

# LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 5

## STRIKING THE BALANCE



JULY 2024



# CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Introduction	5
What does a Local Transport Plan do?	9
Delivering Our council-wide strategies Framing Kent's Future and Securing Kent's Future	11
The challenges we face	12
Our ambition for transport in the county	13
Our proposed outcomes to address the challenges we face	14
Strategic network-wide proposals	22
Strategic road network proposals	25
Local road network	32
Public and shared transport network proposals	38
Walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised travel proposals	49
Considering the effect of our plan on carbon emissions	53
District specific proposals	58
The funding we need for our Plan	82
To Conclude	84
Glossary	85

# FOREWORD



I am pleased to introduce our new draft Local Transport Plan. Our plan sets out our updated ambition and outcomes for transport and the proposals we have identified to deliver them. We have a successful track record of ensuring we have a clear plan that can steer delivery across the transport mix. Whether you drive, catch a bus, take the train, cycle, wheel or walk, we have aimed to strike a balance across our proposals so that delivering our plan should make your journeys better.

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

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

None of these challenges are new - it has always been the case that we need to work hard to secure funding. Our past success shows that being clear about why and how we want transport networks in Kent to change gives us the greatest likelihood of securing new funding.

Having a Local Transport Plan that is clear on our needs allows us to focus our efforts with partners to drive forward delivery of large, impactful changes to transport. Our last plan, for example, set out our ambition for the essential new Lower Thames Crossing. Building on this ambition and working with partners to support the project means that its delivery is now closer than ever as we await the Secretary of State's determination through the planning process. Our new plan builds on this, setting out the strategy to maximise the benefits of the Crossing by ensuring the wider strategic road network is fit for purpose.

Likewise, our last plan set out our intentions for growing the Fastrack network in north Kent and establishing a new network in Dover. Those improvements are now underway and so our new plan looks at the future opportunities to extend the benefits of these networks, working to our 'infrastructure-first' principle where we can.

Our ambition and proposals for improving journeys in Kent are set upon the foundation of aiming to ensure our existing highway network gets the funding it needs. Getting funding will mean we can further maintain it and ensure it can cope with the pressures it faces from its high and growing use, as well as the effects of more impactful weather events such as very high rainfall and high temperatures. Our focus on this fundamental aspect supports a further fundamental of a safe road network and its role in the safe-system approach we established in our existing road safety strategy.

Our Plan sets out what the next steps for improving our transport networks should be, covering our proposals for the road and public transport networks. The majority of trips in the county are made by private or business vehicles and that will continue given the low and zero emission vehicles that residents and businesses are switching to. We need to ensure that our road network supports this travel as it is essential for our economy and quality of life.

Concerning bus services and walking and cycling journeys, our roads are essential for enabling these types of journeys – and as the local highway and transport authority we direct and invest funding from government to in what

works best for our communities. We have already published detailed plans for these journeys – our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and our emerging Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP). These plans demonstrate our balanced approach towards improving all parts of the transport network and we have taken the opportunity in this Local Transport Plan to emphasise the need for their funding to be sufficient and sustained.

Whilst we don't manage the rail network, we have nevertheless set out key changes to both passenger and freight services that we will work with the industry to deliver. The rail system in Kent is already very low carbon and growth in its use should be seen as a key way of quickly reducing emissions both for passenger travel and for freight.

We know the rail industry is going to go through reforms, but whatever shape those take our plan's clear priorities will provide the focus for our partnership working. We need more accessible stations, more frequent services to better connect Kent's towns and villages, and for the use of the international infrastructure to be maximised to support trade and the visitor economy and shift goods vehicles off the road network and onto rail.

In 2023, the consultation on the emerging Local Transport Plan demonstrated that the issue of climate change is important to many of you. I am pleased to say that our work to develop our plan has enabled us to understand how we can help the switch to lower carbon transport and where the greatest potential successes are. We have a number of proposals that can reduce carbon emissions, and these are intended to strike a balance with other proposals, all aiming to support economic growth and the efficient movement of people and goods.

Our work shows that providing greater access to electric vehicle charging points across Kent will be essential to keep up the pace on lowering emissions from road use. This is why I have already taken the decision to proceed with a long-term programme of on-street electric vehicle charging sockets. Supporting the switch will help to lower the carbon emissions from journeys and improve local air quality.

We know there will be changes to the transport network that will create carbon emissions due to their construction and by enabling new or longer journeys. However, we now have a set of tools to calculate whole life carbon impacts that will enable us to refine our proposals to minimise these impacts. The wider highways and transport industry is focused on developing lower carbon approaches to maintaining and delivering new transport infrastructure – for example National Highways aim for the Lower Thames Crossing to lead the way in aiming for carbon neutral construction as part of road building and we expect to be able to learn from that experience should the project proceed.

I am confident that our new Local Transport Plan can deliver our ambition for Kent and I am pleased to invite you to have your say on it. This is a draft plan because your views will help us to form our final Plan and make our decision about whether to adopt it. I look forward to hearing and understanding your views when the consultation closes on 8th October 2024.

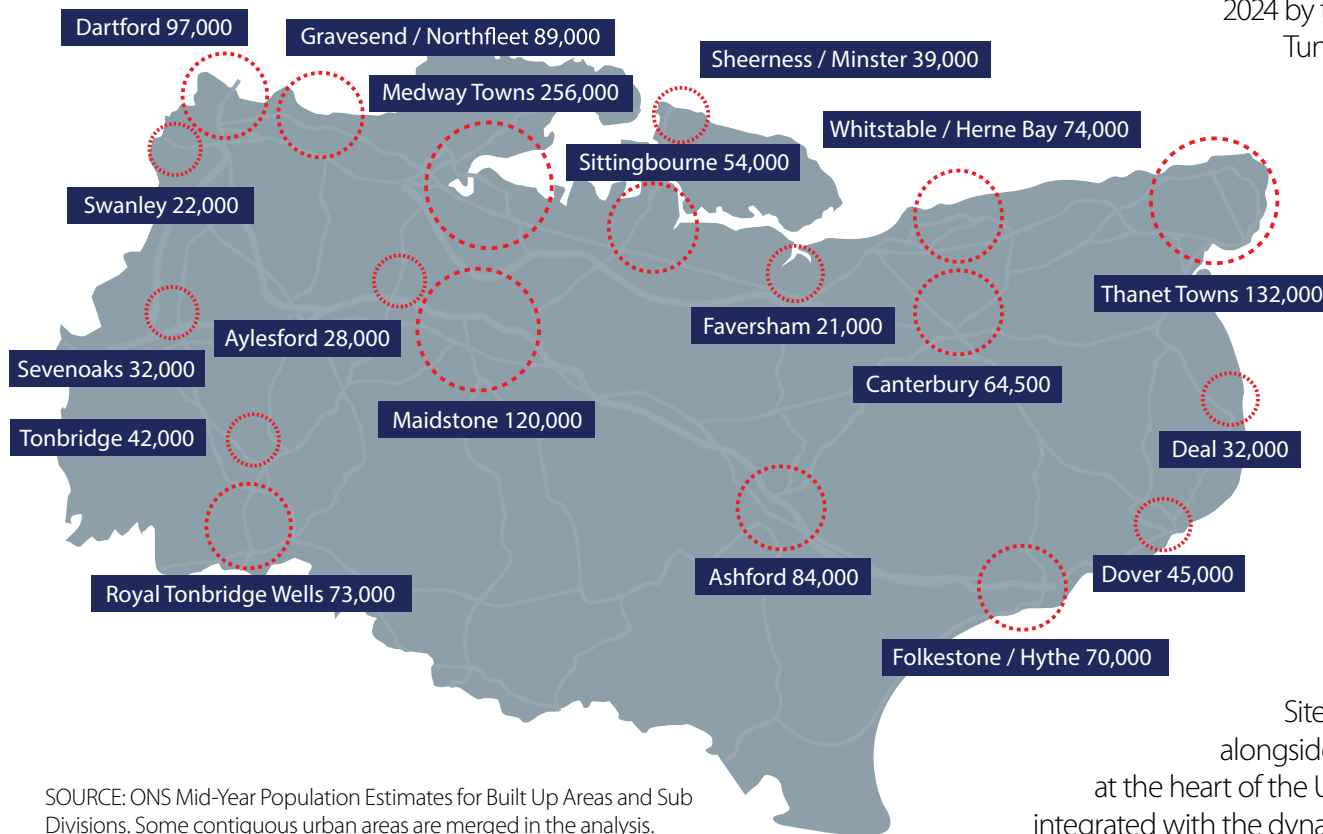
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N Baker', with a long horizontal line underneath it.

**Neil Baker,**  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

# INTRODUCTION

Kent County Council is pleased to present our new full Local Transport Plan (LTP) called Striking the Balance to replace our fourth plan called Delivering Growth without Gridlock (2016-2031). This fifth Local Transport Plan is currently in draft form, no final decisions have been made regarding the contents. We are consulting and actively seeking feedback from the public before the Council votes whether to adopt the proposed plan.

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



SOURCE: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates for Built Up Areas and Sub Divisions. Some contiguous urban areas are merged in the analysis.

The Local Transport Plan covers the Kent County Council administrative area – an area of circa 1.6 million people – one of the largest single authorities in the country and with an economy greater in size than several of the Mayoral combined authority regions. It is an area of strategic importance to the country as a whole, playing a crucial role in the national economy, although the polycentricity of the county, with a large number of medium sized towns and conurbations – see Figure 1. This means there is no one large high density urban centre, making travel patterns in the county complex when mixed with the high burden of international road based traffic and London orbital traffic.

Kent is the UK's primary gateway to continental Europe, highlighted in 2024 by the thirtieth anniversary of the opening of the Channel Tunnel. We are a major centre for innovation in food, life sciences and manufacturing, with a vibrant cultural and creative scene. We are growing rapidly, underpinned by some of Britain's most important locations for regeneration and investment.

