FINAL DRAFT

GROWTH WITHOUT GRIDLOCK

An Integrated Transport Strategy for Kent

18 September 2009

CONTENTS

Executive Summary 3

1. Introduction 4
2. KCC's Framework for Regeneration 6
3. Transport's Wider Contribution 8
4. Roads for Today and Tomorrow 11
5. Maximising the Benefits of Rail 19
6. Buses at the Heart of Kent 24
7. Kent's Airports 31
8. Kent's Ports & Waterways 33
9. Freight 35
10. Sustainable Transport 38
11. Climate Change & Transport Planning 41
12. The Vision for North Kent: An Example 43
13. Bringing it Together in Kent's Districts 45

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Travelling is an essential part of our modern lifestyles, giving us greater freedom in choosing where we live, work, shop, learn and play. Good transport connections are vital to support our economy, giving us access to a wide range of services, goods and opportunities and ensuring that we can live full and independent lives.

But with these benefits and freedoms there are negative impacts. Congestion on our roads causes delays and frustration for all users, pollution can cause ill health and contributes to climate change, transport routes can sever communities, being a hazard to vulnerable road users and our reliance on powered transport means we are less active, leading to obesity and poor health.

Kent is experiencing dramatic change, with high levels of housing and employment planned, both of which will mean more traffic on our transport network and without a dramatically different transport vision and strategy, this growth will result in gridlock.

Our response is an integrated transport network that promotes and encourages a wide range of different transport modes. It recognises that the private car will continue to be the most popular form of transport for most of us but that other forms of transport need to become more attractive, convenient, quicker, and more affordable so that we can continue to provide access without creating gridlock. This strategy outlines how this network can be achieved over the next 20 years.

This strategy outlines a range of measures and initiatives which will deliver this integrated transport network but there are five key elements that will need to be in place to ensure success.

1. **New infrastructure** – investment is needed to solve key bottlenecks on our transport network where congestion is a major barrier to regeneration

2. **Maximising the Benefits of High Speed 1** – ensuring that more of Kent's communities and businesses have better access to the high speed rail services, maximising the regeneration benefits across the county

3. **Integrated Bus Network** –developing and integrating 'Fastrack' type services, inter-urban coaches, local bus services and rural bus services to create a bus network that meets Kent's needs, complementing all other forms of transport

4. **Making Public Transport Travel Easier** – making public transport easier, simpler and cheaper to use through utilising new technology, integrated ticketing and promoting better understanding of how to use it

5. **Flexible Working** –supporting Kent's residents in working in ways that suit them and business and that also reduce the need to travel, especially at peak periods

1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to travel freely around our county, be it for leisure, work, school or business, is essential to our everyday lives

A good transport network is vital for Kent's residents and businesses to have access to opportunities, goods and services and to enable us to have enjoyable and fulfilling lives.

It is vital if we are to support the economic growth of existing businesses and attract new companies into the County.

It is vital if we are to cope with the government's targets to increase housing in Kent by 138,420 homes by 2026.

Technology has made the world seem a very much smaller place but we all still need to travel, whether to our workplace, to see friends and family, to visit Kent's countryside or enjoy our leisure time. And we expect to be able to travel easily and quickly from A to B with minimum hassle.

All of these expectations and demands increase pressure on our transport networks, on our environment and on us as individuals and our communities.

There are still many people in Kent who do not have access to a car and rely on buses, trains, walking and cycling to get around; this poses particular problems for people who live in rural areas and for a growing number of older people who do not want to drive.

Providing the right infrastructure which meets all of our residents' needs also has to be balanced against the use of natural resources, the effect of pollution and climate change on the environment and the fact that the transport network, as well as bringing communities together, can also act as a barrier to movement and be a source of danger.

The private car will continue to be the most popular and dominant form of transport for our residents. This reliance is also the reason why our road network is congested and why we must look to an integrated transport network to provide an attractive and complementary alternative..

If we are to avoid further congestion on our roads travelling by other forms of transport must become more desirable, quicker, more comfortable, safer and represent better value for money. Transport must provide access to jobs, schools, shops and leisure without creating gridlock and while protecting our county for future generations.

This strategy outlines how we propose to achieve this integrated network and fits into the overarching vision in Kent County Council's *Framework for Regeneration 2009-2020*.

It explains how we will work with our partners to meet the key challenge of "Delivering Growth without Gridlock" and aims to ensure that the decisions made and priorities set out by the County Council and all of its partners align and support our aims. District Transport Strategies will be developed within the context of the Local Development Frameworks to show the local projects and measures that will deliver the aims of this document.

Our vision is to create a high quality integrated transport network for Kent which is sustainable and available to all, supports continued regeneration, and enhanced economic prosperity and copes with the demands of housing growth.

Our objectives are:

- To improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors in Kent by improving access to services, goods and opportunities
- To support regeneration and housing growth in Kent whilst minimising congestion through an accessible, reliable and efficient integrated transport network
- To support independence and create equal opportunity for all of Kent's citizens through better access to key destinations and services
- To ensure that new and existing communities are designed to reduce the need to travel and encourage travel by a wide range of transport modes
- To stabilise and, where possible, reverse the adverse effect of transport and its infrastructure on the natural and built environment and on local communities
- To contribute to improved health, security, well-being and life-expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness caused by transport and by promoting travel modes that encourage physical exercise

2. KCC's FRAMEWORK FOR REGENERATION

Unlocking Kent's Potential (2009-2020)

The need for an Integrated Transport Strategy for Kent was identified in KCC's framework for regeneration titled ***Unlocking Kent's Potential: opportunities and challenges***.

This framework identifies the key opportunities and the challenges that must be addressed to deliver long lasting regeneration and economic growth in the County and establishes a series of priority areas for action by KCC and its partners for the next 20-25 years.

"Unlocking Kent's Potential" redefines regeneration to include not only economic growth but also transformation in education and skills, the culture renaissance in the county, an efficient transport system, developing a strong civic spirit, tackling climate change and improving housing conditions. It sets a clear direction for achieving economic growth and diversifying Kent employment; particularly across the professional sector.

Unlocking Kent's Potential represents KCC's first step towards defining what Kent will look like in 2020 and provides a baseline for a broad policy approach that will inform the development of a series of further strategies and implementation plans.

The regeneration framework will act as a catalyst to developing a range of strategies and approaches for taking regeneration in Kent forward. These strategies will be delivered through 2009 and become the collective evidence base to inform KCC's next four-year strategy and programme. An **Integrated Transport Strategy** for road, rail, air and sea, which addresses the key transport solutions that need to be implemented over the next 20-25 years, is one of these key strategies which will enable us to 'Unlock Kent's Potential'.

Other Strategic Drivers

One of the greatest influences on our transport network is the location of housing, employment and other land-uses. At the regional level, the South East Plan has identified the main development areas in Kent and the major infrastructure and other measures needed to support this growth and these are included in this Strategy.

At the district and borough level, Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) provide a long term vision and objectives for an area, ensuring that new development is in the right place to meet people's needs whilst minimising the impact on existing communities and the environment. By providing a long term vision for transport, the Integrated Transport Strategy will be a key influence on these LDFs and they will take into account transport proposals in these strategies, particularly those which require planning permission whilst the ITS recognises and supports the aspirations of each district and borough as expressed through their LDFs. This will be developed through individual integrated transport strategies developed in partnership with each of the boroughs/districts.

The County Council also has a statutory responsibility to prepare a Local Transport Plan (LTP), which outlines our policies and objectives for local transport and through this process, receives funding from central government for a set period of time for local transport improvements. This strategy provides a longer term vision and outline framework for the LTP.

3. TRANSPORT'S WIDER CONTRIBUTION

Economic Growth

Our economy is not as prosperous as other parts of the South-East, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per head of population well below the regional average, coupled with a higher unemployment rate. There are wide differences in prosperity and unemployment across Kent, with higher prosperity and employment in the west and lower levels in the east, particularly in the coastal towns. Being able to access jobs, services and other businesses is vital to improving Kent's economy and the transport sector itself employs around 5% of Kent's workforce. Therefore, building the right skills to run and manage Kent's transport network is of key importance.

Supporting Independence

The last decade has seen changes in the age profile of Kent's population. The most significant population increase has been among the 45-59 years old and as a consequence, Kent will have a population that is much older in 10 to 15 years than it is today. Also, forecasts predict that the older age groups will be found in areas like Thanet, Shepway, Canterbury and Dover with predominately younger populations in Ashford and Dartford.

These differences in population across Kent need to be taken into account when we consider improvements to the transport network, especially relating to access to key services, vulnerability, personal safety and affordability that will exacerbate social exclusion.

Climate Change

Kent has already experienced extreme weather events such as the Great Storm of 1987, flooding in 2000, heat waves in 2003 and 2006 plus other less dramatic but significant changes like rises in sea level, earlier emergence of certain species and earlier arrival and breeding of certain bird species. In the South East, it is suggested that by 2080, summers will be hotter by 2-6°C and summer rainfall will decrease by 20-60%; winters will be warmer by 1.5-3.5 °C and winter rainfall will increase by 10-30%. Kent is particularly vulnerable, due to its location and stretches of low lying coastline.

Transport is responsible for around 20% of the UK's domestic greenhouse gas emissions, with the majority coming from road transport. The way forward is to provide low-carbon transport options allied with better planning to reduce the need to travel which will support economic growth and housing growth and tackle climate change.

Rural Issues

Kent is a rural county. Some 85% of Kent's land area is classified as rural and almost 30% of the county's residents live in rural areas.

While several of Kent's districts regularly top national surveys measuring quality of life and the wealth of residents, almost half of the South East's worst areas of rural deprivation are to be found in Kent. These are concentrated in the districts of Ashford, Shepway and, to a lesser extent, Dover and Tunbridge Wells. Kent also has a significant number of rural residents with few skills and qualifications.

An improved transport network for rural areas, connecting communities with each other and major urban centres, will address these issues, providing opportunities for rural residents

Other important issues are the impact of traffic on rural roads, especially lorries using inappropriate narrow lanes and speeding on remote country roads.

Health and Road Safety

Transport has a positive and negative impact on people's health.

Improving accessibility to hospitals, health centres and GP surgeries makes it easier for people to seek immediate treatment rather than delay care due to lack of transport. This is especially applicable to travel by bus and rail, since many people seeking treatment are too unwell to drive. Moderate activity plays a part in improving health and walking and cycling are good forms of exercise that can easily be incorporated into our busy lives.

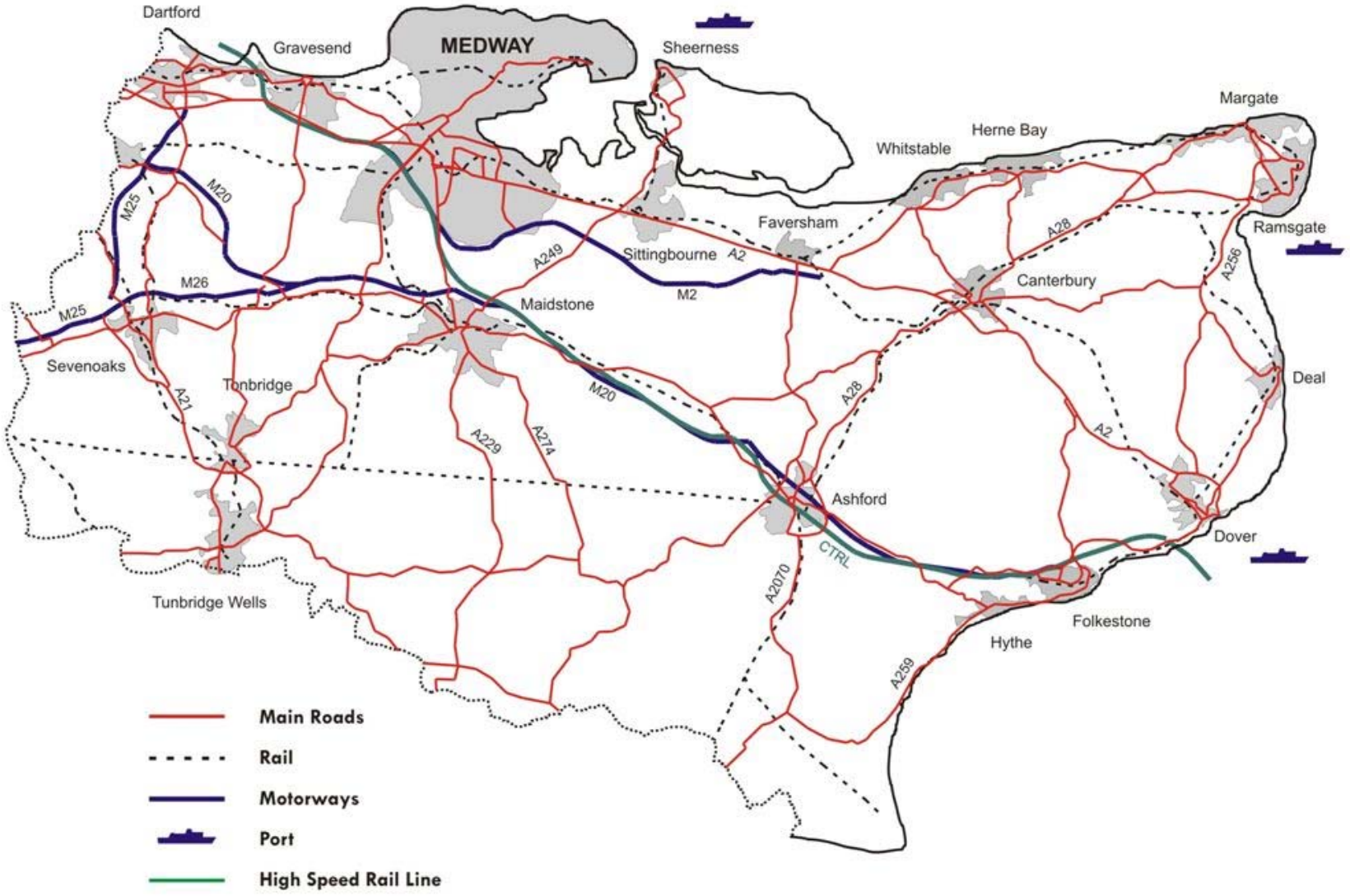
Health and road safety are interlinked, and reducing casualties caused by vehicular traffic is a constant priority for central and local government. Recent years have seen a gradual decline in road casualties, through changes to the highway and vehicle design, as well as through awareness raising, education and enforcement.

There are 31 areas in Kent where air pollution, caused by road traffic, exceeds the Government's objectives and these can lead to respiratory disease and illness. Although primarily on the motorway and trunk road network, the number of locations on local roads is steadily increasing.

Other Strategies

Backing Kent Business, Backing Kent People, Strategy for Later Life

how will it integrate with the housing, environmental and cultural strategies as many of the issues overlap.


