

**By:** David Hall, Head of Transport and Development

**To:** Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview Committee – 16 July 2009

**Subject:** Gravesend Transport Quarter

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** This report is to inform Members of the current proposals for the Gravesend Transport Quarter, give details of the current public consultation taking place on the Masterplan and ask Members to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste gives his support to the Masterplan and in particular gives approval in principle to the alterations to the highway network including the Rathmore Road Link.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The main elements of the Transport Quarter of Gravesend Town Centre are the railway station and the bus stops in Garrick Street and Clive Road (Figure 1). The area has been long overdue for improvement and consequently a working group was set up in 2007 to masterplan a new Transport Interchange and enhancements to the main entry to the town centre (Figure 2). The Objectives are given in Appendix A. The group consists of the key stakeholders, with a view to maximising the benefits from various funding bodies. It is led by the Borough Council and has officers from both the Borough and Kent Highway Services and representatives from Network Rail, Southeastern and *FASTRACK*.
- 1.2 There was a high level meeting held in London on 18 June 2008 to impress the benefits of the project upon the Government Department of Communities and Local Government to secure a grant for its pump priming. This involved Keith Ferrin and Cllr. Mike Snelling (as Leader of the Executive, Gravesham Borough Council), Andrew Mundon (Route Enhancement Manager, Network Rail), Vince Lucas (Southeastern) and Paul Hudson (Thames Gateway Executive, Delivery, Communities & Local Government).
- 1.3 The current masterplan was presented to Gravesham Borough Council's Cabinet on 1 June this year and a copy of that report is included as Appendix B. This gives a background to the project, masterplan drawing and programme of consultation. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix C. A3 size versions of the masterplan and exhibition material will be available at this meeting.
- 1.4 The key enabling element of the plan is to remove through traffic from Clive Road and Barrack Row by building the Rathmore Road Link. This will be essentially a two way road plus an east to west bus-only lane running between Darnley Road and Wrotham Road through the Rathmore Road car park.
- 1.5 The other major change to the ring road, which enables the formation of a Town Square and hence better link the Civic centre with the Town centre, is to

divert the ring road traffic round the back of the Civic Centre along Woodville Place.

## **2. Funding and Programming**

- 2.1 Gravesham Borough Council have secured a grant of up to £8m from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to pump prime the project, with the money needing to be spent by 31 March 2011.
- 2.2 The overall project is currently estimated to cost over £50m. Funding combines that from the Public Sector (LTP and HCA), Network Rail and Southeastern Railways (DfT Access funding, National Stations Improvement Programme (NCIP), car park enlargement fund, platform extension fund), Development Section 106 agreements and receipts from enabling development.
- 2.3 Money for the Rathmore Road link itself was to be gathered from the Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Tariff (£10m) as one of the schemes in the Strategic Transport Improvement Programme (STIP) however, until the tariff approach has been formally adopted in both the Gravesham and Dartford LDFs there are legal problems in requiring developments to pay it. Hence, in the mean time, contributions to the scheme will be gathered in the normal way from section 106 agreements and from the LTP.
- 2.4 Although the Rathmore Road Link is the key to unlocking the potential improvements in Clive Road, Barrack Row and Garrick Street, realistically it cannot be built by the March 2011 deadline for spending the £8m HCA money. This is because, although virtually all the land for the scheme is either existing highway or in the ownership of Gravesham Borough Council, there is some third party land required at its western end and there is a requirement for planning permission. Hence, the first change to the ring road is likely to be to divert the traffic round the back of the Civic Centre along Woodville Place, being funded from the HCA money.
- 2.5 Any blight claims arising from the proposals at this stage can also be dealt with from the HCA money.

## **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Subject to the views of this Committee, it is proposed to recommend that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste gives his support to the Masterplan and in particular gives approval in principle to the alterations to the highway network including the Rathmore Road Link.

