry submitted 19/07/2018	No response.	N/A
Loose Road Sports and Community Centre	Online enquiry submitted 19/07/2018	No response.	N/A



**Kent County Council (KCC) - Project Manager**

Name

Signature

**Kent County Council (KCC) - Head of Service**

Name

Signature



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