For example, although Covid was a significant shock to the economy, the transport system and people's journey behaviours, there are now 21,000 more jobs and over 2,700 more businesses in Kent than in 2019. This contributed to over 100,000 more jobs in the county since 2010, and over 140,000 more residents.

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

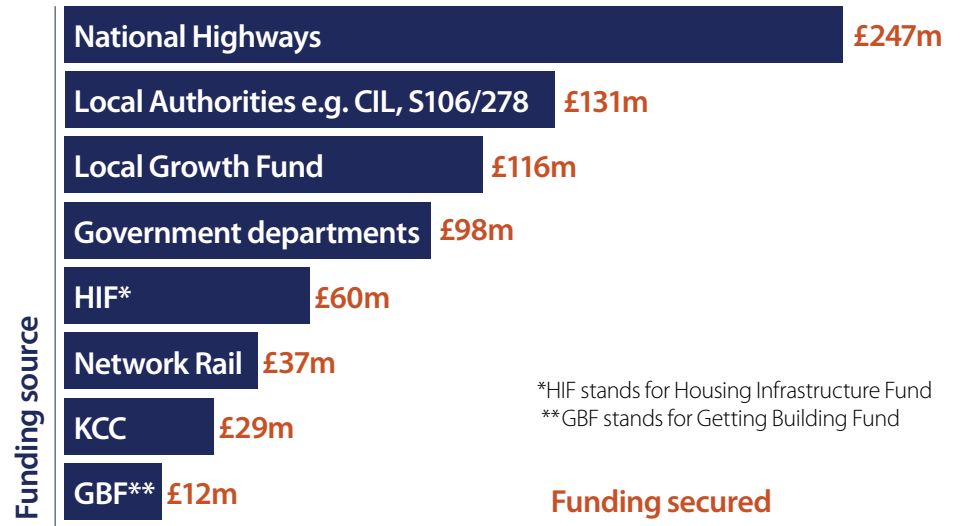
With rapid population, business and employment growth in recent years, we are a place where people want to live, and businesses want to invest. This creates challenges for transport but also underlines our reliance on it. The opportunity from sustaining investment in our transport networks is that it can improve the county’s economy and quality of life, enhancing the prospects of business and residents.

We know this because this past success of economic growing our county was coupled with investment in transport. This includes investments that we successfully secured ourselves and with our partners, totalling over £400m to deliver proposals in our fourth Local Transport Plan that we adopted in 2017. We also supported the case for further investment in networks we do not manage, such as the Strategic Road Network (SRN). This is the national motorway and trunk road network that is managed by the National Highways. Overall, more than £700m has been invested – see Figure 2 – delivering the completed schemes detailed in Table 1, whilst further schemes are substantially progressed and soon to be constructed.

The investment we secured was additional to our annual funding for public transport and highway maintenance, and our success demonstrates the impact of a clear plan with clear priorities. It also demonstrates the scale of

investment needed to deliver the range of improvements that have been delivered or are in construction, and costs have only risen since this period.

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



**Table 1 - Schemes delivered from our last Local Transport Plan**

- M2 Junction 5 Improvements (under construction)
- A20 junction improvements between A228 and M20 junctions
- Maidstone to the city of London rail services
- A2 Bean and Ebbsfleet junction improvements
- Elements of the Maidstone Integrated Transport package
- M20 Junction 10a
- Sandwich station upgrade
- Herne Relief Road
- Ashford to Ramsgate Rail Journey Time Improvement Program
- Dartford town centre urban realm improvements
- Bearsted Road improvements (under construction)
- Thanet Parkway Railway Station
- Expansion of Fastrack network in north Kent
- Improvements to A2500 Lower Road and Barton Hill Drive junction
- Ashford International Station Spurs Signalling project
- BRT (Fastrack) network in Dover (under construction)
- Grovehurst Road and interchange junction with the A249 (under construction)
- Urban Traffic Control improvements across Kent’s towns
- Gravesend transport interchange & Rathmore Road link
- Ashford town centre – Station Access junction and crossings improvement
- Maidstone East station redevelopment
- Deal Improvements including new link road
- Folkestone Seafront improvements
- Sittingbourne town centre improvements and transport interchange
- Tonbridge town centre regeneration and urban realm improvements
- Kent Thameside local sustainable transport and St Clements Way junction improvements

## INTRODUCTION CONTINUED

Some of our strategic priorities in Delivering Growth without Gridlock remain undelivered, and we will continue to work at securing those as they remain essential improvements to the county. Those priorities that remain have been incorporated into this new full LTP and we have reiterated why they remain necessary approaches or investments.

Although there are some priorities carried over from our previous LTP, much has changed since adopting it – for example, the UK has left the European Union, there have been new government policies, an adoption of net zero 2050 and the interim carbon budget targets into UK law, changes to the funding available to us, the longer term impacts of the Covid pandemic on how people work and travel, amongst other things.

We have supplemented what remains with our new policies and proposals to address the changes that have occurred. These proposals cover not only the local highways network that the Council is responsible for, but also the networks that other operators manage, such as the motorway and trunk road network run by National Highways and the rail network managed by Network Rail and Train Operating Companies. We have set out proposals for these because we act in the interests of the constituents of the county who also rely on these networks.

The changes that have occurred have affected how and when people travel, why they travel, what transport operations and networks can provide, and also the priorities that national and local government have for travel and transport. The challenges arising for transport in our county from all the changes we are experiencing are summarised in section 6 of our LTP, whilst more detail about those and the review of our previous Local Transport Plan Delivering Growth without Gridlock is provided in our Evidence Base report.

The government wants to modernise transport infrastructure and establish a long term strategy to do that efficiently and to time. The government also recognises that in places like Kent, cars remain by far the most popular form of transport and that road networks need investment to be maintained. The government has also invited authorities (such as County Councils) to negotiate and agree devolution deals to enable greater autonomy in the investment of government funds. These devolution deals often include local transport funding settlements and sometimes devolution of some statutory powers where a case exists.



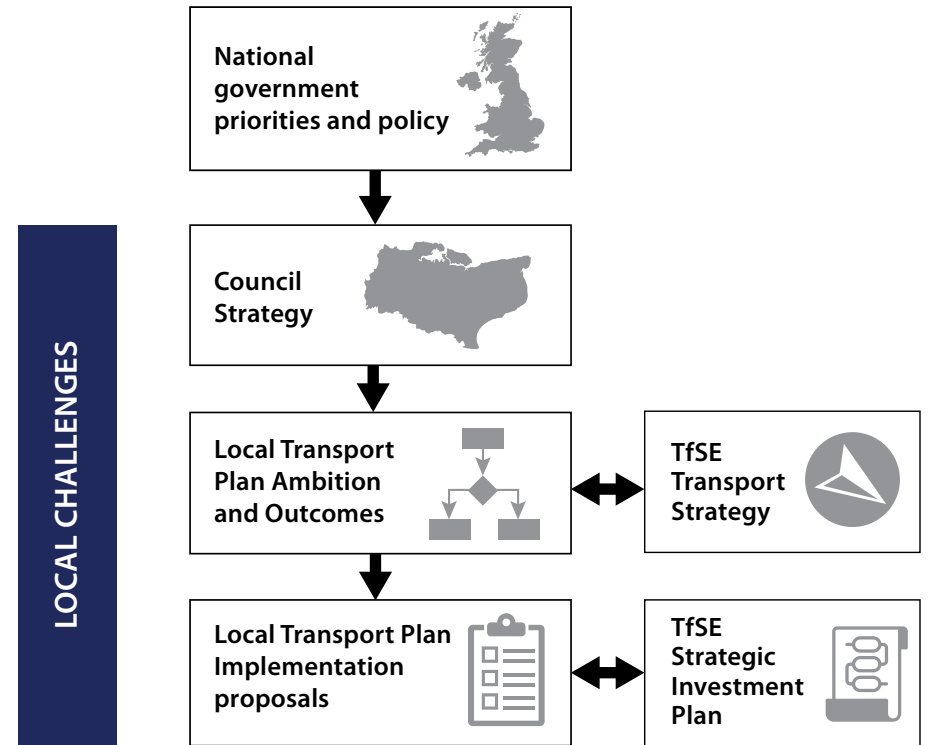
Photo credit: Network Rail

We fully support the principles of seeking to ensure all parts of the nation are prosperous by ensuring their transport systems are modern effective and well used by giving greater control to local authorities over how that is achieved. The notion of "Levelling Up" is the first priority in our Council-wide strategy Framing Kent's Future, established in May 2022.

Framing Kent's Future set clear commitments that the Council will focus on and so this new LTP has been developed with them in mind. We have set out in section 4 how our Local Transport Plan can directly support our three priorities of Levelling Up, Infrastructure for Communities and an Environmental Step Change. Across these priorities we have set out the actions we said we will take, and in our Evidence Base report we have described in detail what we are doing to deliver the commitments.

We have developed our plan to ensure that the detailed proposals follow the "golden thread" of policy and strategy that is weaved down from the national level (such as Levelling Up), through our own Council Strategy, and our plan's relationship to Transport for the South East's (TfSE) strategy – as illustrated by Figure 3. TfSE is the region's Sub-national Transport Body (STB). These detailed assessments are set out in our published Supporting Evidence Base.

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



In the rest of our draft full LTP you can read in more detail about what it is designed to do. The plan describes the challenges we think we need to address, and what our ambition is for addressing them. It then sets out a series of proposals for changes to the transport networks across the county to enable the outcomes of the plan to be achieved. The likely funding needed is set out and the potential delivery timescales subject to securing that funding.



# WHAT DOES A LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN DO?

**This section is very important, and we urge you to read it before reading the rest of the emerging Local Transport Plan.** This is because this section explains the reason for the plan, and how we are supposed to prepare the plan based on legislation and guidance.