Dartford
Gravesend
MEDWAY
Sheerness
Margate
Herne Bay
Whitstable
Faversham
Ramsgate
Sittingbourne
A2
M2
A249
M20
M25
M26
A28
A256
Canterbury
Maidstone
Sevenoaks
Tonbridge
A21
A229
A274
M20
A28
A2
Deal
Ashford
Dover
CTRL
A2070
Tunbridge Wells
Folkestone
Hythe
A259
Main Roads
Rail
Motorways
Port
High Speed Rail Line

4. ROADS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Kent's roads are getting busier and despite the current recession, long-term forecasts indicate that there will be more cars, vans, taxis and buses on our roads in the future. We must manage growth without the county grinding to a halt.

Recent Achievements

- **East Kent Access Phase 1** improving road access to Thanet and the Sandwich corridor
- **West Malling and Leybourne Bypass** opened to support development around Kings Hill
- **Traffic Management Centre** for Maidstone became operational in 2006
- **Ashford Shared Space** wins 2009 Street Design Award for Highways
- KCC is the first authority to receive government approval for a 'Permit Scheme' for roadworks management

A Changing and Growing County

Since 1994, traffic flows have increased by about 19% with more people owning cars, travelling further and choosing to make more of these journeys by car. About 20% of Kent's workers are employed outside the County. There was an 11% increase in the number of households between 1996 and 2006 and 138,420 new houses are planned for Kent by 2026. These could result in a quarter of a million extra car journeys per day on Kent's roads.

Travelling by road in Kent

Kent's dispersed settlement pattern with no one major city or town results in a large proportion of trips between these towns. This means that we are heavily dependent on the car with 71% of journeys to work in Kent made by car while 2 in 5 cars carry only the driver.

All of this has led to increasing congestion, especially in Kent's urban centres, resulting in delays and unreliable journey times, pollution and noise affecting local communities, and ever growing demand for car parking.

Disruption to the cross-channel routes and the high numbers of lorries that travel through the county often leads to the implementation of Operation Stack, which causes delays and congestion on local roads and discourages new employers from locating in the County.

The Strategic Road Network

Kent is well served by motorways and trunk roads, reflecting our position as the UK Gateway. Journey times are generally good, particularly in east Kent but there are bottlenecks and capacity issues in a number of locations which cause frustration for drivers. The network is good for east west journeys but cross-county routes tend to be on single carriageway roads through numerous built up areas, making journey times unreliable.

A21 Dualling - Tonbridge to Pembury and Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst
These sections are a major bottleneck in the south of the county and KCC is pressing for early implementation of these sections, especially as the new Pembury hospital will further increase traffic using this route. The schemes are scheduled to start in 2011/12 and 2012/13 respectively.

M20/M25 Widening
The Highways Agency plans to trial the use of the hard shoulder in peak periods to increase capacity on the M25 J5-7 by 2015 and the M20 J3-5 by 2019. We will work with them to co-ordinate the work of our traffic control centres to cut journey times.

Capacity Improvements to Junctions
These are needed at the following locations:

- A2 Bean Interchange
- M20 Jct 10a
- M2 Jct 5 & 5a
- A2 Bridge interchange
- M2/A2/A299 Brenley Corner

M20 Controlled Motorway
There is increasing pressure on this section of motorway and its occasional closure and subsequent diversion of traffic through Maidstone results in gridlock in the town. Variable speed limits are proposed between junctions 4 and 7 to regulate the flow of traffic at busy times and are expected to become operational in late 2009.

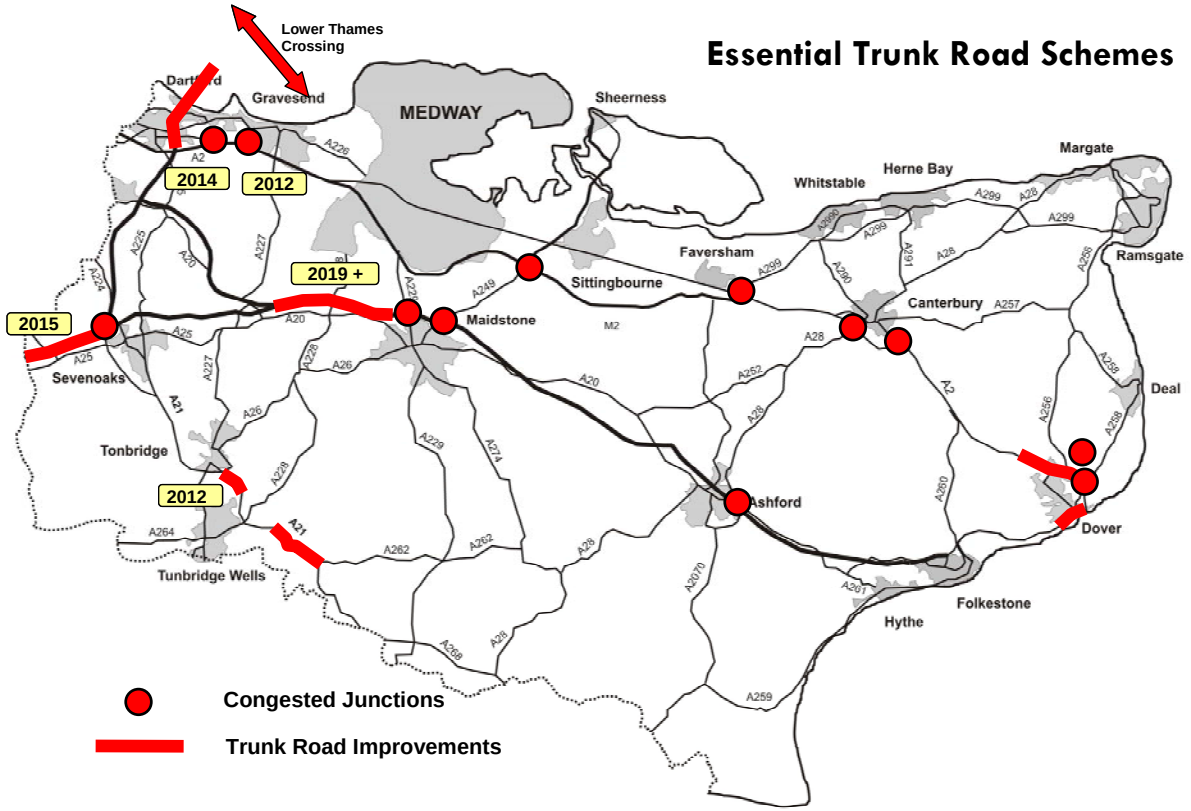
Lower Thames Crossing
The Dartford Crossing is one of the worst bottlenecks in the country. An additional Lower Thames Crossing, connected to the A2/M2 would not only relieve the bottleneck on the M25 but encourage freight traffic from the Eastern Docks at Dover to use the A2/M2 route, while traffic to the expanded Western Docks would use the M20. It also provides an opportunity, coupled with the existing Dartford Crossing, to link both sides of the Thames estuary with an integrated public transport network, a Kent and Essex Orbital Fastrack service. This would serve both Lakeside and Bluewater regional shopping centres as well as the local centres of Basildon, Thurrock, Southend, Dartford and Gravesham .A government study is underway to determine the timing and location of additional capacity.

Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB) Extension
The Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB) can only cope with Phase One of Operation Stack, holding just 400 lorries which, at peak times, can be filled within two hours. The Highways Agency is currently reviewing the performance of the QMB and will recommend whether the scheme should be expanded in spring 2009.

Lorry Park (Operation Stack)
In response to the problems caused by disruption to cross-channel services, KCC has investigated a possible lorry park near Aldington between Junctions 10 and 11 on the south side of the M20. It will provide 500 secure overnight parking spaces for HGVs and an overflow area for up to 2,500 additional HGVs during Operation Stack. The County Council is working towards submitting a planning application in early 2010.

M2/A2 Improvements at Dover
The M20/A20 is the strategic route along which international traffic is signed while the M2/A2 corridor is under-utilised. One possible solution is to have traffic for the Western Dock to continue to use the M20/A20 while traffic for the Eastern Dock would be encouraged to use the A2 approach, reducing the amount of traffic travelling along Townwall Street. This would require improvements to the M2/A2 route including dualling a short length of the A2 north of the town between Lydden and the Whitfield roundabout.
The County Council will ensure that the London to Kent Ports Study takes these issues into account and investigates how the proposed growth along these corridors can be accommodated.

Essential Trunk Road Schemes



The Local Road Network

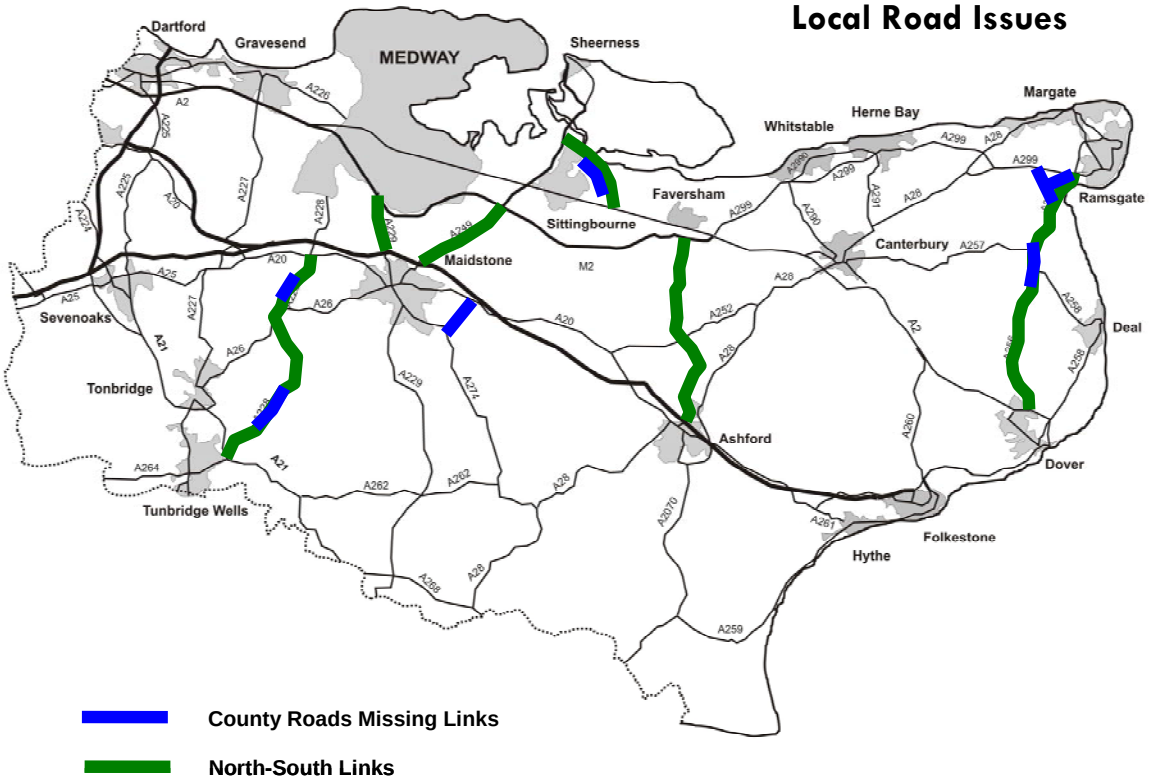
Local road improvements are needed to open up new areas of housing and employment and connect them with our strategic road network. Some of these will be built as part of the development whilst others aim to reduce the impact of bottlenecks on the existing network.

East Kent Access Phase 2
The East Kent Access scheme looks to improve road access between the A299 Thanet Way and the Pfizer site near Sandwich. Phase 1, which was completed in 2007, saw the A256 become a dual carriageway around the Pfizer site as far as the disused Richborough power station. Phase 2 involves the improvement of the A253 from Minster roundabout to Lord of the Manor; and the A256 from Lord of the Manor back to Ebbsfleet Lane. This scheme will open up development land in this area and strengthen Pfizer's role as the main employer for the area. The scheme achieved planning consent in September 2006. Final approval was given by the Secretary of State for Transport in March 2009. A substantive start is planned in October 2009.

Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road
The Relief Road will provide a new access to the major development areas that avoids the town centre and provides the opportunity to comprehensively redevelop the town centre. A substantive start on site will be made before November 2009.

South East Maidstone Strategic Link
In response to increasing traffic levels using the B2163 through Leeds and Langley, the County Council started carrying out a feasibility study into a bypass but it became apparent that it would be unlikely to receive government funding. Maidstone Borough Council has identified, through its Local Development Framework, the

Local Road Issues



potential for new development to the south east of the town. This could require a more direct route from the A274, serving the commercial area around Parkwood and new residential development at the A20/M20 Junction 8 which would also act as a bypass to Leeds and Langley. The LDF process has not defined the new housing areas or new commercial development areas yet so it is difficult to assess the route at present.

A228 Improvement

At present the primary route between the Medway towns, the M20 and A21 follows the A228 and the A26. The A26 section passes through the village of Hadlow and the south eastern part of Tonbridge. The A228 in its entirety would be more appropriate as the primary route and it is the County Council's intention to designate the A228 as such. The route has been incrementally improved towards that aim and the County Council will continue to lobby government for future improvements at Colts Hill between the B2017 at Dampiers Corner and the northern end of the Pembury Northern Bypass.

Local Road Management

It is important that alongside road improvements, we manage traffic better on our existing roads to reduce delays and make journey times more reliable.

Kent Permit Scheme
On the 30th July 2009, Kent County Council was given the go ahead by Government for a scheme whereby contractors intending to work on Kent's roads will require a permit for the work. This provides KCC with greater capability to co-operate with the utility companies and other highways contractors to control and co-ordinate works and minimise their impact on Kent's roads.

Traffic Management Centre
We will develop the Traffic Management Centres (UTMC) to include Tunbridge Wells, Gravesend, Canterbury, Thanet, Ashford, Dover and Dartford, as well as extending and upgrading the bus tracking and real time passenger information system. Once the urban areas have been completed, we will introduce variable message signing on routes across the County to inform drivers of delays, diversions, available car park spaces etc.

Reallocation of Road Space
We will reallocate road space to enable more sustainable travel; used by bus-rapid transit system, car sharers through high occupancy vehicle lanes and cyclists.

"Congestion Busting" Teams
We will create 'Congestion Busting' teams to respond to damage only crashes and breakdowns who will aim to reopen the local highway as quickly as possible. This will be backed up by diversion routes agreed between the Highways Agency and Kent.

Red Routes
Another option we will consider is to assign "Red Route" status on certain roads during peak periods to reduce loading and parking and minimise delays on these key routes.

Congestion Charging/Parking Levy Feasibility
The concept of paying for road use and parking is recognised by the County Council but we are concerned that applying any charging in isolation will undermine economic activity and Kent's ability to attract new businesses and employment in the County. Therefore, whilst we may consider charging schemes as a solution to tackling congestion and providing funding for improvements, we will continue to monitor central government progress on this issue.