### **Background Documents:**

Kent Highway Services file wT/G/127

### **Appendices:**

Figure 1: Gravesend Town Centre Ring Road showing Transport Quarter

Figure 2: The Transport Quarter Scheme

Appendix A: Objectives of the Masterplan


Appendix B: Report of 1 June 2009 to Gravesham Borough Council's Cabinet

Appendix C: Copy of Consultation Questionnaire

**Contact: Colin Martin**

Transportation Engineer for Kent Thameside

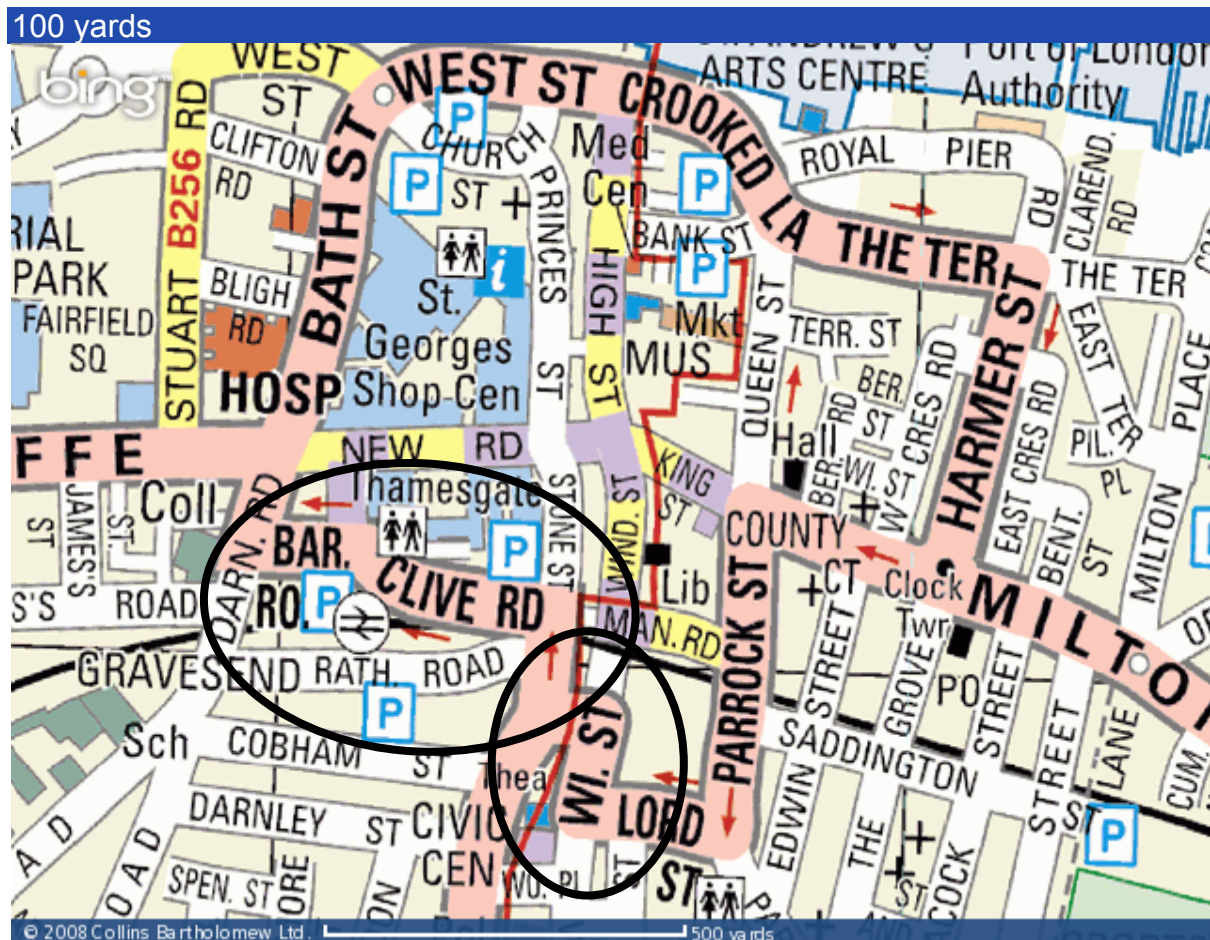
 [colin.martin@kent.gov.uk](mailto:colin.martin@kent.gov.uk)