## Our responsibility as a Local Transport Authority

Our responsibilities as a County Council (also known as an upper tier local authority) includes a role as the Local Transport Authority. National legislation such as the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, set out requirements by the Government on what Local Transport Authorities must do. Specifically, the Acts state that Kent County Council has a duty to:

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

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

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

This document is our emerging Local Transport Plan, and it represents the fifth iteration since we started establishing plans following the Transport Act in the year 2000. We have considered the requirements of the legislation in preparing it and we hope that once you have read it you are clear what our focus for improving transport will be in the county and how they relate to climate change.

The legislation also specifies that in developing our Local Transport Plan and the policies it contains we must consider any relevant policies established by government and other relevant statutory bodies and have regard to any guidance government has established for the purpose of developing local transport policies. Figure 5 shows the current policy landscape that we have had regard to in developing this Local Transport Plan.

Figure 4– Policy context of our draft Local Transport Plan



\*TfSE stands for *Transport for the South East*

As we develop our Local Transport Plan further and establish in more detail the policies and proposals for different parts of the county, we will also consider the Strategic Investment Plan that Transport for the South East established in 2023. We will identify those policies and proposals that support delivery of the south east region's Strategic Investment Plan for transport and how we plan to work with Transport for the South East to progress their development and delivery.

A Local Transport Plan is for the whole county, but there are differing needs and opportunities across the twelve districts that make up Kent as a whole. Delivering our ambition will mean different things in different places and their characteristics will influence what elements of our ambition we can more easily achieve within the limits of our financial resources. This is why our proposals are set out across two tiers – the county-wide and network-wide proposals that are typically larger in scale and impact, along with a second tier of proposals which are typically more local in scale and impact, District by District.

Kent is a largely rural county in terms of land use and has a sizeable minority of its population living in villages, hamlets and in more isolated locations dispersed across the county. More detail is available in our Evidence Base report on the differences in lifestyle how we have considered this in developing our plan.

We understand that local transport authorities will have a role to play helping the government with its aims to decarbonise transport and travel. Given the government is focused on the trajectory of emissions between now and 2050 (known as the carbon budgets, which are interim UK-wide emissions targets to reach net zero in 2050), we have set out those proposals that we think could make a contribution towards reducing carbon emissions from transport and travel and what the scale of that contribution could be.

We have looked at how the population in Kent may change in the future out to around 2037/38, as this is the most common time horizon that Local Authorities in Kent have set out plans for changes in land use and new development. We have inferred what the potential travel demand and patterns around this time would mean for working further ahead to the net zero 2050 target for carbon.

### A costed plan to inform future funding requirements

We have considered the likely funding requirements for delivering this plan. This is essential to ensure all stakeholders understand that the proposals necessary to improve transport networks in Kent will need sustained funding which will need to be made available to the Council and other delivery bodies. The funding requirements for delivery of the plan are set out in section 14.

What is clear is that the scale of change needed and the proposals and schemes to deliver that change cannot be funded by Kent County Council. The Council is reliant on being in receipt of a long term sustained funding settlement from government that is ring-fenced for transport in order to have certainty. In section 14 we have set out the scale of funding that the Council should receive based on benchmarking with the funding that other councils and transport authorities are receiving in different parts of England.



# DELIVERING OUR COUNCIL-WIDE STRATEGIES

## *FRAMING KENT'S FUTURE* AND *SECURING KENT'S FUTURE*

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

It is critical to make an impactful start by setting out clear policies and proposals throughout this Local Transport Plan, to turn the commitments in *Framing Kent's Future* into reality, on a place-by-place basis across our county.

Our priorities set out in *Framing Kent's Future* are shown in Figure 5. Within each priority we have set ourselves a range of commitments, many that directly concern our work to make journeys in Kent better or will be supported by the outcomes that a good transport network can deliver. For each priority and its commitments, *Framing Kent's Future* clearly describes what actions “we will” take.

This has driven our Local Transport Plan development and, as detailed in our Evidence Base report, for each of these “we will” statements we have detailed what “we have” proposed to address those actions. We have done this to clearly demonstrate how our Local Transport Plan will help to deliver our overarching Council strategy.

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



# THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

We considered evidence about travel in the county now and in the future, to determine how far we are from achieving our ambition. With this understanding we have then decided what new policies we will need to achieve our ambition. We know that in Kent we face the following key challenges that we will need to act on. We set out the challenges at the consultation on our draft Emerging Local Transport Plan and based on the feedback we received, we considered that they are representative of issues raised by many respondents. We have therefore continued to focus on the challenges summarised as follows. More detail on these challenges is included within the supporting Evidence Base.

## CHALLENGE 1

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**Our highways assets do not receive all the funding they need which in turn risks them becoming less resilient to new pressures such as greater use and changes to the weather.**

## CHALLENGE 2

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

## CHALLENGE 3

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

## CHALLENGE 4

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

## CHALLENGE 5

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

## CHALLENGE 6

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

## CHALLENGE 7

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

## CHALLENGE 8

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**Related to all the previous points, carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>e) emission reductions from management and use of the road network are forecast to remain at too high a level compared to the reduced levels needed to contribute towards reducing the worst effects of climate change.**

## CHALLENGE 9

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

# OUR AMBITION FOR TRANSPORT IN THE COUNTY

A cross-party group of Kent County Councillors considered what the existing national government, regional (such as Transport for the South East), county and district policies are that the Local Transport Plan needs to support delivery of. The context and challenges with the current transport system were also considered. This work has ensured that the plan is contributing to achieving existing priorities across Kent.

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

The ambition for what our plan will achieve and how we plan to do that is:

**We want to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of lives in Kent by delivering a safe, reliable, efficient and affordable transport network across the county and as an international gateway. We will plan for growth in Kent in a way that enables us to combat climate change and preserve Kent's environment.**

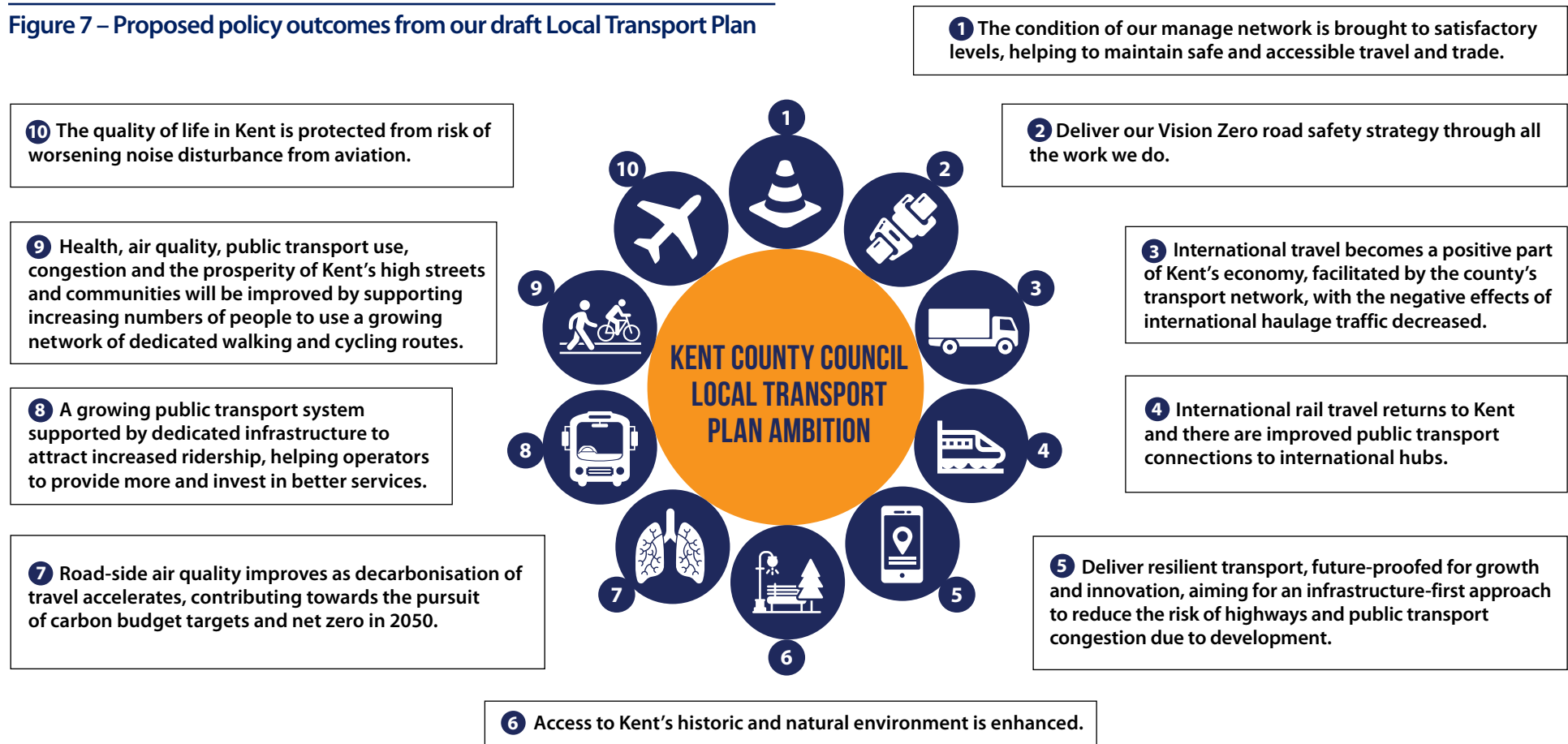
**We will do this by delivering emission-free travel by getting effective dedicated infrastructure to electrify vehicles, increase public transport use and make walking and cycling attractive. This will be enabled by maintaining our highways network and delivering our Vision Zero road safety strategy. These priorities will ensure our networks are future-proof, resilient and meet user needs.**

# OUR PROPOSED OUTCOMES TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

We have developed nine policy outcomes that will drive our focus and efforts to fulfil our ambition and tackle the challenges we face. Our proposed policy outcomes are shown in Figure 7. We consulted on these outcomes in our former Emerging Local Transport Plan. If we deliver towards these outcomes, we expect to address some of the challenges we face and avoid some of the bad effects those have on Kent’s communities, businesses, and natural environment.