Reducing the Demand to Travel

Alongside managing traffic on our networks, Kent will continue to influence where development and supporting infrastructure is located to minimise how far and how often people travel. We will ensure that Kent builds genuinely sustainable communities (new and existing) where people can walk and cycle and easily access public transport. This will be done through the Kent Design Guide which specifies the high standards of design and construction needed to create these sustainable communities.

Land-Use Planning
Working in partnership with the district councils, the County Council will look to ensure that all major trip generators – whether retail, office, leisure, educational or health services, are located within the communities they serve and have good accessibility by foot, cycle and public transport.

Mixed Use Development
Working with the planning authorities, we will encourage a higher proportion of mixed-use development to provide local services, employment and learning opportunities where people live. These will look to include work/learning hubs to enable remote working and to bring services to people, thereby reducing the need to travel.

Park and Ride
Proposed park and ride facilities will look to fulfil different functions, including collection/delivery point for goods, interchange for school transport and rural bus services and link to existing bus services, whilst reducing the need to park all day in town centres.

Variable Parking Charges
We will look to make car parking charges more expensive during peak periods and cheaper during non-peak periods. This will influence demand during peak periods and discourage all day commuter parking which adds little value to businesses in town centre locations. We will also review long and short-stay parking and their impact on the number of car trips into town centres.

Teleworking
The County Council is keen to encourage teleworking, where employees connect to their workplace through telecommunications from their home or local café, rather than commute. Videoconferencing also allows staff to interact without the need to make a long business journey. This reduction in the need to make a journey also applies to distribution. For example, British Gas has closed its 380 depots and with one distribution centre, now uses the Royal Mail as a distribution network to its field service engineers through Royal Mail's local delivery offices.

Broadband Access
In Kent, there are about 9,000 properties in Kent that cannot obtain any sort of broadband and about another 108,000 that cannot achieve 2Mbps download speed. Kent County Council has made grants available to parish councils to help fund suppliers' setup costs and will continue to support improved broadband access across the County.

Better Streets for All

Kent acknowledges that while the principal function of our streets is to allow travel, they are also places where communities meet and business is done and that attractive and safe streets encourage community interaction and enjoyment.

KCC's approach to "placemaking" is to create streets, squares, parks and other public spaces that will attract people because they are pleasurable and interesting. By creating high quality connections between and through our towns and villages, we will help to make Kent prosperous, attractive, distinctive, inclusive and sustainable, by either attracting or deterring investment and job opportunities. The quality, design and layout of this environment can also influence opportunities to be physically active as part of our everyday lives. Transport is a key element to how a place functions, its quality, its identity, its distinctiveness and the impact it has on residents, visitors and investors alike and will play a major role in the "placemaking" agenda.

Shared Streets

The UK's first shared space scheme was opened in Ashford in December 2008. The award-winning scheme has transformed the town's historic centre and replaces a section of Ashford's former four lane ring road with two-way streets on which drivers, cyclists and pedestrians have equal priority. Unnecessary street furniture, road markings and traffic lights have been removed and the speed limit cut to 20mph. Moving away from the segregation of pedestrians, cyclists and cars and through collaboration with artists has created a real sense of place and a centre for the community. The Ashford scheme has become a unique example of how public realm could, and should, be managed in the future and the "shared space" philosophy will be extended to other parts of Kent.

5. MAXIMISING THE BENEFITS OF RAIL

High Speed 1 represents the largest single investment in Kent's infrastructure in modern times and has the ability to transform the economic prosperity of huge tracts of Kent. The county has an extensive network of passenger rail services which serve nearly 100 stations with most services operated daily on at least a half hourly of hourly basis. There is a significant level of commuting to central London, especially from West Kent though the introduction of high speed domestic services will make East Kent much more attractive for rail commuting. Reduction in services to the City are still concerns that need to be resolved.

Recent Achievements

- Completion of the **Channel Tunnel Rail Link (High Speed 1)** in 2007
- **Restoration of Eurostar services** between Ashford and Brussels
- Provision of **High Speed Domestic Rail Services** extending to Thanet and Dover from December 2009

Enhancing the Benefits of High Speed Rail

On 29th June 2009, a High Speed One Preview Service commenced in advance of the full service in December 2009. This is great news as these services have already dramatically cut rail journey times to Ebbsfleet and Ashford and will do so for other areas of Kent to north London and to the north of the country. The improved journey times will help regenerate parts of the County and make them very attractive places to live and visit, making Kent's rich variety of places to visit accessible to visitors in London.

HS1 Quickest Journey Times to London from:	Current (mins)	Draft Proposed (mins)
Ashford	84	37
Folkestone Cntl	101	57
Dover	116	69
Ramsgate	129	80
Canterbury	110	59
Gravesend	57	22

We would like the benefits of these HS services to be supported by connections to existing and planned communities as well as other improvements to make them easier and more attractive to use.

HS Parkway Stations

We are keen that commuters on the HS1 services use buses, walking and cycling to connect with these services but recognise that many of the existing stations are difficult to reach and offer limited car parking, causing some commuters to travel to Ebbsfleet. Therefore, we will develop parkway stations serving high speed services at Maidstone, Thanet (KIA) and Westenhanger.

Electrification of Ashford to Hastings Line

The electrification of the rail line between Hastings and Ashford will allow high speed services to be extended to Hastings, improving travel between the two towns and also to employment in Ebbsfleet, Stratford and London. A HS parkway station at Appledore would enable commuters from Tenterden and the Romney Marsh to access HS1 services. This has the potential to regenerate both the Romney Marsh area and the Hastings area in East Sussex by reducing journey time from Hastings to London from 100 mins on the current railway to 75 mins using High Speed 1.

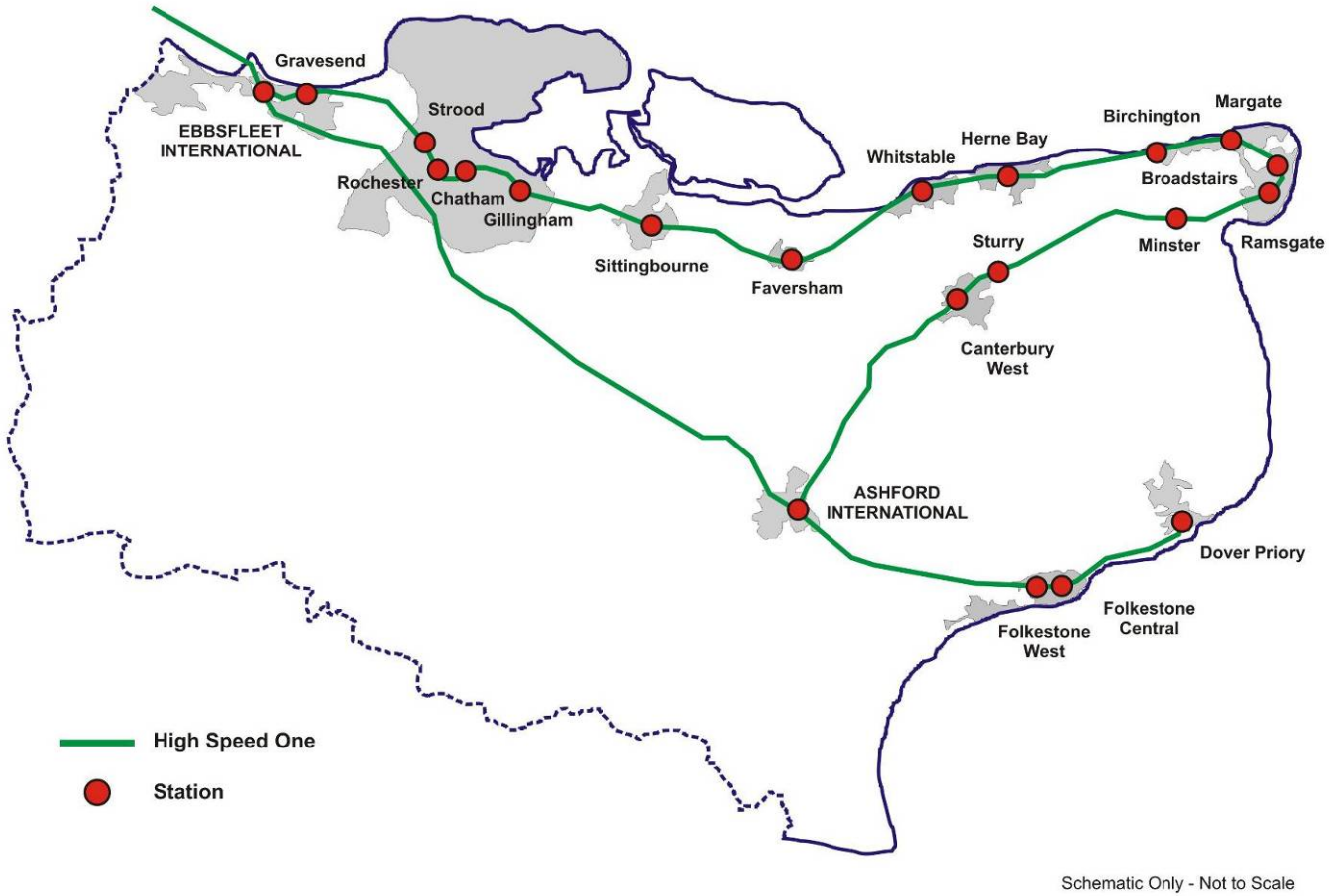
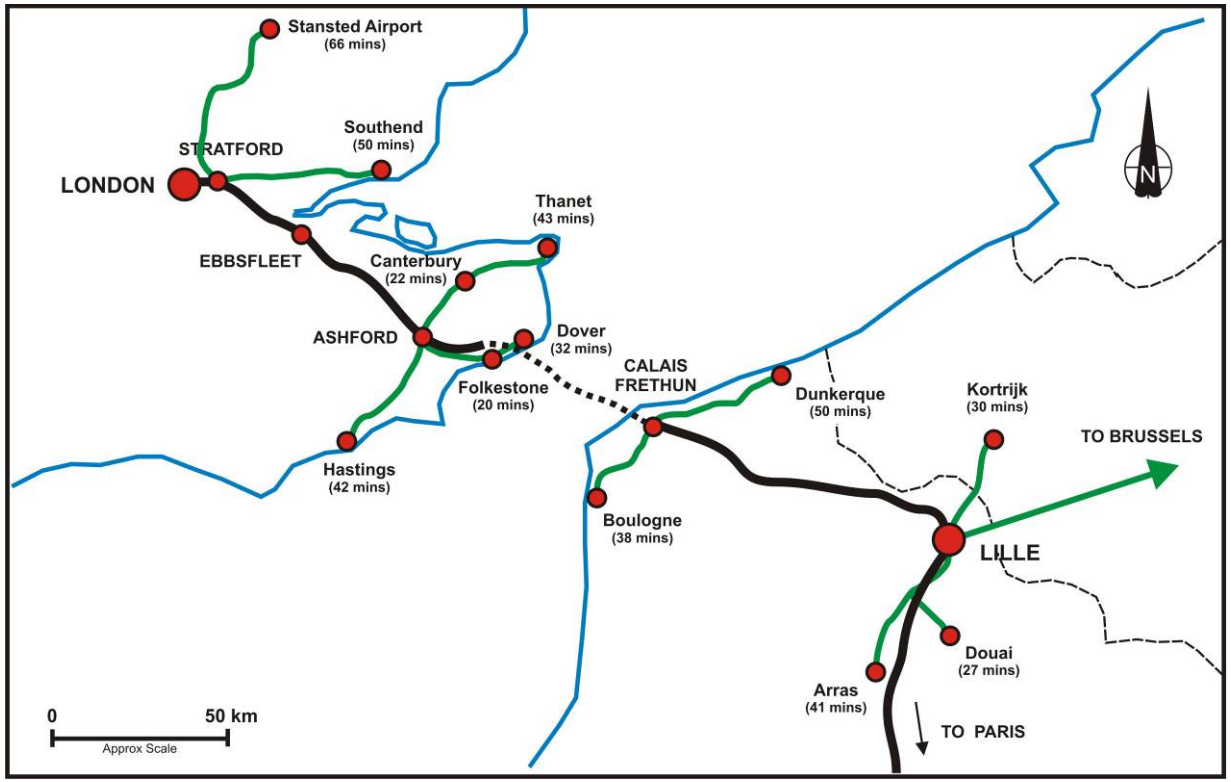


Figure 5.1 - High Speed Rail Services in Kent

Figure 5.2 – Local Connections to the Transmanche Metro



Transmanche Metro

There is a real opportunity to enhance international rail services by utilising the intermediate stations on both sides of the channel with a semi-fast high speed rail service connecting into European wide services

There would be a regular interval service (working up to hourly) linking St Pancras, Stratford, Ebbsfleet, Maidstone Parkway, Ashford, Calais-Frethun and Lille with connections at Lille for Brussels and into Holland and Germany, connections from Calais to the French coastal towns and at St Pancras/Kings Cross for the north and east of England.

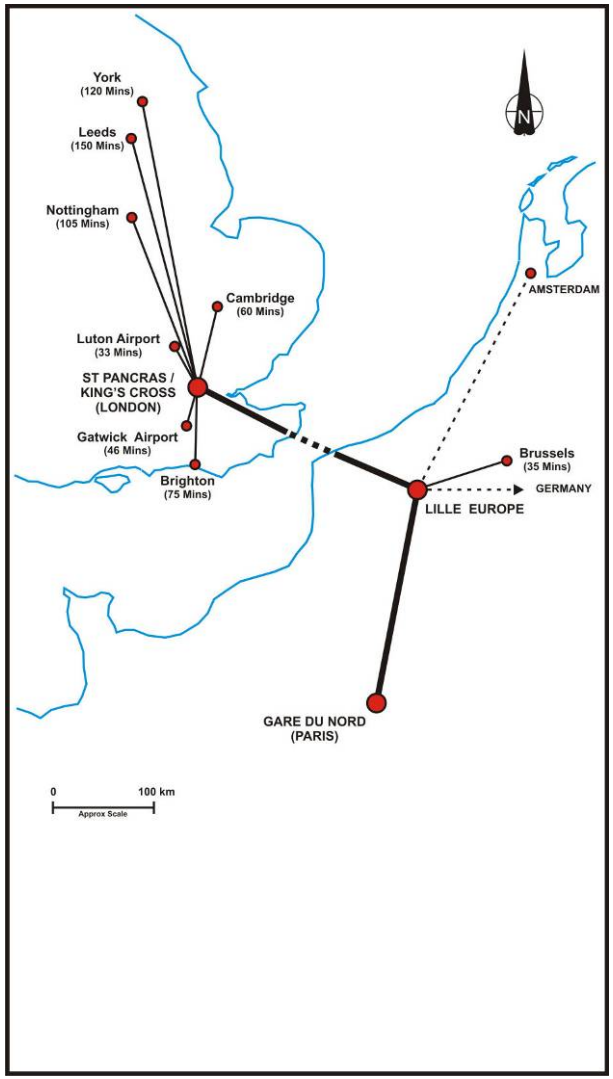


Figure 5.3 – Wider Connections to the Transmanche Metro

Value for Money Rail Fares

We will continue to lobby government to ensure that Kent residents do not pay an unfair amount for rail travel compared to London residents or other parts of the country.