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## Gravesend Town Centre Ring Road

Showing Transport Quarter



Transport Quarter approximates to areas within the two rings

Large Ring

Section of Ring Road to be bypassed - Clive Road & Barrack Row  
Road to be realigned and upgraded for Ring Road - Rathmore Road

Small Ring

Civic Centre - Ring Road to be moved from in front to behind along Woodville Place

### OBJECTIVES OF MASTER PLAN

The master plan for the Transport Quarter is a project based on partnership that complements existing regeneration initiatives for Gravesend. It is a comprehensive regeneration scheme that will create:

#### **Accessibility & Public Transport**

- a new Public Transport Interchange which links local and *Fastrack* bus services with Southeastern Rail Services and from December 2009 CTRL Domestic Rail Services
- an enhanced Railway Station building to meet the requirements of the new service into London which will halve the travel time to 24 minutes
- a DDA compliant footbridge over the railway, which includes discreet access on to the platforms, will create an accessible town centre by directly linking Rathmore Road and Clive Road
- the implementation of the new traffic layout, which realigns and widens Rathmore Road, removes through traffic from Clive Road and Barrock Row and all but buses and taxis from Garrick Street, will improve the traffic circulation within the town centre
- a new taxi rank adjacent to the railway station

#### **Homes & Jobs**

- new homes
- new places of work

#### **Sustainable & Integrated Communities**

- residential units above new rail user parking
- completion of Gravesend through the integration of the Transport Quarter within the town centre
- improvements to the existing public realm as well as the creation of new streets and spaces
- a new town quarter that is pedestrian friendly and promotes the use of public transport

**Gravesham Borough Council**

**Report to:** Cabinet  
1 June 2009

**Date:**

**Reporting officer:** Assistant Director, Special Projects

**Subject:** Gravesend Transport Quarter

**Purpose and summary of report:**

To present Members with the revised master plan for regenerating the Transport Quarter (see appendix 1) and seek agreement to undertake a public consultation exercise as set out in the attached draft "Transport Quarter Consultation Strategy" (appendix 2).

**Recommendations:**

That:

1. the revised Master Plan for the Transport Quarter be agreed for consultation;
2. Members approve the attached draft Transport Quarter consultation strategy and the programme included within it;
3. the results of the public consultation be reported to the earliest Cabinet; and
4. the Master Plan be used to inform the Local Development Framework

**1. Background**

- 1.1 The Transport Quarter immediately adjoins the shopping quarter and is the focal point of public transport within the town centre. The purpose of the Transport Quarter master plan is to create a major gateway for Gravesend with a transport interchange that integrates the railway station, bus services, Fastrack, taxi access, parking, set-down and pick up and pedestrian linkages.
- 1.2 Public consultation on the original Transport Quarter Master Plan was carried out by the Kent Architecture Centre and reported to Cabinet on 12 March 2007.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 12 January 2009, Cabinet were informed of progress and that a grant of £8 million had been secured from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to take the scheme forward. Members were also advised that the funds need to be defrayed by 31 March 2011.

**2. Progress**

- 2.1 The 2005 Master Plan proposed the inclusion of the Victoria Centre, the "Gala Bingo island block" and the rebuilding of the Darnley Road bridge. Following feedback from KCC Adult Education Services and owners/occupiers of

properties located within the island block from the original consultation, the Victoria Centre and the island block have been removed from the master plan.