Our proposed outcomes cover all parts of the transport mix and will help guide our work so that we can strike the balance across the different needs of journeys in Kent. Delivering them will not be easy. The objectives we have set for each outcome provide specifics of the types of actions we will pursue to give us the best chance of having a positive impact on the outcomes we want to realise.. Our evidence base document sets out in more detail how the proposals in our Local Transport Plan can deliver on the outcomes and objectives.

**Figure 7 – Proposed policy outcomes from our draft Local Transport Plan**





## POLICY OUTCOME 1:

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



## POLICY OUTCOME 2:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 1:

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

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 2:

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

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



## POLICY OUTCOME 3:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 3:

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

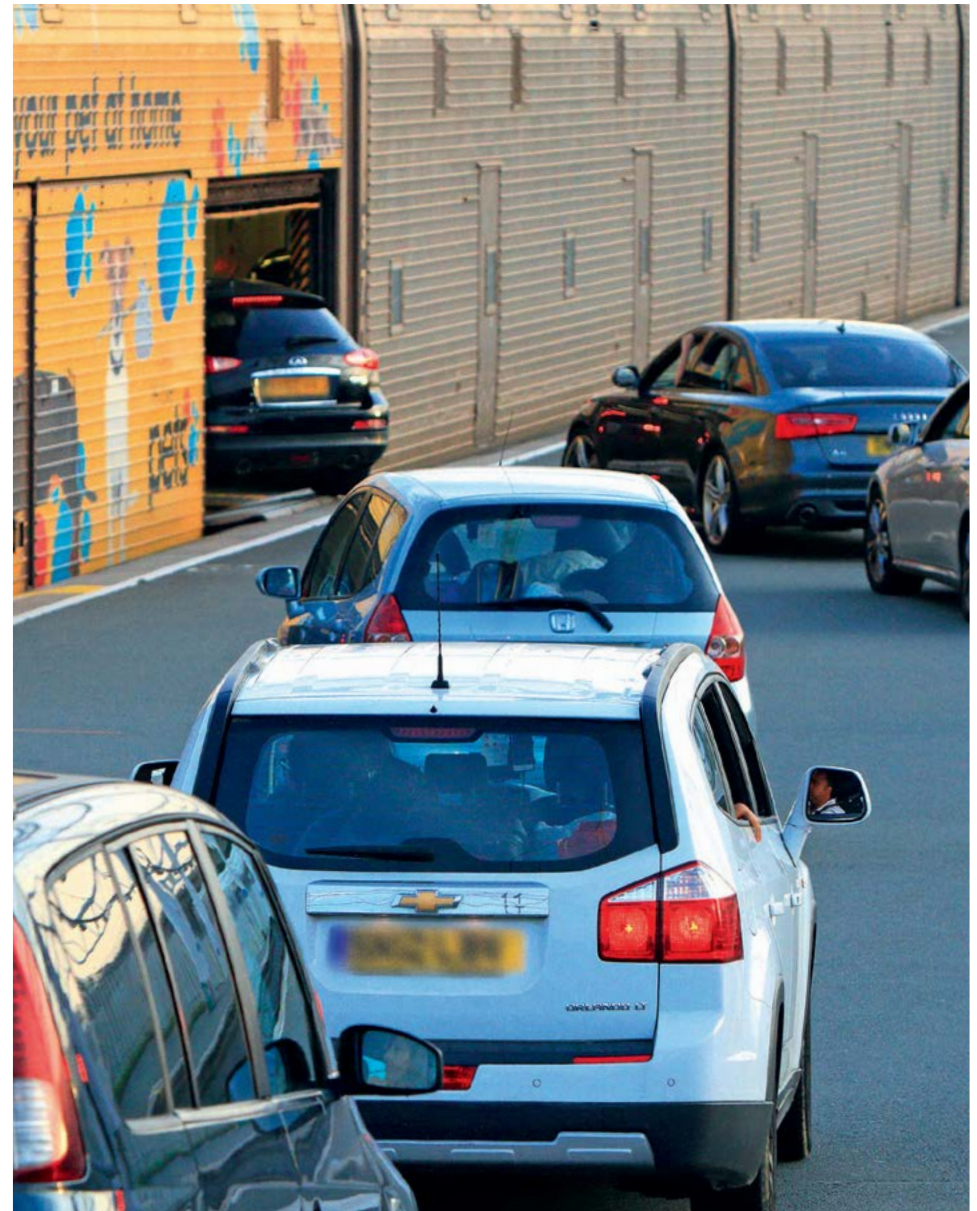


Photo credit: Getlink Ltd





## POLICY OUTCOME 4:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 4:

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

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

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



Sergii Figurnyi - stock.adobe.com



## POLICY OUTCOME 5:

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



## POLICY OUTCOME 6:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 5:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 6:

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

Our overall ambition is to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of Kent. The transport network has a vital role to play in this and it can be achieved alongside other co-benefits and outcomes outlined in this strategy. Achieving this outcome is not at the cost of achieving those other outcomes of the plan, but in recognising the important benefits it can provide and the role transport has to play in that. After all, the unique historic and natural environment in Kent is often why people choose to live, work and study in our county.



## POLICY OUTCOME 7:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 7:

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

These objectives focus on the close co-benefits of decarbonisation of transport and improved air quality from reduced emissions at the tailpipe and is aligned with the government’s Decarbonising Transport strategy. Whether the national total emissions target of net zero 2050 and the interim carbon budget targets on the pathway to that can be achieved will be down to how government balances emissions across the industrial sectors, including from transport.





## POLICY OUTCOME 8:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 8:

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

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

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



## POLICY OUTCOME 9:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 9:

- A) We will aim to deliver walking and cycling improvements at prioritised locations in Kent to deliver increased levels of activity towards the Active Travel England target (of 50% trips walked, wheeled, or cycled in towns and cities by 2030) and support Kent's diverse economy, presented in a Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Walking and cycling are already essential parts of people's journeys in Kent. Almost everyone walks or wheels along pavements for at least some part of their journeys, be it from the car park to shop around the town centre, from the train station to the beach, or the bus stop to the GP surgery. Supporting everyone to be able to walk, wheel and cycle with confidence can have a widespread effect on the outcomes sought by our Local Transport Plan and our council-wide strategy *Framing Kent's Future*.



## POLICY OUTCOME 10:

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



## POLICY OBJECTIVE 10:

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

In recent years there have been a series of airport proposals that could affect communities in Kent. Our former Local Transport Plan set out our strategic approach and we continue to ensure that negative impacts of any new proposals can be addressed. For example, through the planning process we have made representations on the proposals to expand Gatwick operations to its current emergency runway, which would lead to an increased volume of flights over parts of Kent. Significant noise disturbance from flight paths has been shown to have detrimental impacts on health and wellbeing, and therefore we will try to impact any proposals to avoid them worsening the noise environment.

### *Delivering on our outcomes.*

All our proposals can have a positive impact on one or more of the ten outcomes that we want to achieve. In some cases there may be a potential impact on an outcome but at this stage we cannot be sure if it could be a positive or a negative impact. Lastly, for a small number of proposals they may have a negative effect on an outcome, but nonetheless overall have a positive impact when considering all the proposals. The detailed consideration we have made of the proposals against the outcome we want to achieve are set out in the Supporting Evidence Base we have published with this plan.

# STRATEGIC NETWORK-WIDE PROPOSALS

We have identified a series of strategic proposals that can have wide impact on the transport network in Kent and deliver on the ambition and outcomes of our plan. This and following sections detail those strategic network-wide proposals and what we think needs to happen next for each to be progressed. These strategic, network-wide proposals are so called because they have either or both of the following characteristics:

- A scheme with a scale in delivery terms that will require action by KCC across more than one District in Kent, or beyond the boundary of Kent itself.
- A scheme with an impact which is likely to affect the way people or goods travel, or the impacts (e.g. noise, emissions etc) from travel in the county across more than one District.

Whilst these are the focus of our Local Transport Plan, we recognise there are also a series of smaller scale proposals where their delivery or impact is likely to be isolated within the District they are based. These smaller scale local transport proposals may nonetheless have the potential to make a positive contribution towards achieving the ambition and outcomes of our Local Transport Plan. These local proposals often arise due to their role in delivering local district transport strategies and plans that have been developed with Kent County Council through those local plan making processes. These local proposals are covered in the District specific section – see section 14. The local proposals are presented along with those strategic network wide proposals that will have notable impacts on the District.

Before we detail our main proposals for future delivery, it is important to recognise that there remain some important proposals from our last Local Transport Plan which are substantially progressed, but which are not yet delivered as well as proposals which the sub regional transport body, called Transport for the South East have identified and are working with ourselves and neighbouring transport authorities to progress.

## Completing delivery of our last Local Transport Plan's proposals

Some proposals we set out in our last Local Transport Plan remain priorities for us and we have already taken decisions as a Council concerning their delivery. They may face final hurdles in their delivery and we will work with developers, local planning authorities, National Highways, and with government to ensure those are overcome and the proposals delivered.

The proposals concerned are:

- The Sturry Link Road in Canterbury
- The A2-A249 Key Street junction in Swale
- The A20 London Road junction with Mills Road and Hall Road in Aylesford

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

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

The transport schemes TfSE are focused on achieving progress on are:

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

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- The A21 National Highways corridor through southern Kent and into East Sussex.
- Freight gauge enhancements to benefit freight transport from the midlands and north all the way to the Channel crossings in Kent.