Carnet Ticketing
With the increasing practice of home working and flexible hours, many commuters are making fewer journeys but still rely on rail travel to commute. The County Council is keen to see the introduction of a "Carnet" ticket, where a number of tickets can be bought at a discount and then used when required. This concept has already been adopted by other train operators like Chiltern Railways and National Express East Coast.

Extend Freedom Pass to Rail
We will lobby for rail fare concessions, to encourage uptake of post-16 education, further education and higher education across Kent.

The Local Rail Network

For many, the existing rail network in Kent will continue to be a vital service, influencing where people live and the quality of their lives.

Station Improvements
It is important that improvements to the facilities at Kent's stations and access to the stations by all modes is improved. Integrating rail travel with the car, bus, walking and cycling is essential. We are exploring the potential for initiatives incorporating Smartcard technology to allow ticket-less integrated travel, cycle hire and storage and real-time journey information.

Reduced Journey Times
As well as the electrification of the Ashford - Hastings line, there are restricted speeds on other sections of rail including Ramsgate – Ashford, Maidstone - London and sections of the North Kent line which we will look to minimise to improve journey times.

Thameslink Services from Kent
The expansion of Thameslink services from 2015 will significantly improve access to and from the City. KCC will lobby for Kent to benefit from these new services and in particular for Maidstone to be linked directly into the Thameslink network.

Crossrail Services Serving Kent
Crossrail is an exciting new railway line running east to west across London from Maidenhead in the west via Heathrow, Paddington and Liverpool Street stations and then dividing to terminate at Shenfield in Essex and Abbey Wood. Due to be complete by 2018, it will give direct rail access to the capital as well as Canary Wharf and Stratford. KCC is keen to see the route extended to Gravesend with good interchange at Ebbsfleet International.

Platform Extensions and Longer Trains
Kent will work with partners to investigate the feasibility of lengthening platforms and providing more carriages to reduce overcrowding and increase capacity on the network.

Figure 5.4 – Route of Crossrail

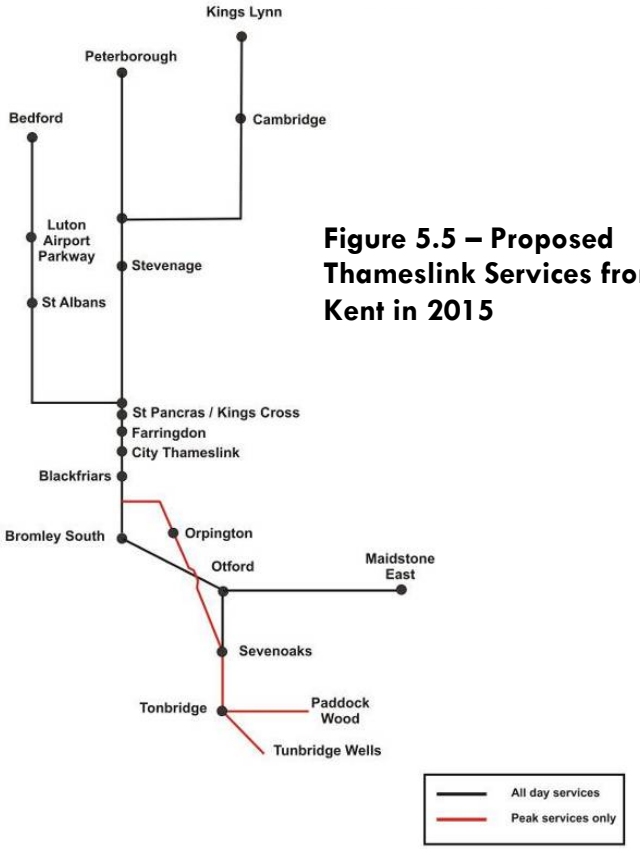


Figure 5.5 – Proposed Thameslink Services from Kent in 2015

6. BUSES AT THE HEART OF KENT

Better Access for All

KCC is at the forefront of working with operators and other partners to improve local bus services.

Recent Achievements

- **Kent Freedom Pass** – pilot scheme achieved a 27% mode shift from car to bus for school journeys and now available across the County
- **Increasing bus passenger levels** in Kent compared to national picture where bus use is declining outside London
- **Fastrack** Bus Rapid Transit System levels exceeding expectations and 95% of customers rate it as "Excellent" or "Good"
- Kent County Council named **Transport Authority of the Year** at the UK Bus Awards 2007

22% of households in Kent do not have access to a car, making the bus vital to allow them to reach the services and opportunities that some of us take for granted. Those living in rural areas, who do not own a car, still struggle to access local services and we aim to improve this accessibility by developing new forms of rural bus services.

Kent has always been a popular area for retirement and with most of us living longer, a larger proportion of our residents will be over 60. They will rely on buses to access healthcare, shops, entertainment and their friends and family. We also know that the current financial downturn has made bus and rail travel more popular as people reconsider the cost of running and using their private car.

Access to services is one of the key issues facing Kent's rural areas and the rural regeneration agenda. 85% of Kent is classed as rural with 400,000 (almost a third of the County's population) live in rural areas. Access to services in rural areas is paramount to normalcy. 13% of rural households don't have a car. Significant areas of the County are not serviced by public transport. Without access to basic provision, employment, health centres, shops or education people are socially and economically isolated.

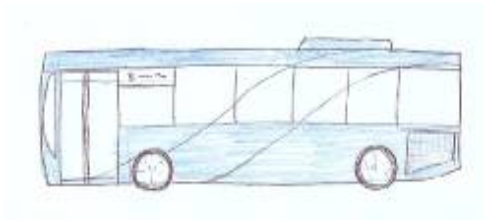
An Integrated Bus Network

The County's road network will struggle to cope with the proposed housing and employment growth planned so we have no choice but to plan and provide more efficient ways of getting people to where they want to go. Whilst trams and other light rail systems have been built elsewhere in the UK, Kent does not have a large enough urban area with sufficient demand and congestion to justify the high expense of a tram network. Therefore, the bus is the answer and lies at the heart of our proposed integrated transport network. This network will be formed around integrating and connecting four different types of bus service, bus rapid transit, inter-urban coach services, local buses and rural transport.

Bus Interchange

The crucial element of this integrated bus network is the ability to change from one kind of service to another. This would be done at a number of locations although the key sites would be in town centres, at major transport interchange points like the local train

station and at edge-of-town park and ride sites, which would also connect the rural bus services into the existing commercial bus network. These interchange points could also be a place where parents drop their children off to catch a school bus to the urban centre, known as “kiss and ride”. This ease of interchange can be enhanced by initiatives such as single ticketing across modes with simpler methods of payment.

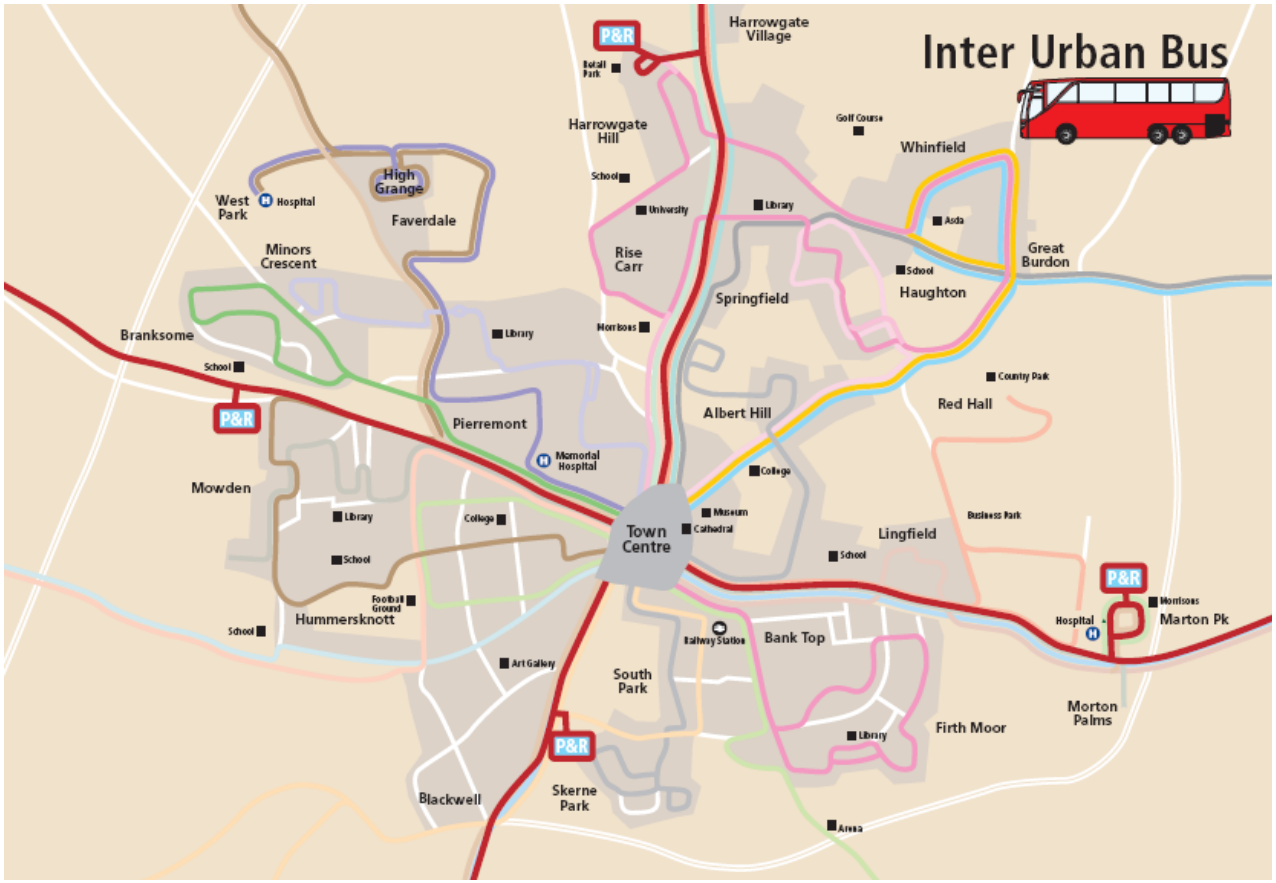


Bus Rapid Transit (Fastrack)

Bus Rapid Transit aims to provide a service that is of a higher quality than an ordinary bus service through improvements to infrastructure, vehicles and scheduling such as Fastrack in Kent Thameside. The improved features include sections of bus only routes to bypass queues, a strong image/brand, very frequent service on a relatively direct route and off bus ticketing. These improved features offer a genuine advantage over the car for local journeys.

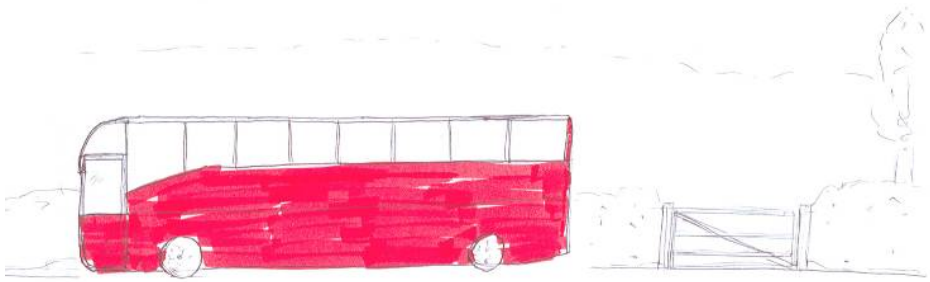
We will establish further bus rapid transit schemes in Kent's towns and development areas using Fastrack as the blueprint. To date, Dover, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells have been identified as potential future locations, as well as extending Fastrack itself in the Thames Gateway. The combination of the existing crossing and a Lower Thames Crossing creates the opportunity for an orbital bus rapid transit system linking the north Kent Thameside Fastrack network with the south Essex rapid transit network, establishing for the first time a public transport link between the two sides of the Thames estuary.

A similar system is already planned for Ashford, called Smartlink which will link the major development areas in the town to the town centre, train station, park and ride sites, business parks and the Designer Outlet.



Inter-urban Coach Service

Kent's transport network has developed upon both historic desire lines and natural physical constraints, meaning that many routes are radial, extending outwards from London. This is especially true of the railway network, therefore some towns lack direct public transport links. Good examples are Sittingbourne to Maidstone, Faversham to Ashford and settlements in the High Weald. In response, we will develop a network of inter-urban coach services offering direct, fast services along major corridors. A good existing example is the high frequency 101 service between Maidstone and the Medway towns. Whilst these services will have minimal stops, they will serve Park & Ride sites on the urban peripherary and other significant out of town locations. In addition to urban centres, these services will also connect key transport interchange points such as our passenger ports, international rail stations and airports.



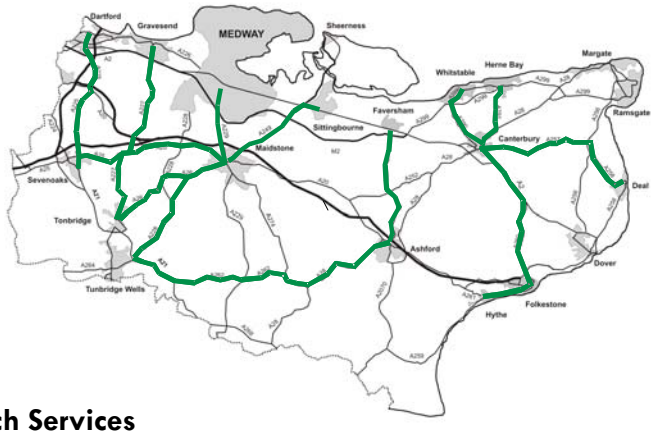


Figure 6.1 - Proposed Inter-Urban Coach Services

Local Bus Services

Local bus services which penetrate into and serve local communities will continue to operate, feeding into the rapid transit and inter-urban services at key locations and via a town centre hub. The County Council has worked with district councils and local operators to increase patronage on local bus services, a good example being the Thanet Loop where a straightforward route, linking the town centres with Westwood Cross and QEQM hospital has seen large increases in ridership. Features like a frequent ten minute service, low floor buses and real-time information, connected through strong branding make the Loop easy to use and understand and these successful aspects will be extended to other local bus services across the County.

Rural Interchange Service

Despite Kent's good transport network, there are significant pockets of deprivation and social exclusion in our rural areas, especially where the loss of local services has necessitated a greater reliance on transport. There are almost 100 community transport schemes in Kent and Medway, which include Kent Karrier (and similar schemes in Medway and Sevenoaks), Volunteer Car Schemes, Age Concern buses and Shopmobility schemes. Through the Rural Access to Services Programme, we are working on a pilot brokerage scheme of community transport provision to improve the sustainability of current community transport schemes.
KCC funds a number of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) like 'Kent Karrier' but for the most inaccessible locations, KCC is keen to look at a rural interchange bus service which feeds into the existing commercial bus network at key interchange points on inter-urban routes, unlike conventional DRT, which transports passengers from their home villages to the centre of neighbouring towns.