- 2.2 The Council was advised by Network Rail in January 2009 that they were able to extend the existing platforms –and provide a third - within the existing footprint of the station and without the need to rebuild the Darnley Road bridge. The master plan has been amended accordingly and a technical reappraisal carried out to ensure that scheme is viable with the existing bridge.
- 2.3 In addition, the securing of HCA funds has enabled detailed studies to be commissioned on the proposed highway layout and junction design as part of the process of finalising design. This has identified a number of constraints which have been taken into account in the revised master plan.
- 2.4 The project co-ordinator attended a meeting of the Disability Equality Resource Group in order to ascertain their consultation needs, to ensure meaningful engagement. This has informed the consultation strategy and resulted in additional two week exhibition period within the Civic Centre foyer.
- 2.5 A presentation for members was held on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009 in order to re-engage members and consult on the revised master plan prior to going out to public consultation. The meeting was chaired by the Leader of the Council and was well supported with 24 members in attendance.
- 2.6 A copy of the revised Master Plan (2009) is attached (appendix 1) which reflects the changes outlined above.

### **3. Next Steps**

- 3.1 There is now a need to re-engage with the public and carry out further consultation on the amended Master Plan. The attached consultation strategy has been planned to meet the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement for major planning applications and is consistent with the requirements of the Local Development Framework.
- 3.2 Feedback from the consultation, including the treatment of suggestions and objections will be compiled into a report which will be brought before cabinet for consideration.

### **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1 Member's agreement to the revisions to the master plan, the consultation strategy and subsequent process are essential in progressing the Transport Quarter scheme.

### **5. Risk Assessment**

- 5.1 Delays to progress could threaten maximising the expenditure of HCA funding.

### **6. S.17 Crime and Disorder Act, 1988**

- 6.1 The master plan will make a positive contribution to Crime and Disorder issues.

## **7. Background papers to this report.**

7.1 Gravesend Transport Quarter - Community and Stakeholder Involvement, A report by Kent Architecture Centre (7 July 2006)

Note: These are available for inspection on request from John Pexton, Major Projects Co-ordinator.

# Appendix 1



- KEY
- Existing buildings
  - Proposed buildings
  - Improved public realm
  - Special carriageway treatment
  - New green areas
  - Trees (proposed and existing)
  - Existing pool
  - Cars
  - Bus lane

## Gravesend Transport Quarter DRAFT Master Plan

Date: 27 March 2009  
Drawing Number: 10165.611  
Issue: Preliminary  
Drawn by: BW  
Checked: MB



Scale 1:1000 @ A2

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### Gravesend Transport Quarter Consultation Strategy

#### Background

The objective of the Transport Quarter proposals is to bring benefits to the immediate neighbourhood by creating a new town quarter with identity, with the station and public transport interchange as its focus. The new Transport Quarter will act as a catalyst to the further regeneration of Gravesend, providing new and enhanced public realm and new homes.

Public consultation on the Transport Quarter draft Master Plan was carried out in late 2005/early 2006 by the Kent Architecture Centre. The 2005 Master Plan was revised in light of both feedback and subsequent constraints which have been identified in the intervening period. We now wish to re-engage the public and consult on the revised, amended plan.

#### Prior to Public Consultation

The consultation strategy has been planned to meet the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement and is consistent with the Local Development Framework process. Prior to going to public consultation again there have been further discussion with Officers, Councillors and other key stakeholders to inform the content of Transport Quarter Master Plan, to ensure that its objectives are met and that any statutory requirements can be viably met.

The following organisations and individuals are currently engaged with the project to ensure an approach which conforms to relevant legislation whilst satisfying the Master Plan requirements, prior to going out to public consultation:-

Councillors     GBC, KCC

Officers         GBC Planning, Conservation & Access, Property  
                      KCC Kent Highway Services

Key stakeholders:   Network Rail, Southeastern, Fastrack & Arriva

#### Consultation Strategy Proposal

In order to positively involve the local community there needs to be an agreed Public Consultation Strategy in place that sets out the approach of how this will be achieved. Public engagement needs to be a managed process which identifies:

- who is to be consulted,
- by what means/how will the consultations take place
- how outputs from the consultation process will inform the design
- how the results of the consultation will be fed back to consultees

#### Who Is To Be Consulted?

This proposal aims to draw as wide a range of consultees as possible including Gravesham residents as well as young people, public transport users, businesses, town centre workers and special interest groups.