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

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

### A balanced set of proposals

We have developed a set of strategic proposals to strike a balance across the mix of transport in Kent. This is in recognition of the needs of all users and the different types of places where people live and work.

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

Our balanced approach also reflects the limits of how much change is likely to occur concerning how travel takes place in Kent and where the greatest pressures will be. We have been realistic about the amount of change we can generate for journeys in Kent and by taking a steer from national policy about how people are likely to travel in the future.

The full range of strategic network-wide proposals we have across the transport mix are shown in Table 2.

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



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

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



# STRATEGIC ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS

In this section each proposal concerning the strategic road network, which includes motorways and trunk roads is detailed. A map showing all the Strategic Road Network proposals is shown in Figure 8. The proposals in this section we would not deliver ourselves – National Highways would be responsible for the planning and delivery of these proposals. The proposals we have identified are largely focused on ensuring that the cross-county routes of the A2/M2 and M20 highways enable Kent-based journeys to be made effectively by ensuring these routes also have the capacity and resilience to cope with the international traffic from the rest of the country with Europe.

The proposals are also made to ensure that the strategic road network enables journeys that need to access the strategic network to do that in the most effective and efficient way possible, so that the burden of what should be strategic journeys is limited to routing on the local highway network in towns and new communities where congestion can occur.

## LOWER THAMES CROSSING

LOCATION: GRAVESHAM, NORTH KENT, TO THURROCK IN ESSEX

### Strategic aims:

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

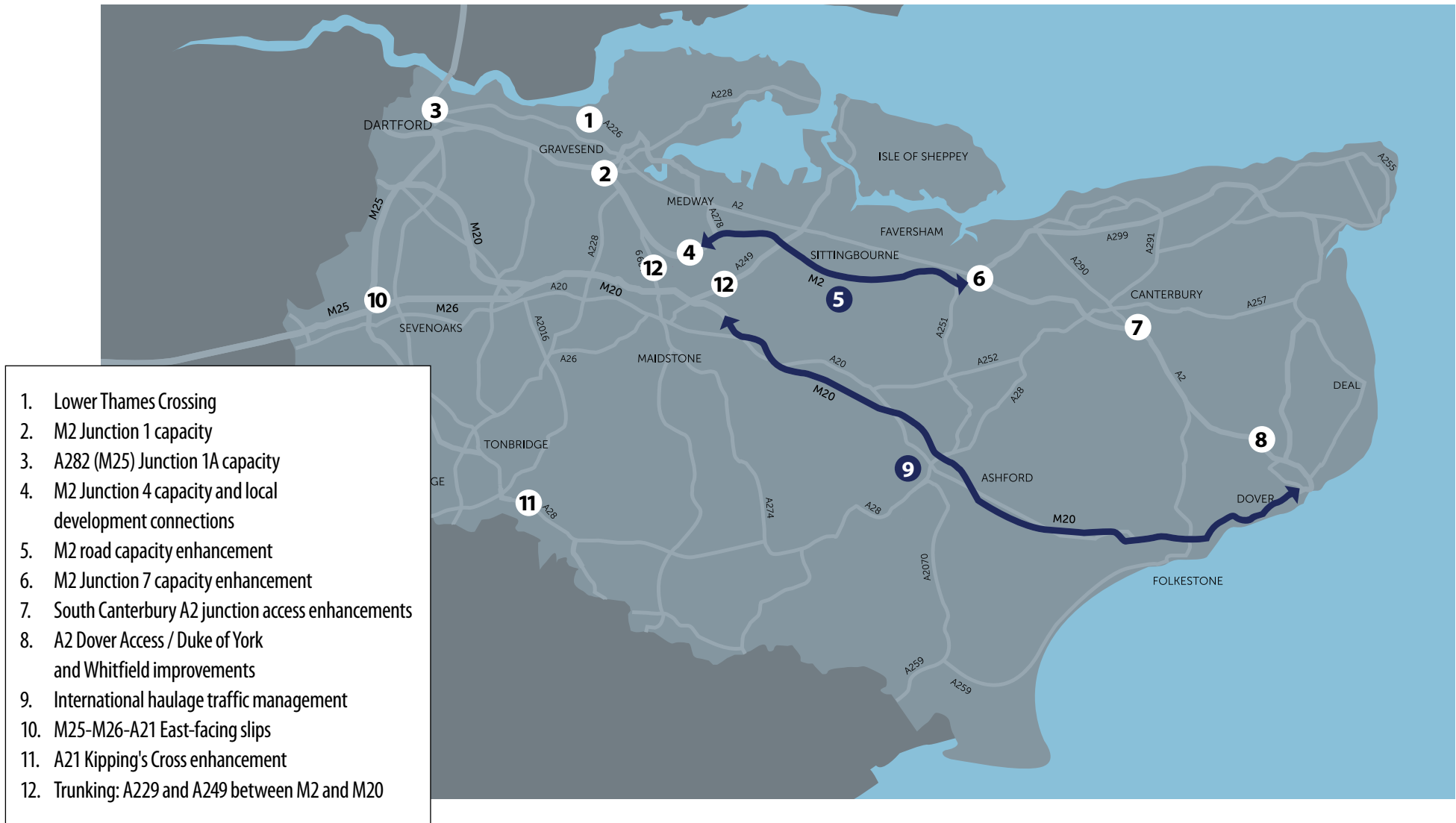
### What needs to happen?

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



Photo credit: National Highways

Figure 8 - Strategic Road Network proposals



## M2 JUNCTION 1

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

National Highways needs to establish the capacity shortfall at Junction 1 and the primary drivers of that over future years. Dependent on that outcome, National Highways should commence the project lifecycle process to reach a minimum of completion of the 'Options Phase' to inform planning of future Road Investment Strategy activity and any dependency associated with development growth pressures.

## A282 JUNCTION 1A (M25) CAPACITY

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



## M2 JUNCTION 4 CAPACITY

LOCATION: MEDWAY, ON THE BORDER WITH MAIDSTONE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

## M2 CORRIDOR CAPACITY

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

## A2 BRENLEY CORNER (M2 JUNCTION 7) CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

LOCATION: SWALE DISTRICT, EAST OF FAVERSHAM

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



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## A2 SOUTH CANTERBURY ACCESS

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

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## A2 DOVER ACCESS / DUKE OF YORK AND WHITFIELD IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: A2 DOVER ACCESS / DUKE OF YORK AND WHITFIELD IMPROVEMENTS

### Strategic aims:

- To increase resilience on the A2 corridor to the Port of Dover, to support the bifurcation strategy.
- To relieve congestion on the approach to the Port of Dover, to support international trade, travel and enable local travel to avoid disruption to the benefit of the quality of life of Dover residents, businesses and visitors.
- To improve the safety of the strategic road network into Dover.
- To ensure the local road network and its junctions with the A2 are able to serve travel from the existing community and increased travel demand from local growth sites.

### What needs to happen?

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

## INTERNATIONAL HAULAGE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

LOCATION: COUNTYWIDE, WITH A FOCUS ON THE APPROACHES TO THE INTERNATIONAL CROSSING TERMINALS OF DOVER AND FOLKESTONE.

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

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



## M25 – M26 – A21 JUNCTION – EAST FACING SLIPS

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

### Strategic aims:

- To reduce traffic volumes through Sevenoaks town associated with west to east movements from the M25 to the M26 (for the M20), with requisite improvements to road safety, air quality and junction performance given a growing Sevenoaks.

### What needs to happen?

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

## A21 KIPPING'S CROSS ENHANCEMENT

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

As a National Highways road, there needs to be a clear plan by National Highways for how planning and optioneering can take place, setting a clear timescale for progressing the scheme through the Road Investment Strategy. As the only main road route from Tunbridge Wells towards Hastings and locations en-route.

## FURTHER TRUNKING THE LOCAL ROAD NETWORK

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

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



# LOCAL ROAD NETWORK PROPOSALS

In this section, each strategic network-wide proposal concerning the local road network that we manage, is detailed. A map showing all the local road network proposals is shown in Figure 9. These proposals that we would deliver in our capacity as the local highway authority are designed to ensure that we can best fulfil our network management duty and respond to the variety of pressures on our local roads, ranging from development pressure on our network through to the interface with the strategic road network. The proposals also concern how we can best utilise our highways assets to ensure that the shift to electric vehicles is eased through better access to on-street charging infrastructure for as many people as possible.

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## MAINTAINING THE ROAD NETWORK

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE.

### Strategic aims:

- To deliver our Highways Asset Management Plan and achieve safe and reliable journeys to be made around and through the county, supporting social wellbeing and economic prosperity.
- To reduce the backlog of maintenance work over a long-term sustained period.