An additional solution is that existing, commercial interurban routes are diverted at regular frequencies throughout the day to serve villages and hamlets located a short distance off the main interurban trunk road.

Making Bus Travel Easier

Other European towns and cities have achieved high quality bus networks that are easy to understand and have simple fares for one journey, all day or all week. We will continue to work to make the bus network more user friendly so that residents can not only find out where routes go but also consider if taking the bus is cheaper and better for the environment.

Extend Kent Freedom Pass
The Kent Freedom Pass, offering young people in academic years 7-11 unlimited bus travel in return for a £50 annual pass, has proved extremely successful in overcoming cost as a barrier to travel. Subject to cost, we would like to extend this scheme to 16/17 year olds and journeys across the Kent boundary.

Over 60s Concessionary Travel
Free travel for over 60s is likely to become a KCC responsibility in 2011 and with an ageing population in Kent, There will be an increasing demand for these services in the coming years.

Quality Partnership Bus Schemes/Kickstart
We will work with bus operators to press for improvements in vehicles and services through Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) and using powers in the Transport Act 2008.

Kentcard/Smartcard Ticketing
We intend to expand Kentcard/ Smartcard as an Oyster card form of ticketing for all forms of transport and to enable booking of car club vehicles, car and cycle hire, car parking and toll charges.

Carnet Ticketing
With the increasing practice of home working and flexible hours, many commuters are making fewer journeys but still rely on rail travel to commute. The County Council is keen to see the introduction of a "Carnet" ticket, where a number of tickets can be bought at a discount and then used when required.

Real Time Passenger Information
We will support improvements and the expansion of information on service arrivals for bus and rail, linked to better timetabling information.

Low Emission Bus Fleet
We will work with operators to bring forward investment in fuel efficient/ low emission buses.

Punctuality Improvement Partnerships
KCC will work with operators and district councils to analyse causes of regular congestion and pinch points on the network and implement solutions to improve bus service timekeeping.

Kent Passenger Transport Authority
As part of this work, we will lobby Government to allow the establishment of the Kent Passenger Transport Authority, allowing us to have greater control and influence over our transport network.

7. KENT'S AIRPORTS

Maximising the benefits of Air Travel

3.4 million flights were taken by Kent residents in 2007, mainly from the main London Hub airports (Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton) yet Kent has two functional commercial airports; Kent International Airport (Manston) and London Ashford Airport (Lydd). Both Kent airports are looking to increase passenger numbers and expand other air transport activities to meet the predicted future shortfall in runway capacity in the South East but both suffer from peripheral locations in relation to the M25 and the rail network.

KCC will continue to oppose a London terminal airport being built in the Thames Estuary. A similar proposal was made around a decade ago for a new airport to be built at Cliffe. Not only did it pose major environmental challenges, it was subsequently found to be unable to deliver the additional capacity needed, because of the constraints upon airspace in South East England, requiring a downgrade in capacity at Heathrow and Stansted to operate effectively.

Kent International Airport (KIA)

Kent International Airport (Manston) has the potential to develop into a regional airport and become one of the largest single generators of economic activity within the county, being a well developed airfield with Code F (A380) capability and capacity for significant expansion. The airport predicts that it will serve around 6 million passengers and cater for 500,000 tonnes of freight by 2033. This could generate over 3,500 jobs by 2018 and 7,500 jobs by 2033 within Kent in a range of employment opportunities. Its future growth is dependent upon and will be driven by the displacement of traffic from other airports as they begin to operate at capacity due to continuing growth.

Integration with Local Buses
The KIA Masterplan states that on reaching 3 million passengers per annum, consideration will be given to opening up a further access route from the east as a bus priority route to link either to the A299, via a link from Mount Pleasant roundabout or to a new railway station or to Ramsgate railway station. A new taxi and bus drop-off zone is proposed alongside the new terminal building.

Links to the Local Road Network
At KIA, improvements are proposed to the Minster and Mount Pleasant roundabouts to increase capacity and beyond 1 million passengers, a new access road to the Mount Pleasant roundabout is planned.

KIA Parkway Station
The KIA draft masterplan proposes major expansion with 6 million passenger movements serviced by 2033, supported by a Parkway station with high speed rail services from London, serving not just the airport but also the local area. This will be located near to the perimeter of KIA, with improved bus links and local road improvements to link to the A253.

London Ashford Airport

London Ashford Airport (Lydd) is a full service international airport located on the Romney Marsh, close to the boarder with East Sussex. It was purpose built as a civilian airfield in the 1950's, and in recent years over £20 million has been spent developing and upgrading the airport's facilities.

Future Plans

The airport has plans to extend its runway and build new terminal facilities with the ability to provide 500,000 passenger movements by 2015, capitalising on the growing passenger preference for using a regional airport and reducing surface transport times and costs. Additionally 75% of all air transport movements in the UK are in a South Easterly direction, therefore Lydd brings additional benefits by being the most South Easterly airport.

Currently two planning applications for a runway extension and a new terminal facility are being determined by Shepway District Council, but there are international environmental designations immediately adjacent to the airport that need to be considered.

LAA is keen to utilise the existing rail connection between Hastings and Ashford and utilise a potential Parkway station at Appledore as well as integration with the bus network when demand enables sustained economic operations.

8. KENT'S PORTS & WATERWAYS

The Channel Corridor

There are few people in Kent who are unaffected by the County's role as an international corridor. We are fortunate to have convenient access to the Continent, whether for business or pleasure but we also have to suffer the traffic that uses this corridor. Road freight is significant and one in four vehicles on the M20 near Charing is a lorry and when Operation Stack is in force, it makes us all realise how fragile our transport network is. Dover is the largest passenger ferry port in Northern Europe and handles more than half of all the UK's international ferry passengers. However, as a result Dover experiences congestion, severance and air quality problems on a daily basis due to queuing traffic from the Eastern Docks but also benefits from the employment opportunities that the Port brings. There has been a significant and continued increase in road freight through the Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel since the Tunnel opened in 1995 and after the current credit crunch, growth is predicted to continue. The County Council recognises the importance of this link to "UK plc".

Eurotunnel

Although strictly speaking, it is not a port, it offers an alternative to Dover for international car and lorry movements, taking some 40% and 33% of the market respectively in 2008. Competition with the ferries has kept the costs of crossing the Channel relatively low and, together with the short and frequent crossing has meant that Kent attracts a high level of international traffic. It has good, direct access to and from the M20 but the benefits on this are negated when there is major disruption in the Channel and Operation Stack is required. Theoretically, Eurotunnel could operate more shuttles which could relieve some of the pressure on Dover.

Dover Western Docks Expansion

Dover Harbour Board has developed a 30-year plan for the port. A new ferry terminal in the Western Docks could provide a location for up to four new ferry berths with the possibility of re-introducing rail freight connections. Other improvements would be a new marina in the outer harbour and other related waterfront development including expansion of Dover's role as a busy cruise liner terminal.
Since the new terminal at the Western Docks will take a while to be complete, interim measures to deal with traffic continuing to use the Eastern Docks include revising the A20 dock exit and upgrading Berth 5 to accommodate larger vessels. Similar expansion plans are also in place for the port of Calais.

Other Ports and Short Sea Shipping

Sheerness
Sheerness is the largest UK port for break bulk fresh produce and has the opportunity to intensify its activity within its existing boundaries with the option to expand onto nearby industrial areas. The Second Swale Crossing has significantly improved road access to the port, but improved rail access and facilities are needed to increase the amount of rail freight to and from the port.
A massive regeneration project to transform Sheerness Port was announced in September 2009, with a marina for up to 500 large yachts, three new deep water berths, new housing ands an extension of commercial shipping facilities.

Ramsgate

Ramsgate restored the car ferry service to Ostend in July 2004 and has the potential to operate up to twice as many ferries through the port without any additional infrastructure and can provide services to the northern part of the European coast complementing the increased capacity planned for Dover. The possible reduction of rail journey times to London will also support Ramsgate's gateway role.

Ramsgate is being used in connection with the construction of the Thanet Offshore Wind Farm, a 100 turbine development 8 miles off the NE Kent coast and will be the base for the projects operations and maintenance centre. The London Array wind farm is also planning to use the port as it gears up for offshore construction from 2010 and as a base for its future operations and maintenance. The London Array project is a much larger development of 271 wind turbines midway out in the Thames Estuary with an investment value of £3 billion. Both wind farms will create extra jobs in East Kent and make an important contribution to the local economy

The extensive marina can offer significant regeneration potential from the sailing market in the south-east and London.

Thamesport
Thamesport is one of the largest deep-water container ports in Medway, carrying a relatively high volume of containers to and from the port by rail (some 20%). Further development of the port would benefit from improved access by the A228 and for more capacity on the branch rail line.

River Services & Short Sea Shipping
Kent is surrounded by water on three of its boundaries and KCC will investigate the potential to travel by ship/boat between the county and London as well as the movement of bulk goods and waste by barge. Fast commuter services from Gravesend to London and/or Canary Wharf will be investigated as well as the potential of using the River Medway between the Medway towns and Maidstone. There may also be potential for sightseeing boat trips along Kent's coast, especially since Kent has a coastline rich in both natural and man-made features.

9. FREIGHT

The Channel Corridor

Kent is a major gateway for the movement of international freight, which is dominated by road haulage, with 3.7 million lorries crossing the Channel in 2008. A consequence of this is the impact on Kent when cross-channel services are disrupted and the resulting backlog of lorries are parked on the M20/A20, known as Operation Stack. This closure of the M20/A20 severely disrupts local roads and results in severe congestion and lengthy delays.

With the expansion of the western docks, there is scope to direct traffic for the eastern docks along the A2/M2, reducing traffic that severs the town from the seafront. This promotion of the A2/M2, known as bifurcation, would also connect to the Lower Thames Crossing although other improvements to this route are needed.

Kent wants to ensure that freight traffic passes through the County as harmlessly as possible, including local lorries not being directed down country lanes and through other sensitive areas/

Despite the provision of rail freight services through the Channel Tunnel, the modal share in Kent is disappointingly low. Estimates are that six million tonnes of rail freight could use the Channel Tunnel, but the maximum level reached was barely over three million tonnes in 1998. Due to problems with illegal immigrants boarding trains and the poor level of service quality in France, the flow has declined to 1.24 million tonnes in 2008 but there is the potential to re-connect the Western Docks at Dover to the rail network.

The Thames Estuary

The other potential significant railfreight flow in the County is to and from the Thamesport deep sea container port where currently some 20% of the freight is taken by rail and there is potential to expand the port at Sheerness.

The Channel Corridor

Dover Port Terminal T2
The Port of Dover is expected to maintain its position as the primary route of choice for cross-channel road freight. To meet the forecast in traffic growth, a new ferry terminal in the Western Docks is proposed with up to four new ferry berths.

Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB) Extension
The Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB) can only cope with Phase One of Operation Stack, holding just 400 lorries which, at peak times, can be filled within two hours. The Highways Agency currently has no plans to extend the use of the QMB over a longer stretch of the M20.

Lorry Park (Operation Stack)
In response to the problems caused by disruption to cross-channel services, KCC is investigating a possible lorry park near Aldington between Junctions 10 and 11 on the south side of the M20. It would provide some 500 secure overnight parking spaces for HGVs and an overflow area for some 2,500 additional HGVs during Operation Stack. The County Council is currently working towards submitting a planning application in early 2010.

Britdisc
This is the County Council's proposal to introduce a charge for lorries using Kent's roads to provide up to £40m per annum for the lorry park and other infrastructure improvements which will mitigate the impact of cross-channel traffic.

CTRL Rail Freight
The Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) offers a higher loading gauge than the rest of the rail network in the UK and could make the transfer of freight by rail between East London and mainland Europe much more competitive when compared with road haulage. We will continue to press central and international government to put more freight through the Channel Tunnel.

Countywide

Kent International Airport

KIA is the 8th largest freight airport in the UK by volume and already serves as a London freight airport. With the migration of pure freight air services from the primary to the secondary airports expected to continue, KIA's role in the freight market is expected to expand.

Railfreight Service Quality and Pricing
We will work with the freight industry to identify potential legislative and physical barriers for transferring freight from road to rail and assist, where possible, in identifying solutions to overcome such barriers.

Road/Rail Terminals
The County Council is generally supportive of strategic road/rail terminals if they are located in the right location and will genuinely transfer freight from road to rail. As a result, the County Council supported the proposed redevelopment of a 64 hectare site at Howbury Park in Erith as it is well located close to London and the M25. However, the County Council does not support the proposals for the Kent International Gateway

(KIG), located to the east of Maidstone as, amongst other things, it is over 20 miles from the M25 and would not relieve the most congested western part of the M20 of lorry traffic.

Lorry Management
Where practical, we will look to signpost heavy transport and HGV routes away from rural, residential and environmentally sensitive areas and show these on a web-based Kent Lorry Route Map.

Overnight Lorry Parks
In addition to Operation Stack, overnight lorries parking in residential and commercial areas have a detrimental on Kent and it's communities. The County Council will lobby for the provision of over-night lorry parking and associated facilities at suitable sites adjacent to Kent's motorway and trunk road network. We will also work with other agencies to reduce the occurrence of inappropriate lorry parking on Kent's roads.

Low Emission Freight (LEF)
We will work in partnership with local hauliers/distributors/public transport operators and taxis to replace vehicle fleet with low emission vehicles and incentivise local business, through business rate discounts, to utilise LEVs. We will also look to encourage local businesses and retailers to work in partnership to co-ordinate deliveries, particularly in outlying areas, to reduce duplicated trips and emissions.

Freight Strategy

The County Council will develop a Freight Strategy to create a framework for more sustainable distribution alongside the preparation for the third Local Transport Plan which has to be finalised by March 2011.

10. SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Better for Everyone……. and the Environment

Kent has significant housing and employment targets for the next 15-20 years but this growth threatens to bring some parts of Kent to a standstill, especially if using our cars continues to be the most popular means of travelling. To counteract this, we will work to make new housing and employment safe and attractive for walking and cycling, we will ensure that bus routes serve these areas and are close to or link into rail stations and that streets are attractive places to meet and talk with neighbours.

We will implement strategic and extensive cycle corridors linking our green infrastructure, good quality and safe cycle lanes to, from and through our towns and villages; and good wide, hospitable, uncluttered pedestrian links within and between towns and villages, encouraging people to cycle and walk, as their first option.