In addition, the normal statutory consultations will be undertaken once the Masterplan is agreed and any planning applications submitted.

### **Programme of Engagement**

In order to ensure wide, effective public engagement different forms of communication with the community are required. These will be:-

Information packs supplied to local press 5<sup>th</sup> June

Four page wraparound on Gravesend Reporter 11<sup>th</sup> June edition

Via GBC Website

Via KCC Website (Link to GBC site)

Posters around the town

Flyer handouts to commuters and bus users

Flyer deliveries to town centre businesses

Direct invitation

A primary method of engagement will be via a two week long exhibition at Towncentric with a further two week exhibition at the Civic Centre including plans, post implementation photo montages and a model of the scheme.

### **Timetable:**

**Early June** - Youth Council consultation session, flyer handouts and deliveries, posters go up, website information available, direct invitations sent.

**Throughout June** - Education packs about the project sent to schools to engage young people. (Exercises on regeneration/traffic systems/decision-making)

**11<sup>th</sup> June** edition of the Gravesend Reporter - four page wrap around for highlighting the scheme and consultation opportunity.

**11<sup>th</sup> June** - A4 flyer extract of wraparound delivered to all town centre businesses.

**11<sup>th</sup> June** - Invitations delivered to all primary catchment area residents and businesses.

**12<sup>th</sup> June** - Exhibition of Transport Quarter proposals to be opened at Towncentric.

**12<sup>th</sup> June** Press Briefing – Leader; Mike Snelling & Youth Leader; Laura Hryniewicz, Cabinet Preview of Public Consultation/Exhibition  
Member Preview

**13<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2009 at TOWNCENTRIC**

Public exhibition period – open for public drop in. Group consultations to be timetabled within the period. The exhibition will be staffed during the first week.

**29<sup>th</sup> June – 10<sup>th</sup> July at Civic Centre**

Public exhibition period – open for public drop in. Group consultations to be timetabled within the period.

**27<sup>th</sup> July 2009** – Closure - The consultation period for responses will remain open for six weeks from the opening of the exhibition at Towncentric.

**Post consultation**

A report on the consultation and responses received will be compiled and taken to cabinet.

Copies of the report will be made publicly available post consultation via the website and hard copy from Towncentric and Civic Centre for viewing on request.

**Please take a few moments to complete this questionnaire**

Name ..... Home Postcode .....

- Are you: A. Working in the Town Centre   
 B. Visiting/Shopping in the Town   
 C. Commuter

How did you get in to town today? Tick one

- Walked   
 Cycled   
 By bus   
 By train   
 Car   
 Taxi

Other, please specify: .....

For each of the following statements please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree where 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree

**An integrated public transport interchange bringing together buses, trains, taxis and Fastrack is a good idea.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	O	O	O	O	O	Strongly Disagree

**I am in favour of the new Civic Square and improvements to public spaces the proposal will bring.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	O	O	O	O	O	Strongly Disagree

**I am in favour of the removal of through traffic from Clive Road and Barrack Row.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	O	O	O	O	O	Strongly Disagree

**The proposals will make the town centre more accessible (e.g. Civic Centre forecourt, new footbridge)**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	O	O	O	O	O	Strongly Disagree

**I support the proposal to provide additional car parking within the Transport Quarter.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	O	O	O	O	O	Strongly Disagree

**I am in favour of additional housing within the Transport Quarter.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	0	Strongly Disagree

**I support the proposals for the Transport Quarter.**

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly agree	0	0	0	0	0	Strongly Disagree

Comments:-

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