### What needs to happen?

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

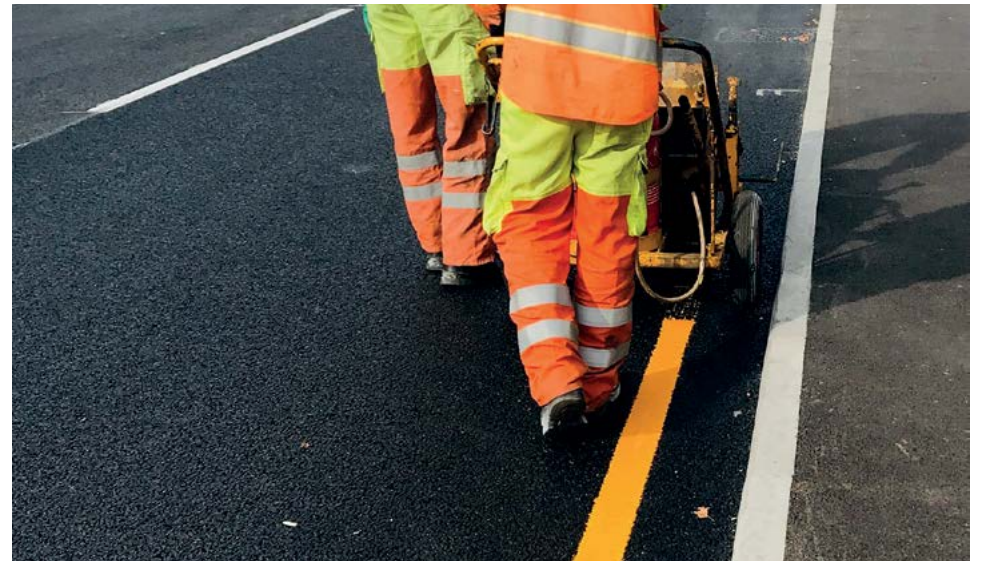
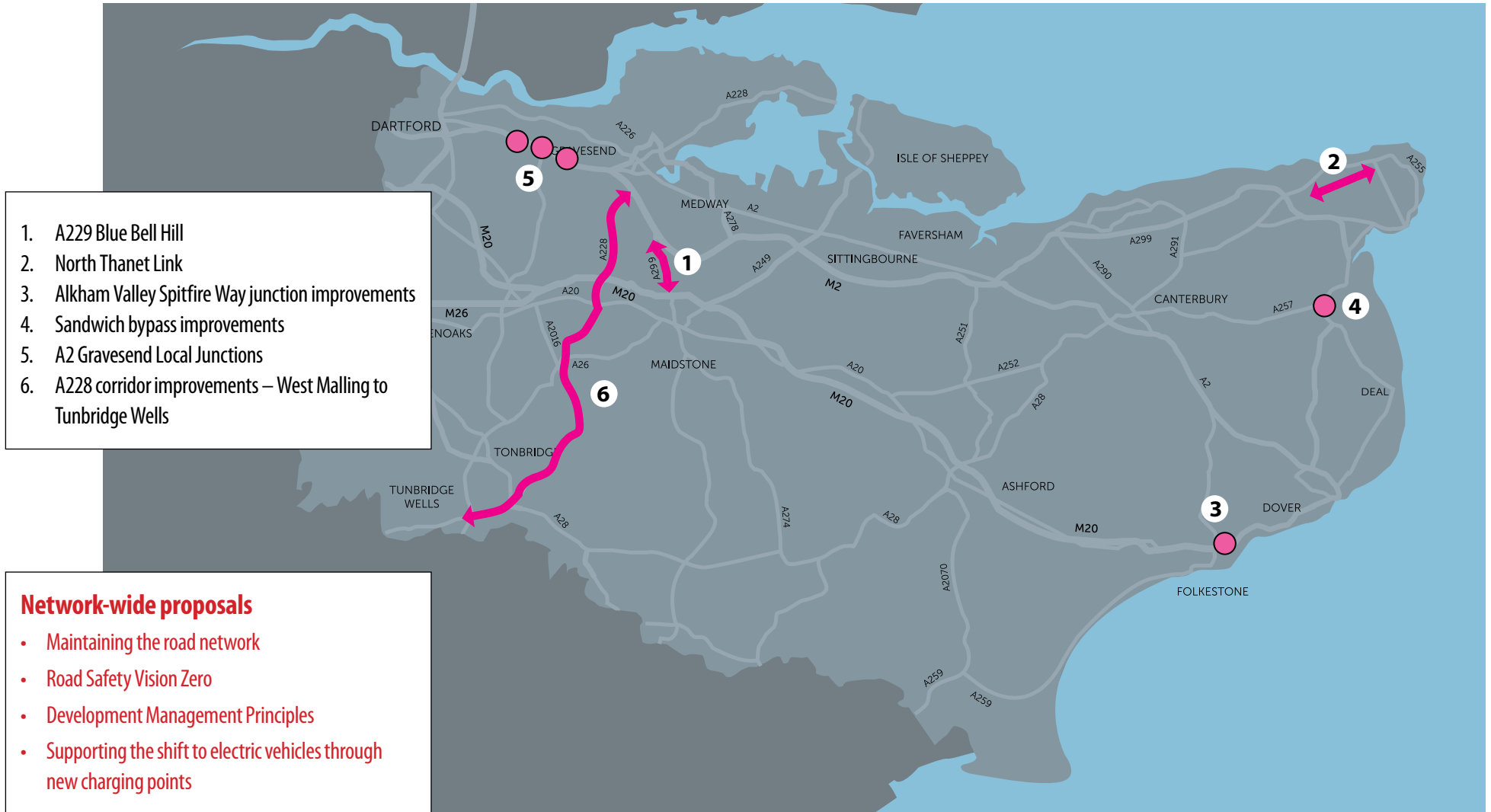




Figure 9 - Local Road Network proposals



## ROAD SAFETY VISION ZERO

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE.

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



## A229 BLUEBELL HILL

LOCATION: MAIDSTONE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

The scheme needs to be funded by government so that we can complete the development and planning of the scheme and construction subject to the necessary planning consents.



## NORTH THANET LINK

LOCATION: THANET

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



## ALKHAM VALLEY SPITFIRE JUNCTION

LOCATION: FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

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## SANDWICH BYPASS

LOCATION: DOVER

### Strategic aims:

- To ensure the junctions along the bypass can accommodate the impact of local development and its effect on growing traffic volumes.
- To ensure that the corridor as a whole has sufficient capacity to realise the benefits of any junction upgrades and to provide reliable and safe journeys along its length by meeting the needs of users along the main road corridor between Thanet, Dover and Folkestone and Hythe.

### What needs to happen?

Surveys and simulations are required of the junctions and stretch of road to ascertain whether capacity works can be limited to the junctions or include wider capacity improvement of the corridor. The delivery and funding of the schemes will be influenced by the timing of consented development delivery at Discovery Park which would deliver junction improvements for the A256-A257 junction.

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## GRAVESEND LOCAL JUNCTIONS

LOCATION: GRAVESHAM

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

KCC needs to evaluate the junctions and monitor their performance, to identify options meet the strategic aims and any other objectives that arise. This would include establishing any phasing including considering the timing of Lower Thames Crossing works and any disruption that may cause in the area.

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## A228-A264 CORRIDOR BETWEEN WEST MALLING TO TUNBRIDGE WELLS

LOCATION: TONBRIDGE AND MALLING AND THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

Surveys and simulations are required of the junctions and stretch of road to ascertain whether capacity works can be limited to the junctions or include wider capacity improvement of the corridor. The delivery and funding of the schemes will be influenced by the timing of consented development delivery at Discovery Park which would deliver junction improvements for the A256-A257 junction.

## LOCAL ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

Kent County Council will deliver a long term programme of on-street electric vehicle charging sockets, working with the private sector charge point operators to ensure satisfactory delivery across the highways estate that is owned by the council.



## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

Given the Local Transport Plan is a statutory plan, it is reiterated here, further to our existing Developer Contributions Guidance, that we will deliver with district planning authorities a 'decide and provide' approach to plan and site development. This approach supports achieving greater choice of transport modes to help reduce traffic generation onto the existing highway network whilst also addressing impacts that do require mitigation. This will be delivered by ensuring planning agreements for sites make provisions for uncertainty of transport impacts by applying a monitor and manage approach.



# PUBLIC AND SHARED TRANSPORT NETWORK PROPOSALS

In this section, each strategic network-wide proposal concerning the public transport network is explained. A map showing all the public and share transport network proposals are shown in Figure 10. We do not operate the public transport network in Kent, with the exception of the Fastrack system which we specify and manage the contracting of alongside the subsidy we provide for supported bus services. Almost all bus services are privately run whilst the rail network is currently operated by the government's operating company.

Our highways are important assets though for enabling bus operators to provide their services effectively and for rail users reaching the station. Our roads will also be of importance for other potential future forms of shared transport that are being trialled across the country and potentially in locations in Kent.

As the local transport authority, we have a role in representing the views and interest of our constituents concerning bus and rail services. We have secured funding in the past to improve both the bus network and the rail network.

We anticipate that there could be new funding opportunities in the future and so we have set out priorities for how the public transport and evolution of shared transport could take place to meet the ambition and outcomes of our Local Transport Plan.

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## KENT'S BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