Recent Achievements

- **Walking and cycling** are being promoted, building on the success of the Tour de France
- 68% of all Kent schools have an adopted **school travel plan**, supported by dedicated Travel Plan Advisors and BikeIt officers
- The County Council is three years ahead of schedule on its targets to reduce the number of road users **killed or seriously injured**
- **Cycling and walking networks** in many of Kent's urban areas continue to expand

We also want businesses and schools to help us in tackling congestion and pollution by looking at ways they can help their staff to commute to work by sustainable modes, helping to reduce the high number of cars that travel in the peak with a lone driver. We need attractive and direct walking and cycling routes and cycle parking outside our main destinations like schools, shops, stations, parks etc. We will also give better information on the impact and costs of everyday journeys, so that residents can consider other ways of making their journey that are quicker, cheaper and greener. Chronic life-style related health problems create a huge costs to society partly due to very low levels of physical activity in the UK compared to Europe and walking and cycling are physical activities that can be easily integrated into our busy lifestyles.

Workplace Travel Plans

We will be putting in place Travel Plans at all KCC offices sites and will support other organisations and the business community with updated guidance, monitoring and enforcement of plans at new developments.

School Travel Plans

All Kent schools are to have travel plans by 2010 and those plans already in place continue to demonstrate 1% mode shift pa to tackle the school run through ongoing support for projects including safer routes to school improvements, the K&M Walk to school initiative, BikeIT, Junior Travel Co-ordinator (Journease) and the Kent Freedom Pass. Staggering school hours to reduce

peak traffic levels will also be investigated.

Kentcarshare/Car Clubs
We will develop car clubs in all of Kent's major urban areas, which give people access to a car without the expense and hassle of owning one. These clubs will use low emission vehicles, promoted through local businesses, new development, travel plans and marketing and promotional activities.

Better Interchange
We would like to improve the interchange between sustainable modes at rail and bus stations including improved boarding, information, secure cycle parking and through ticketing.

Marketing and Awareness Raising
We shall use marketing and awareness raising of sustainable modes to existing car drivers via the Traffic Management Centre and through personalised travel planning. Many people are either unaware of the facilities and options for travelling so targeted information will be provided to potential bus and rail users, cyclists and walkers, especially in new housing areas.

Travel Information Hubs
We will develop travel information hubs to provide accurate information relating to journey times, departures, cost and carbon emissions.

Walking and Cycling Networks
We will build on the Green Grid principle to develop a high quality walking and cycling network, within and connecting urban areas which will be suitable for people with mobility impairment. We will also improve their maintenance through expanding the Kent Ranger volunteer network, the introduction of Bikeability cycle training to adults and the launch of a bike hire scheme similar to OYBike, starting in Canterbury.

Public Rights of Way
Over 40% of Kent's highway network are public rights of way (PROW), an extensive network of routes available for mainly pedestrian access but also cycling and riding. This network is extremely important to providing extra capacity to the highways network and dramatically improving pedestrian and cycling links to schools, shops and public transport.

Car/Cycle Hire
We will provide car club and cycle hire facilities at major destinations and transport hubs which can be booked online. We will also provide a pool of cycles for staff to use on business journeys.

Taxi Strategy
We feel that there are ways in which we can encourage taxi operators to become more sustainable, such as encouraging them to drive low emission vehicles.

Expansion of Travel Plans
We will work with all Kent businesses that have over 200 employees to

adopt travel plans which tackle congestion and improve journey times.

Low Emission Zones
We shall consider charging high emission vehicles during peak periods in our urban centres and identify sites as possible low emission zones. Town Centre/Residents Parking Zones parking charges will be discounted for low emission vehicles.

Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation, biofuels and whether Kent might have a role given agricultural economy...a new dimension for the Garden of England of the future?. There might also have been something about low carbon technologies and renewable energy opportunities linked to transport infrastructure but sadly nothing

Road Safety of Vulnerable Road Users

11. CLIMATE CHANGE & TRANSPORT PLANNING

Introduction

There is now overwhelming evidence from scientists that the world's climate is significantly changing as a result of human activity. Current levels of CO2 emissions have caused the world to warm by more than half a degree Celsius and, over the next few decades, will lead to at least a further half a degree warming. This is largely as a result of burning fossil fuels, deforestation and other land use changes. Transport is responsible for around half of the UK's CO2 emissions and so needs to make a considerable contribution to reduce this impact. By reducing emissions from transport this will also improve air quality and potentially reduce noise impacts.

The Climate Change Act (2008) commits central Government, by 2050, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80 per cent lower than the 1990 baseline. In addition, five yearly budgets are to be set which will contribute to meeting the longer term targets.

The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (2006)

The Stern Review is an assessment of the evidence of climate change and the costs to the world's economy. The Review recognises that 'climate change presents a unique challenge for economics: it is the greatest and widest-ranging market failure ever seen.' If the problem is ignored the Review states that it will eventually damage economic growth.

From all the evidence gathered by the Review the overwhelming conclusion is the benefits of early action far outweigh the costs. Taking early and 'strong' action to begin reducing emissions should be viewed as an investment which will 'avoid the risks of very severe consequences in the future.'

Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (2008)

Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) is the Government's response to the Eddington Transport Study and the Stern Review. The document outlines immediate plans to 2014 and the proposed approach to the longer term.

Two out of five of DaSTS goals relate to climate change, these are;

- To reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change;
- To improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.

DaSTS states 'we want to encourage low-carbon technology and improve efficiency of all modes of transport. We also want to ensure that, wherever practicable, there are low-carbon transport options for people to choose, and also solutions, such as better planning, which may reduce their need to travel.'

To decrease emissions, in the short to medium term, improved vehicle and fuel efficiency and behavioural change will play a significant role, 'and increasing the carrying capacity of transport networks will be a key element in supporting economic growth.' However, in the longer term, moves towards electric vehicles, rail electrification and decarbonisation of electricity generation will continue towards the greenhouse gas reduction targets. In addition

to technological advances, the relationship between economic growth and transport demand needs to considered, 'for example by planning cities to bring housing, jobs and services closer.' Over time, it must be clear that levels of emissions are declining in line with the greenhouse gas targets.

Local Transport Plan 3 Guidance

The Department for Transport (DfT) is encouraging local authorities to develop strategies and plans that mitigate against climate change. These include developing a sustainable transport system, encouraging behaviour change and reducing the need to travel.

Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 Guidance recognises that 'in addition to measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is important that local authorities put in place measures to improve the resilience of local transport to the impacts of climate change.'

Possible Options include:

- Development of work place and school travel plans to reduce emissions from car journeys, improve air quality and promote health
- Improvement of public transport services to reduce congestion
- Better integration of transport and land use planning to reduce the need to travel
- Working with partners to change the way key services such as highway maintenance and street lighting are delivered.'

Regional Funding Allocation

All major schemes in an authority's Local Transport Plan are required to be assessed by the regional assemblies who then advise Government on which schemes should be funded. The Government announced in its advice to regions for the 2008/09 Regional Funding Allocation refresh in 2008 that:

"In developing their proposals, regions should note that carbon budgets and targets are likely to become more challenging over time. DfT will therefore consider regional advice in the light of their aggregate impact on transport Carbon Dioxide emissions over time. In turn, regions should seek to estimate the effects of proposals on Carbon Dioxide emissions and to develop advice which supports delivery of this key DfT goal." It is evident from some of the schemes promoted by SEERA that not all of the schemes necessarily support this goal, but it is reasonable to assume that in future iterations of the RFA, greater value will be placed on schemes that reduced Carbon emissions.

In undertaking LTP3, Kent will have to take into account the need to actively demonstrate Carbon benefits for its major schemes.

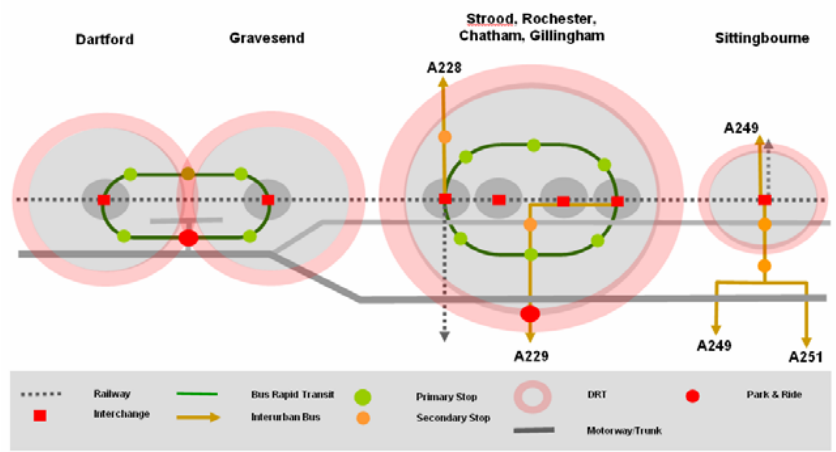
12. THE VISION FOR NORTH KENT – AN EXAMPLE

Integrated Transport Network

This strategy sets out a blueprint for an integrated transport network for Kent. This network will be made up of the separate public transport services as previously described.

Figure 4.1 shows how the integrated transport network could look for North Kent. This project is situated within two highway authorities (Kent and Medway) and is being developed as a partnership.

Figure 4.1 The integrated transport network in North Kent

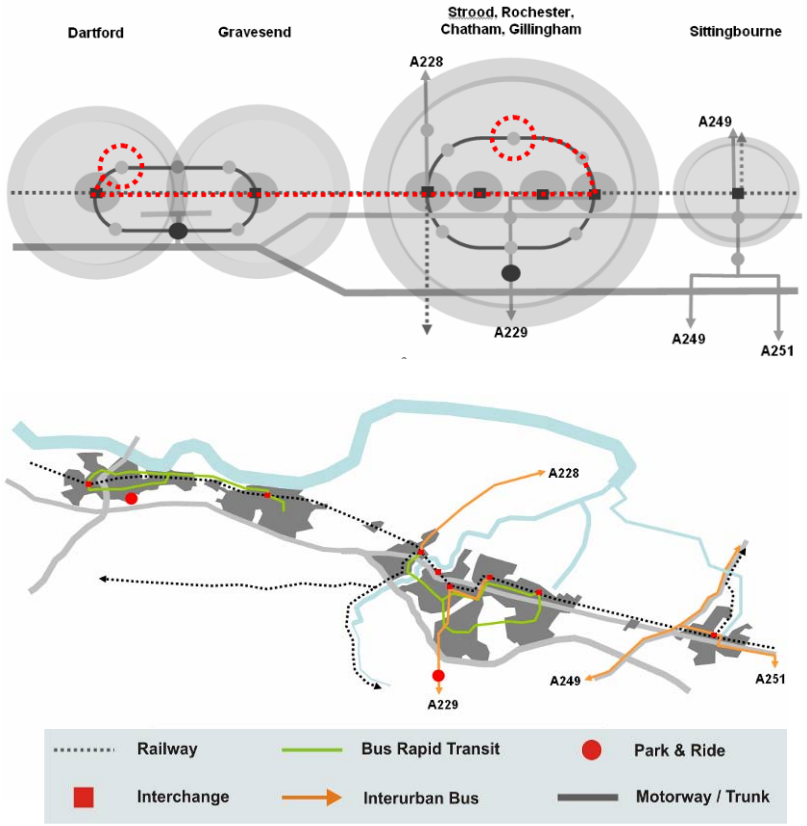


Each of the four urban areas; Dartford, Gravesham, Medway Towns and Sittingbourne, will have their own local transport networks. In the case of Dartford and Gravesham the Fastrack bus rapid transit system operates across both urban areas, as illustrated. For simplicity, the local bus service component is not featured.

The train stations on the North Kent line act as interchange hubs with two bus rapid transit systems; Fastrack in Kent Thameside and a similar rapid transit system in the Medway Towns. Inter-urban bus services are identified in the Medway Towns, including the existing 101 Service to Maidstone via the A229 corridor. Similar services could potentially be established to serve the Hoo Peninsula via the A228 and between Sittingbourne and Maidstone and Ashford, via the A249 and A251 corridors, respectively. The provision of a park and ride facility in Kent Thameside and the Medway Towns will provide transfer onto local bus services for those travelling by car.

Therefore, this is a transport network that provides for all types of trips, but places public transport at the heart of travelling within and between Kent's towns. For instance, those wishing to travel between Dartford and Gillingham will be able to do using a high quality public transport network comprising bus rapid transit and rail using just one ticket as outlined in Figure 4.2

Figure 4.2 Utilising an Integrated Transport Network for travel between towns



13. BRINGING IT TOGETHER IN KENT'S DISTRICTS

Ashford

The strategic position of Ashford on the channel corridor has meant that the town has always been a major transport hub. The M20 runs through the town and access is provided via junctions 9 and 10. Ashford also became a railway town, being the junction of five lines to Hastings, Folkestone, Canterbury, Maidstone and Tonbridge and is also served by the high speed rail link with an international railway station. Ashford will benefit from reduced journey times when High Speed One services commence in December 2009, with the quickest current journey time to London of 84 mins cut to 37 mins.

Because of its strategic location, good transport links and a generally flat topography, Ashford is one of the South-East region's growth areas, with the capacity to provide an additional 31,000 homes and 28,000 jobs over the period 2001 to 2031. This equals a doubling in the number of households within the town centre area by 2031. It is planned for Ashford to develop as an office, research and business node providing market growth for East Kent and an opportunity for large investments that require an expanding workforce.

The key transport issues for Ashford are:

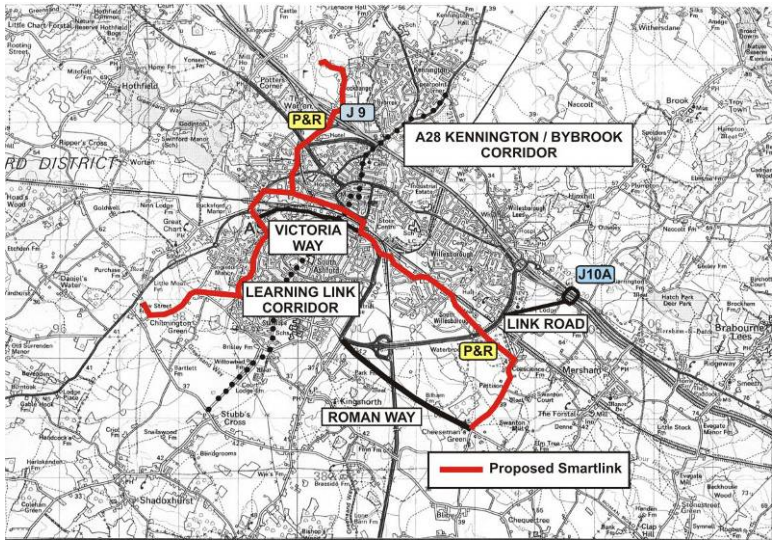
- Securing road access from development sites to and onto the M20
- To provide a high quality public transport network to connect the growth areas with the town centre, the international station and other key locations
- Provide a choice of transport modes for residents
- Create an attractive and high quality public realm in the town centre

Proposals

Highway improvements including M20 jct 9 and drovers roundabout, M20 jct 10 improvements and new jct 10a, Victoria Way corridor, Chart Road dualling, Orchard Way

Smartlink bus rapid transit system connecting the growth areas and out of town park and ride sites with the town centre and international station

Green spaces and the necklace incorporating walking and cycling routes



Canterbury

The City of Canterbury is the predominant retail, cultural and educational centre within East Kent and a principal focus for professional services and as a result, suffers from high levels of congestion. The city currently depends on a large net inflow of commuters to support the level of jobs in the area as well as an influx of secondary school children and around 160,000 vehicles per day travel to and from Canterbury along the nine "A" and "B" roads that converge on the city. Although the city is bypassed to the south-west by the A2, the highway network is under acute pressure and as a result, Canterbury suffers from significant congestion, especially on the inner ring road and inner radial routes and this is despite over 1 million passengers using the Park & Ride in 2004, made up of mainly shoppers and tourists. There are two railway stations which serve the city and High Speed One services will stop at the Canterbury West station from December 2009, cutting the journey time to London from 110 to 61 minutes.

