

Faversham Town Council Active Travel Fund Tranche 4:

Cross Town Walking Route

Report on Exhibition held at FTC Town Hall, Nov-23

Introduction

Faversham Town Council hosted an exhibition of the proposed interventions to implement the Cross Town Walking Route (XTWR) using funding from Active Travel England.

The exhibition had two main aims:

- Raise awareness of the interventions being planned in order to reduce concerns during the works – there is likely to be some traffic disruption.
- Identify potential enhancements to the scheme.

On both aims, the exhibition can be considered a success, with some 300 – 400 people visiting the Exhibition over [3] weeks and there were a number of suggestions made for improvements, some which can be included; others will need to wait for future funding.

The route starts at Faversham Recreation Ground and ends at Wallers Road on Lower Road. Total funding is a little under £1m and the work on the route is planned to start by March 2024. Twelve interventions are planned:

- 4 major interventions, principally enhanced crossings /reworking of junctions on busier streets: Newton Road, Bank Street, South Road/Napleton Road and Lower Road/South Road
- 8 smaller interventions along the route: mainly raised tables to make for a better / more level walking experience and road narrowing to slow down traffic.

Detailed feedback

Some 300 – 400 people visited the Exhibition over 3 weeks and 116 gave feedback, either by email (19), on post-it notes 44 or using pre-printed forms 53.

Overall, the feedback was positive, although concerns were expressed about the total amount of funding, which some considered to be high. There were also a number of suggested improvements, either as part of these plans, or for the future.

The largest set of comments were about the 4 major interventions planned, plus an overall concern about whether the interventions on Lower Road will reduce vehicle speeds sufficiently.

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- The new Zebra crossing on Newton Road was seen very positively. Concern was expressed about the lighting around the area, particularly in Gatefield Lane, which is seen as intrusive. Respondents would also like to see a crossing further up Newton Road at Solomons Lane – see comment later

- Bank Street received fewer comments, with the main concern being about whether pedestrians will have sufficient right of way, whether cars will be able to speed up coming out of the car park because the exit has a slightly less tight turn and whether the unofficial carparking outside Paydens can be removed
- While respondents welcomed the Zebra crossing on South Road from Cross Lane to Napleton Road in principle, concerns were expressed about design:
 - will it lead to more flooding?
 - Will the raised tables be noisy for those living nearby?
 - Could the intervention be extended to include Stone Street, seen by many as a desire line for accessing the town centre?
- The improvements to the junction of Lower Road and South Road were welcomed. One question was whether there could be an additional crossing of South Road to the east of Lower Road.
- The interventions along Lower Road, mainly junction tightening and raised tables across the side junctions, were generally welcome, with some caveats about whether there could be:
 - More interventions to slow the vehicles as they come down Lower Road
 - More crossing points, particularly on pedestrian desire lines, for example around the park near Lion Field
- Although there were limited comments on the interventions in the St. Mary's area, they were generally welcomed.

Current position

Kent Council Council is currently finalising its plans, taking into consideration this and other feedback received about the interventions. The proposals have now been sent out to tender. The programme is currently on track to be completed in Autumn 2024.

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