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

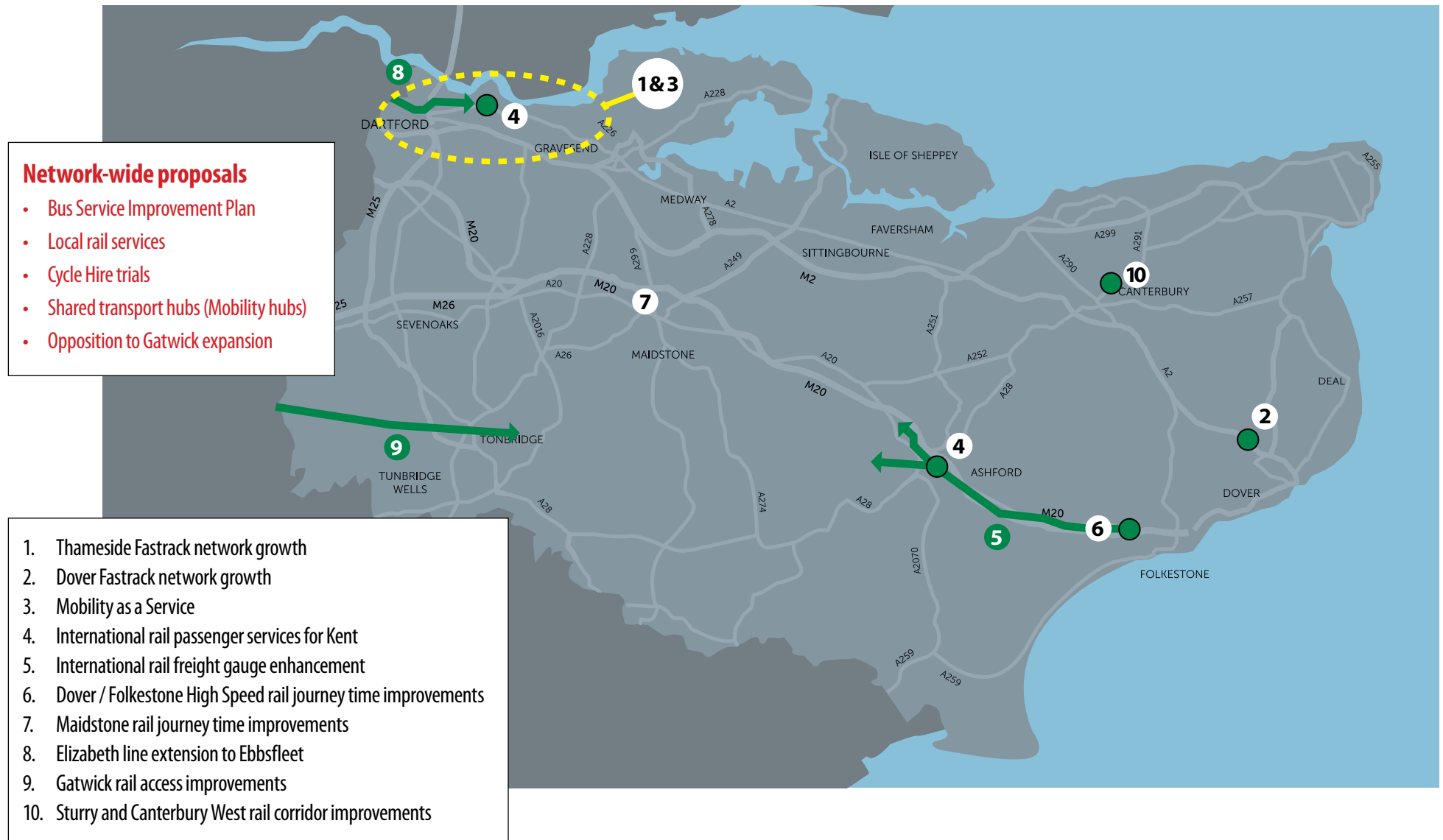
- To place the customer at the heart of everything we do through an established passenger charter, to help us work with operators on customer's behalf.
- Put buses at the centre of decision making in respect of new road schemes, planning and developments, and support bus operators and services in KCC's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

### **What needs to happen?**

The KCC Bus Service Improvement Plan needs to be further funded by government beyond March 2025. We have set out a detailed program of investment into improving all aspects of bus services, working in partnership with local authorities and the bus operators. The total estimated cost of those improvements over the period of 2025 to 2029 is £240m – or £60m per year. Stabilising and improving bus networks across the county will need KCC to demonstrate Buses are a strategic priority on parts of its road network, to help operators in improving journey times, service reliability and reducing the cost of their operations. This can enable more services and attract more passenger journeys.

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Figure 10 - Public transport network proposals



## KENT THAMESIDE FASTRACK

LOCATION: GRAVESHAM AND DARTFORD

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



## KENT DOVER FASTRACK

LOCATION: DOVER

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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





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## CYCLE HIRE PILOTS IN DEVELOPMENT AREAS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

Where necessary, KCC will work with developers and District Councils on the delivery of planned cycle hire schemes and to be informed of their performance and impact. Performance of the pilots will assist KCC with any potential future consideration of cycle hire in new developments and existing communities.



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## MOBILITY AS A SERVICE (MAAS)

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

Subject to funding KCC can secure, KCC will aim to further develop and deliver a MaaS platform trial to evaluate its effectiveness, alongside learning from other MaaS rollouts across the UK such in the Solent Future Transport Zone. KCC will work to find opportunities more widely in Kent to apply the MaaS platform such as associated with other planned new large communities. Subject to the outcomes of the initial MaaS Ebbsfleet pilot, KCC will explore establishing a county-wide MaaS platform phased by Enhanced Bus Partnership areas with potential to also expand to Medway.

## SHARED TRANSPORT HUBS (KNOWN AS MOBILITY HUBS)

### LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

#### Strategic aims:

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

#### What needs to happen?

KCC will work with developers and Districts with the planning of mobility hub networks should they propose them. It is anticipated that hubs would be deliverable first in new developments, funded and delivered by development,

which provides the opportunity to learn lessons and evaluate their suitability for other parts of Kent.

Regardless of whether mobility hub proposals come forward in Kent, KCC will monitor and learn lessons of their implementation elsewhere in the UK to determine whether they have a role to play as part of Kent's transport mix.

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

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



Photo credit: CoMoUK

## OPPOSITION TO GATWICK EXPANSION

LOCATION: TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND SEVENOAKS.

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



Photo credit: Jan Rosalino

## GATWICK RAIL ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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

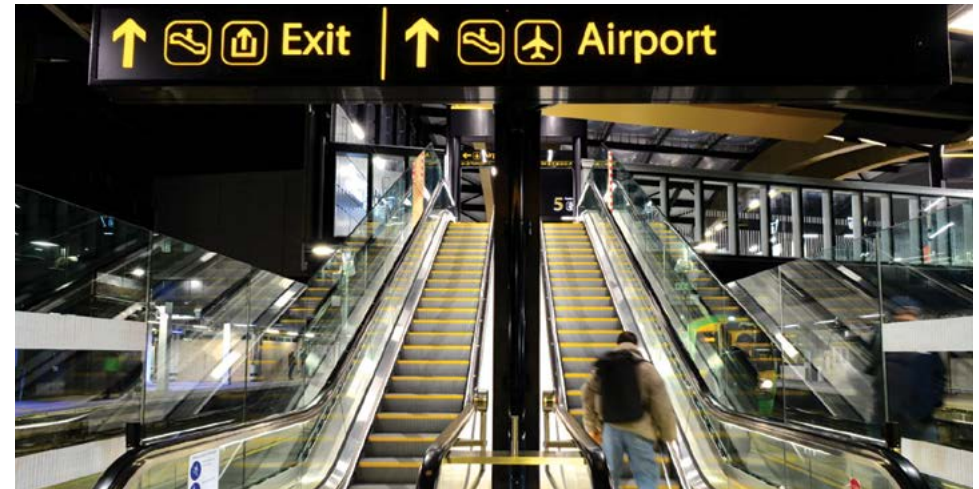


Photo credit: Network Rail

## INCREASING RAIL FREIGHT FOR INTERNATIONAL GOODS MOVEMENTS

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

Changing rail gauges would enable containerised loads to fit through tunnels in Kent and serve the Midlands and the North. As Network Rail stated in 2023 , "Gauge clearance of the classic routes to W12 is still the rail freight industry's firm aspiration for the longer term and will be needed for anything like the extent and diversity of market enjoyed by Channel Tunnel rail freight in the late 1990s to ultimately return."

### What needs to happen?

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



Photo credit: Getlink Ltd

<sup>2</sup> See Network Rail published report International Rail Freight: Opportunities for Growth, February 2023 at [www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/International-Rail-Freight-Opportunities-for-Growth.pdf](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/International-Rail-Freight-Opportunities-for-Growth.pdf)

## MAIDSTONE RAIL MAINLINE JOURNEY TIME IMPROVEMENTS

### LOCATION: MAIDSTONE

#### Strategic aims:

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

#### What needs to happen?

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

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

## CANTERBURY WEST AND STURRY STATION IMPROVEMENTS

### LOCATION: CANTERBURY

#### Strategic aims:

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

#### What needs to happen?

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



## DOVER AND FOLKESTONE HIGH SPEED RAIL ENHANCEMENTS

LOCATION: DOVER AND FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

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



## ELIZABETH LINE EXTENSION TO EBBSFLEET

LOCATION: DARTFORD AND GRAVESHAM

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

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

### What needs to happen?

Government have been considering the business case that the partnership that KCC was part of submitted. A decision by the government is needed about whether any of the options in the business case should be progressed and if so, provide funding for the appropriate transport authorities to progress more detailed planning, design and an outline business case.

## INTERNATIONAL RAIL SERVICES FOR KENT

LOCATION: DARTFORD (EBBSFLEET) AND ASHFORD

### Strategic aims:

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

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

### What needs to happen?

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



Photo credit: Eurostar Ltd

## LOCAL RAIL SERVICES

### LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

#### Strategic aims:

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

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

- Canterbury to Faversham / Sittingbourne – 1 tph
- Sittingbourne <> Sheerness – 1 tph
- Maidstone <> Ashford / Dover / Folkestone – 1 tph
- Ramsgate <> Dover – 1 tph
- Canterbury <> Dover – 1 tph

#### What needs to happen?

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



Photo credit: Southeastern Trains



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

In this section we have set out our proposals for walking, cycling and other non-motorised travel (such as equestrians that use bridleways). The proposals we have are focused on further improving the networks we have so that they become increasingly easy, attractive, and safe to use, helping to encourage active" journeys. Active journeys have the highest range of benefits and are the most accessible form of transport to the widest number of people. They improve the health of the person making the journey, reduce noise, air pollution and carbon emissions through zero emission travel, add footfall back to highstreets, reduce wear and tear to the transport network, and increase the propensity to use bus and rail transport which will help to make services more popular and improve the range and quality provided by operators in the future.

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## KENT CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

A draft Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan has been developed setting out fifteen corridors where we could focus future planning and design work to set out detailed proposals which we can make the case for receiving funding. The fifteen cycling corridors and fifteen walking zone locations are shown in Figure 11 and 12 respectively.

We will further develop the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and its proposals to improve infrastructure in the corridors and zones it details, subject to the funding we receive. We will continue to work with stakeholders, including the Districts, to deliver Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and consider potential new priorities that may emerge for incorporation into our county plan.