The key transport issues for Canterbury are:

- Congestion hot spots particularly along the A28 and the ring-road
- Integration of rail services and connectivity between stations and maximising the benefits of High Speed One
- Sufficient transport infrastructure to support development in the Little Barton Farm area
- Reducing impact of traffic on the natural and historic environment of the city

Proposals

Provision of A2 slip roads to reduce city centre congestion and open up the Wincheap area for future development

Development of Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) to maximise efficient use of the existing road network

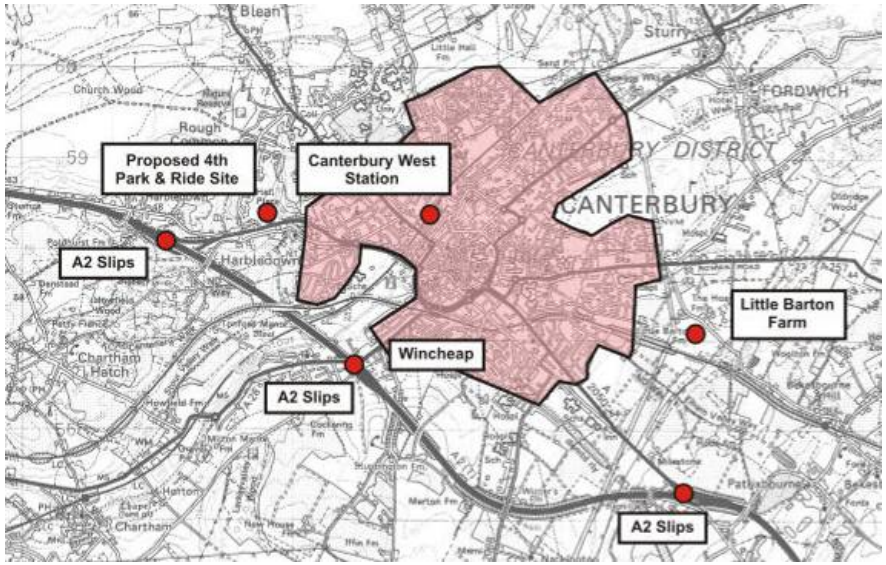
Fourth park and ride site

New junction on A2 with link to Little Barton Farm area

Bus lanes and bus priority measures

Extend and improve walking and cycling routes

Improvements to Canterbury West railway station



Dover

Dover is best known as the UK's major gateway to the Continent, being the UK's busiest ferry port which results in. traffic congestion along the A20 Townwall Street, causing pollution and severance between the town and sea front. This is exacerbated when disruption causes cross channel services to be suspended and Operation Stack is put into operation. The other main strategic road connection is the M2/A2 which runs inland past Canterbury, eventually reaching the M25 near the Dartford Crossing. Dover also has regular rail connections from its central station, Dover Priory. The most direct service to London is via the Folkestone line which connects with services from Ashford, with other lines that connect to the north Kent line via Canterbury and a coastal line to Deal, Sandwich and Thanet. High Speed One services will serve the town from December 2009, reducing the journey time from 116 to 64 minutes.

The key transport issues for Dover are:

- Increase in cross-channel freight traffic using the Port causing congestion and pollution on A20 and severance
- Growth Point Status resulting in significant housing between 10-14,000 new homes at Whitfield requiring improvements to the A2
- Better accessibility to town centre and railway station to maximise benefits of High Speed One
- Regeneration of the old colliery sites around Aylesham and Snowdown and supporting growth in the Sandwich corridor

Proposals

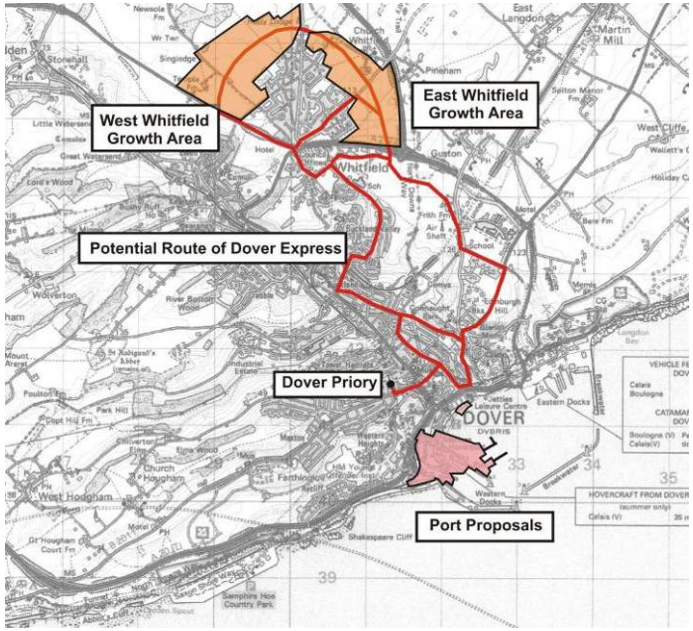
Expansion of Western Docks, seafront development and related access improvements to A20 with bifurcation of port traffic via M20/A20 (Western Docks) and A2/M2 (Eastern Docks)

Dualling of A2 from Lydden to Dover and improvements to the network at Whitfield

Dover Priory railway station improvements

Rapid bus transit system between Whitfield, Dover town centre and the railway station

East Kent Access Phase 2



Kent Thameside

Kent Thameside is part of Thames Gateway, Europe's largest regeneration project, and is formed by the parts of Dartford and Gravesham which fall north of the A2 corridor. With 25,000 new homes and 50,000 new jobs being developed by 2026, it is essential that the transport system is planned and managed to ensure that the road network continues to function effectively to serve both existing communities and the proposed development sites.

The area is intersected by the M25/A282 with the A2 forming the southern boundary, and to the north, the river Thames. The transport hub for Kent Thameside is the new domestic and international station at Ebbsfleet, providing journey times to London of 17 minutes on High Speed 1.

The key transport issues for Kent Thameside are:

- To achieve a sustainable community and reduce the need for long distance travel.
- Congestion hot spots including the M25/A282 Dartford Crossing, A2 corridor including the Bean Interchange; B262 Hall Road/Springhead Road; A226 London Road/St Clements Way; and the town centres of Dartford and Gravesend.
- Integration of rail services and connectivity between stations to maximise the benefits of High Speed 1.
- Sufficient transport infrastructure to mitigate the impact of the planned development including walking and cycling routes
- Significant levels of traffic generated by Bluewater.

Proposals

Strategic Transport Investment Package Schemes (STIPS) over the next 12 years totalling over £185m including UTMC across Kent Thameside

Support the creation of high density development by providing high quality public transport links between urban areas and London.

Improvements to Dartford and Gravesend town centres' public transport interchanges to promote public transport journeys

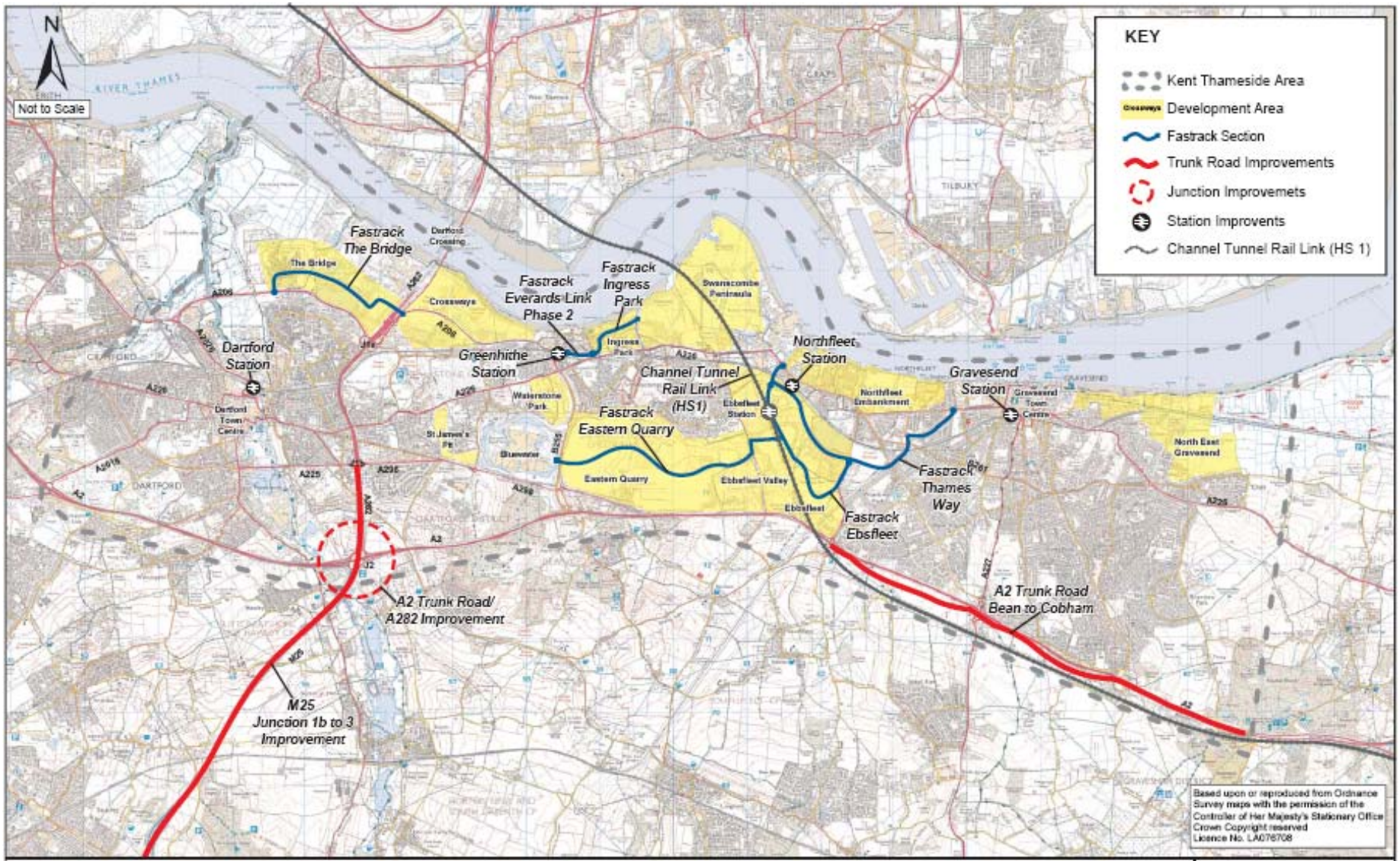
A226 Thames Way (South Thames Development Route) Dualling (2015/16 delivery target) – a principal arterial route through the Kent Thameside growth area.

Green Grid project to join green spaces with a continuous pedestrian and cycle path adjacent to the River Thames, with improved links to existing communities and development sites.

Continued Fastrack and high quality bus improvements

Dartford, Gravesend, Northfleet and Greenhithe Station improvements.

Lower Thames Crossing to relieve congestion at the Dartford Crossing incorporating Fastrack facilities to extend this bus rapid transit system into the South Essex Rapid Transit system



Kent Thameside - Major Developments & Committed Transport Schemes

Maidstone

Maidstone is the County Town of Kent. It is a designated Growth Point status, and identified as a Regional Hub in the South East Plan.

The town centre currently experiences severe congestion, particularly where three 'A' roads meet at the bridge gyratory system. An Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system that is now proving affective in managing traffic signals efficiently.

There is a large volume of inbound traffic heading for the town's offices, shops and schools every day. These movements are served by an extensive bus network, including three Park & Ride sites run by the Borough Council. Outbound commuting takes place on the regular rail service to London via Maidstone East.

The key transport issues for Maidstone:

- Congestion hot spots and areas of poor Air Quality, particularly in the town centre and on the A roads into Maidstone.
- High Growth Point targets for future housing provision.
- The need to serve a proposed urban extension of 5-6,000 homes to the south and east of the town by sustainable transport.
- Maintaining accessibility to the town centre by public transport.
- Maintaining frequent rail services, particularly to London city area.

Proposals

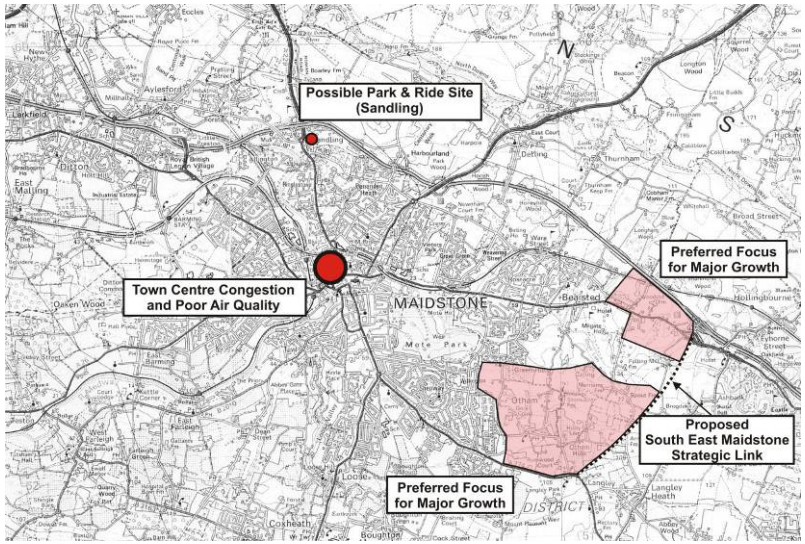
Construction of the South East Maidstone Strategic Link to give direct access from the proposed urban extension to the M20 at Junction 8.

Extension of bus lanes to serve the proposed urban extensions.

Additional Park & Ride sites to assist in reducing congestion in the town centre.

Coordination with the Highways Agency to manage the local and strategic networks as efficiently as possible.

Improved walking and cycling networks, supported by Travel Plan requirements for new major developments.



Sevenoaks

The district of Sevenoaks is in west Kent and borders Greater London to the north-west, Surrey to the west and Sussex to the south. It is largely rural in nature with the majority of the District designated as Green Belt (93%), with two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). There are three main urban areas in the District: Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge. The District is well located in terms of its proximity to London and the Continent, with a number of major transport links running through or alongside it including the M25, M26 and M20 motorways. Railways provide links to London, Gatwick and Ashford.

The key transport issues for Sevenoaks are:

- Achieving a rebalance of the transport network in favour of non-car modes as a means of access to services and facilities.
- Working towards an improved and integrated network of public transport services in and between both urban and rural areas.
- Reducing impact of traffic on the natural and historic environment of the main urban areas.
- Development pressures resulting from Sevenoaks location in the commuter belt.
- 11 AQMAs in the District.
- Congestion hot spots in Sevenoaks and Swanley town centres, and on the A25 and the A225.

Proposals

Provision of east facing slips at junction 5 of the M25/M26 at Chevening to enable traffic approaching from the south to travel east of the M26 and M25.

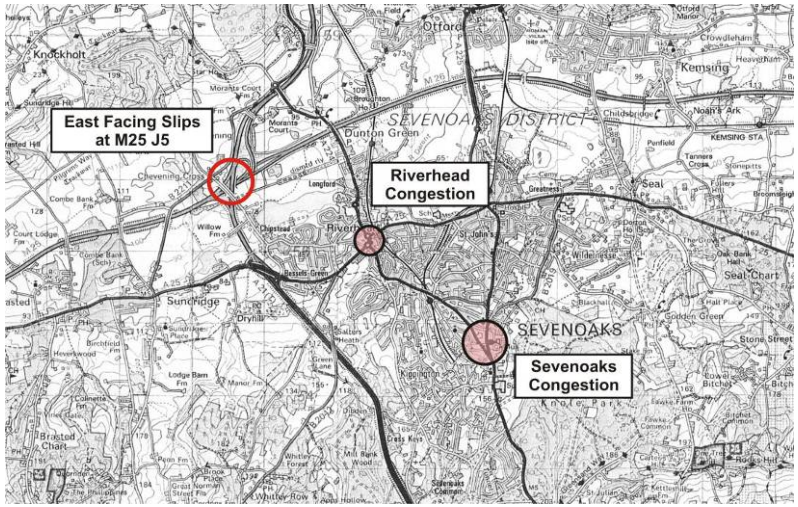
Development of Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) to maximise efficient use of the existing road network and improve Air Quality.

Bus lanes and bus priority measures to improve the commercial viability of operating buses to, from and within the Sevenoaks District.

Extend and improve walking and cycling routes.

Improved community and voluntary transport options.

Ensuring reliable and improved services for commuters into London from Sevenoaks.



Shepway

Shepway is located within the channel corridor so the main transport issues relate to the impact of international traffic. Folkestone is the main urban, retail and commercial centre in Shepway with Hythe and Sandgate located along the coast, Hawkinge which lies on the North Downs and various towns and villages dotted around the Romney Marsh. As in many of the coastal towns in Kent, Folkestone has suffered from several decades of economic decline, due mainly to the loss of seaside trade and ferry services due to competition from the Channel Tunnel and Dover. The town centre is facing increased competition from neighbouring shopping centres with leakage of trade to Canterbury and Ashford.

In transport terms, Folkestone has good road access to London and the south-east via the M20, the A20 and the A259, and regular rail services to London and Dover. Folkestone will benefit with the introduction of High Speed One services in December 2009, with the current journey time being cut from 101 mins to 51 mins, making Folkestone an attractive place to live. The Channel Tunnel facility is located to the north of Folkestone at Cheriton.

The key transport issues for Folkestone are:

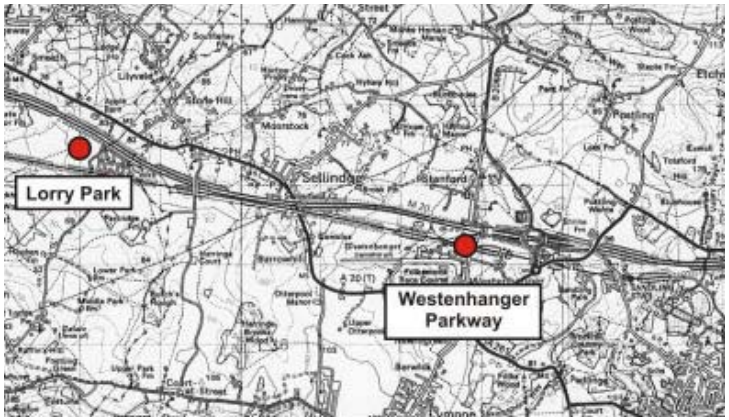
- The impact of Operation Stack on the local road network
- Maximising the benefits of High Speed One and managing the impact on local journey patterns
- Supporting the regeneration proposals for the seafront as part of the Folkestone Harbour and Seafront Masterplan with better access to the seafront from the town centre
- Poor public transport access to/from surrounding rural areas

Proposals

Lorry park at Aldington (Ashford district) with additional capacity for Operation Stack

Parkway station at Westenhanger and improvements to Folkestone West station

Improved public transport between rural areas and key destinations



Swale

The Borough of Swale is located in north Kent, with Sittingbourne as the main population centre with the towns of Faversham, an historic market town and Sheerness, the main town on the Isle of Sheppey. Both Sheerness and Sittingbourne have suffered from high unemployment and therefore, the priority for the area is economic regeneration and employment. The western part of Swale (including the Isle of Sheppey) forms part of the Thames Gateway growth area and 9,500 new dwellings are planned by 2026.

The Borough is well served by transport. The M2 gives quick journey times into London and the rest of the south-east and the recently completed Sheppey Crossing has reduced disruption on the A249 for traffic travelling to and from the Isle of Sheppey. The A2 runs parallel to the M2 and connects Sittingbourne with the Medway towns and Faversham. Following the same alignment is the North Kent railway line which serves a similar function linking Faversham, Sittingbourne and the Medway towns with London. Sittingbourne will benefit from the new High Speed One services that commence in December 2009, cutting journey times to and from London from 69 mins to 53 mins. Sheerness is located on a branch line from Sittingbourne. The A251 provides the only direct road link between Faversham and Ashford, including access to emergency hospital services for the eastern part of Swale.

The key transport issues for Swale are:

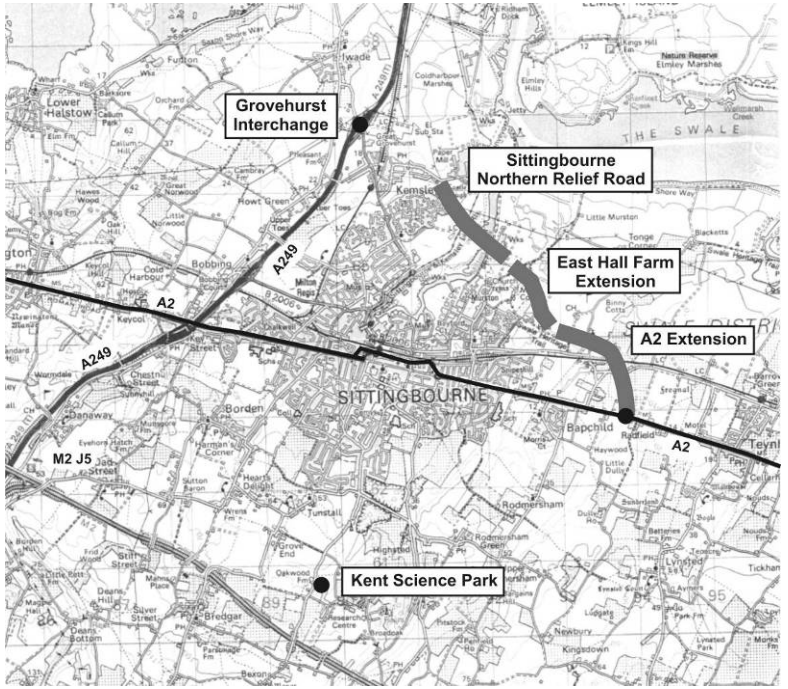
- Securing the infrastructure to open up the key development areas for housing and employment
- Capacity improvements on the strategic road network
- Regeneration of the town centre

Proposals

Major road infrastructure including Sittingbourne Relief Road, A2/M2 junction 5 capacity improvement, A249 Grovehurst Interchange, Rushenden Relief Road

Expansion of Kent Science Park with possible new link to M2 (south) and A2 (north)

Traffic management improvements to Sittingbourne town centre



Thanet

Thanet is located on the north-east corner of Kent, comprising the sea-side towns of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs which form a horseshoe-shaped settlement pattern following the coast as well as smaller villages and rural areas. The area has suffered from increasing unemployment and deprivation due to the closure of the East Kent coalfields and especially for Thanet, the decline of the traditional English seaside holiday trade but has recently experienced economic regeneration through the development of the Westwood Cross shopping centre and associated business, leisure and educational development in the surrounding area. The new Turner Contemporary Gallery will be completed in 2012 and this will be one of the key drivers in the regeneration of Margate.

Road connections to the rest of the UK have been improved through the dualling of the A299 Thanet Way and Phase 1 of East Kent Access though the recent growth at Westwood Cross has resulted in greater congestion on the local road network, especially at weekends. Thanet is served by seven railway stations with direct connections to London via the Medway towns and Canterbury and also the coastal line to Dover and Folkestone. The introduction of High Speed One services in December 2009 will reduce journey times between London and Ramsgate from 129 mins to 81 mins. Kent International Airport (KIA) is located at Manston and the Port of Ramsgate offers a direct ferry service to Oostende.

The key transport issues for Thanet are:

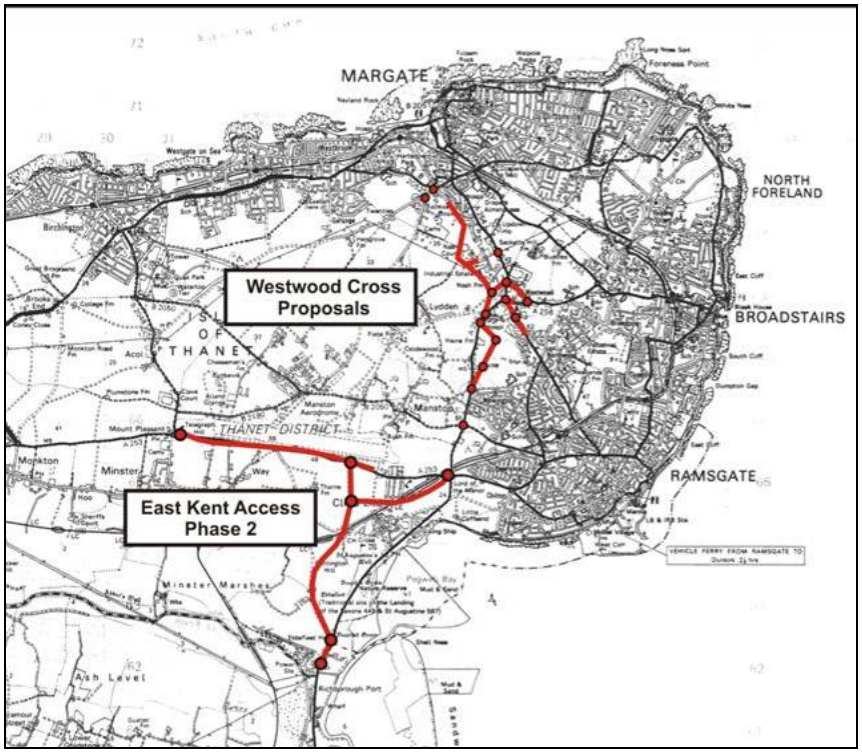
- Securing the infrastructure to support 1,000 planned houses adjacent to Westwood Cross, the nearby mixed development at Eurokent and the business site at Manston Park
- Supporting the regeneration of Margate
- Maximising the benefits of High Speed One and managing the impact on local journey patterns
- Supporting the expansion of Kent International Airport and the Port of Ramsgate through improved transport links

Proposals

East Kent Access Phase 2

Local Road Improvements around Westwood Cross

KIA Parkway Station



Tonbridge & Malling

The Borough of Tonbridge and Malling has a population of approximately 112,000 and covers an area of just over 24,000 hectares.

The Borough does not have a single urban focus but is comprised of a number of diverse, contrasting settlements and neighbourhoods. A considerable area of the Borough is rural in character. The M20 motorway, a key national link, cuts through the middle of the Borough and has important implications for traffic patterns on the local network. Tonbridge and Tonbridge Wells together form a 'hub' in the South East Plan, implying that priority will be given to transport and accessibility improvements in this area.

The key transport issues for Tonbridge & Malling are:

- Dealing with the transportation implications of the range of developments in the Borough.
- The adverse impacts of traffic on the A25 corridor through Platt, Borough Green and Ightham.
- Poor air quality in a number of declared management zones arising from traffic related factors, including a long stretch of the A20 and in Tonbridge town centre.
- Poor rail connections to the City of London on the West Malling/Maidstone East Line.
- Poor connections and deteriorating service from the Borough to Gatwick on the Tonbridge/Redhill Line.
- Peak period congestion hot spots.

Proposals

Bus lanes and bus priority measures – especially focussed on the A20 corridor.

Develop and improve walking and cycling networks through strategies.

Construction of a bypass at Borough Green.

Dualling of the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury.

Work with Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies in the area to enhance opportunities for transport interchange at stations.

A228 Corridor Improvements – including at Kent Street and at Colts Hill - to relieve the A26 corridor.

Tunbridge Wells

Tunbridge Wells Borough is an area of 326 square kilometres bordering Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Ashford in Kent; and Rother and Wealden in East Sussex. The town of Royal Tunbridge Wells is the main urban centre in the District, providing social, cultural and economic opportunities. Southborough, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook, Hawkhurst and 17 villages serve the extensive rural population.

The Borough benefits from a good rail service to Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and London, a bus network that covers both the urban and rural areas and good provision of car parking facilities within the town centres, many of which are free in the more rural towns.

There are very high levels of car ownership and use within the Borough, resulting in congestion and poor air quality issues. Royal Tunbridge Wells is a centre of strategic importance in the South East: a Regional Hub of economic, social and cultural activity. Infrastructure improvements and increased use of high quality public transport, cycling and walking facilities have already started to reduce traffic congestion, and this is a key area for continued improvement in the future.

The key transport issues for Tunbridge Wells are:

- Regional hub allocated jointly in the South East Plan between Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge owing to their complementary roles: Tunbridge Wells as a significant economic and service centre and Tonbridge as a major transport interchange.
- Congestion hot spots on the A21 between Tonbridge and Royal Tunbridge Wells; on the Pembury Road; within the North Farm/Longfield Road industrial area; and on the A26 within the towns of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.
- Air Quality management areas across the district.
- Reducing impact of traffic on the natural and historic environment of the main urban areas.
- Ensure optimum accessibility to new hospital at Pembury.
- Development pressures resulting from location in the commuter belt.

Proposals

Maximise benefits of being a regional hub.

Development of Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) to maximise efficient use of the existing road network.

Implement Park & Ride to tackle congestion and poor air quality in Tunbridge Wells town centre.

Bus lanes and bus priority measures.

Extend and improve walking and cycling routes.

Ensuring reliable and improved services for commuters into London from Tunbridge Wells.