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Figure 11 - Kent Cycling Infrastructure Plan priority corridors

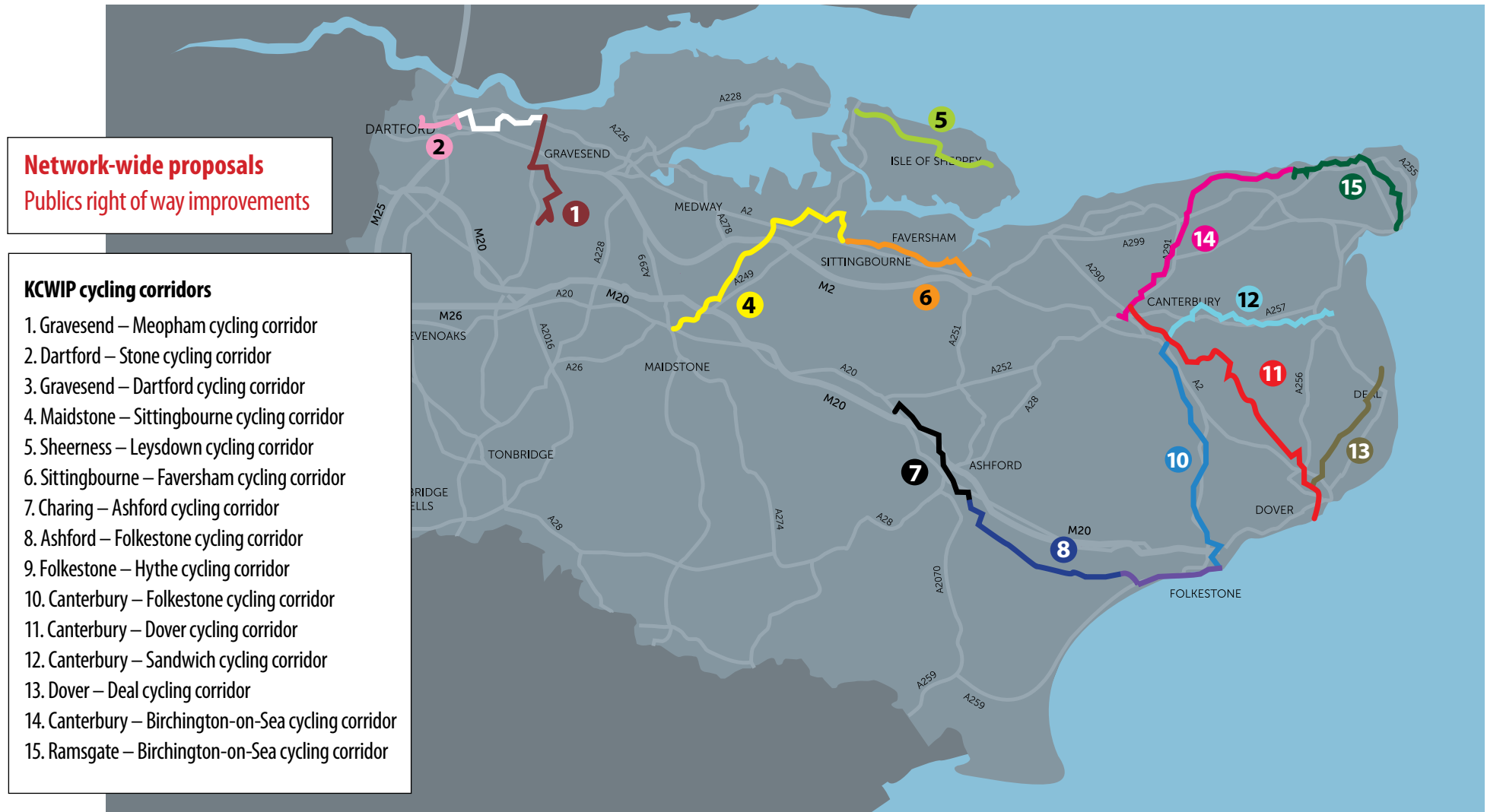
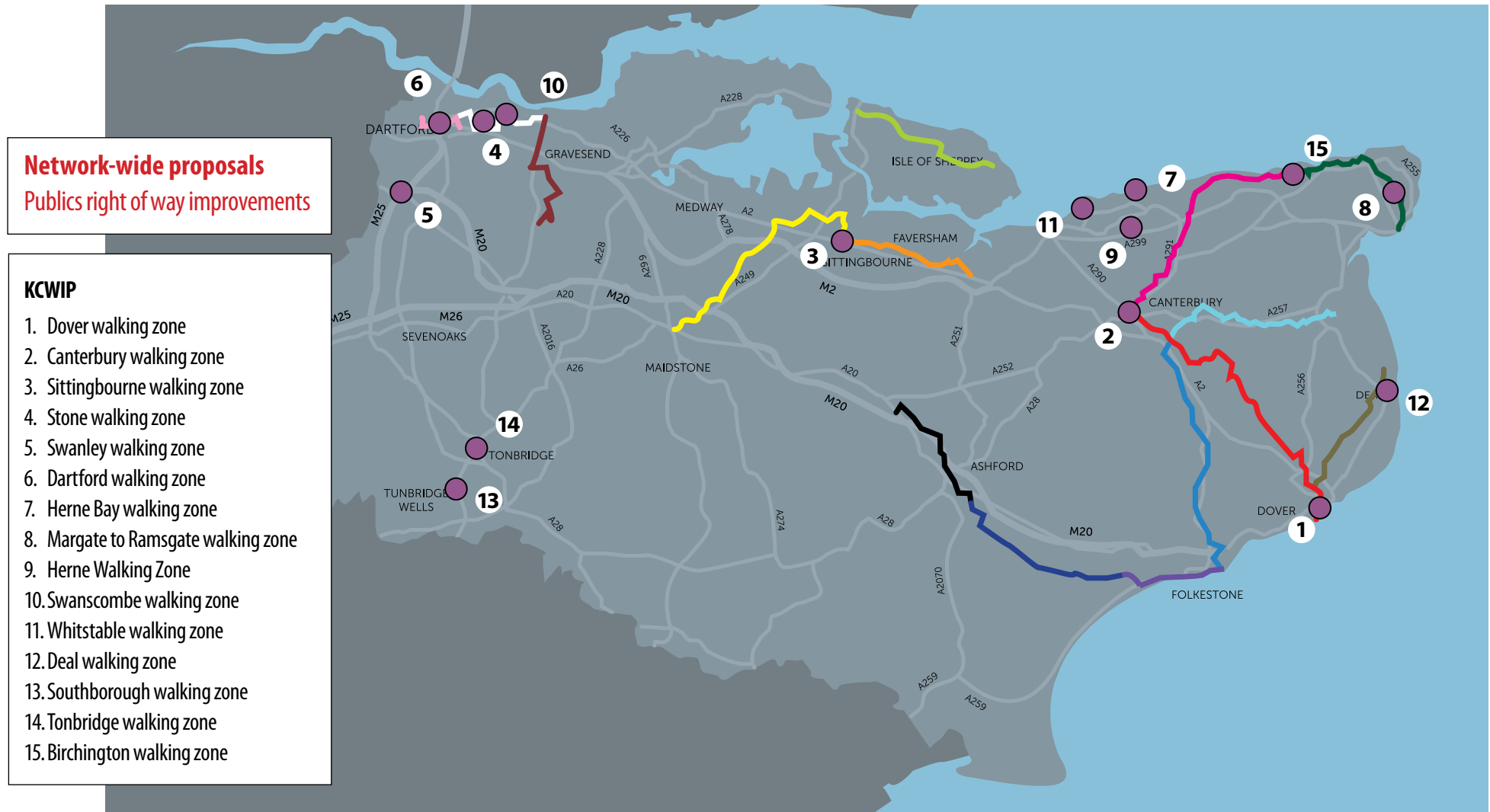


Figure 12 - Kent Walking Infrastructure Plan priority zones



## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

LOCATION: COUNTY-WIDE

### Strategic aims:

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

### What needs to happen?

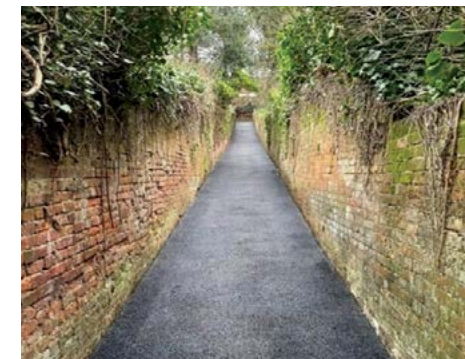
Delivering the wide-ranging and detailed actions in the KCC Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan to exploit the network and deliver better journeys and access across our urban and rural communities will need further funding to be secured. We have a need of at least £26m over the next 10 years to undertake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

Figure 13 – Improvement scheme to an existing public right of way

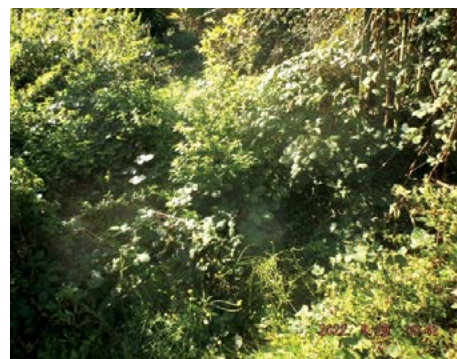
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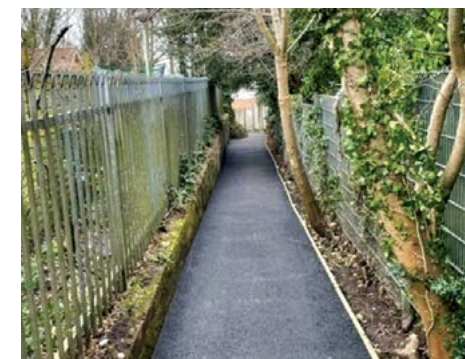
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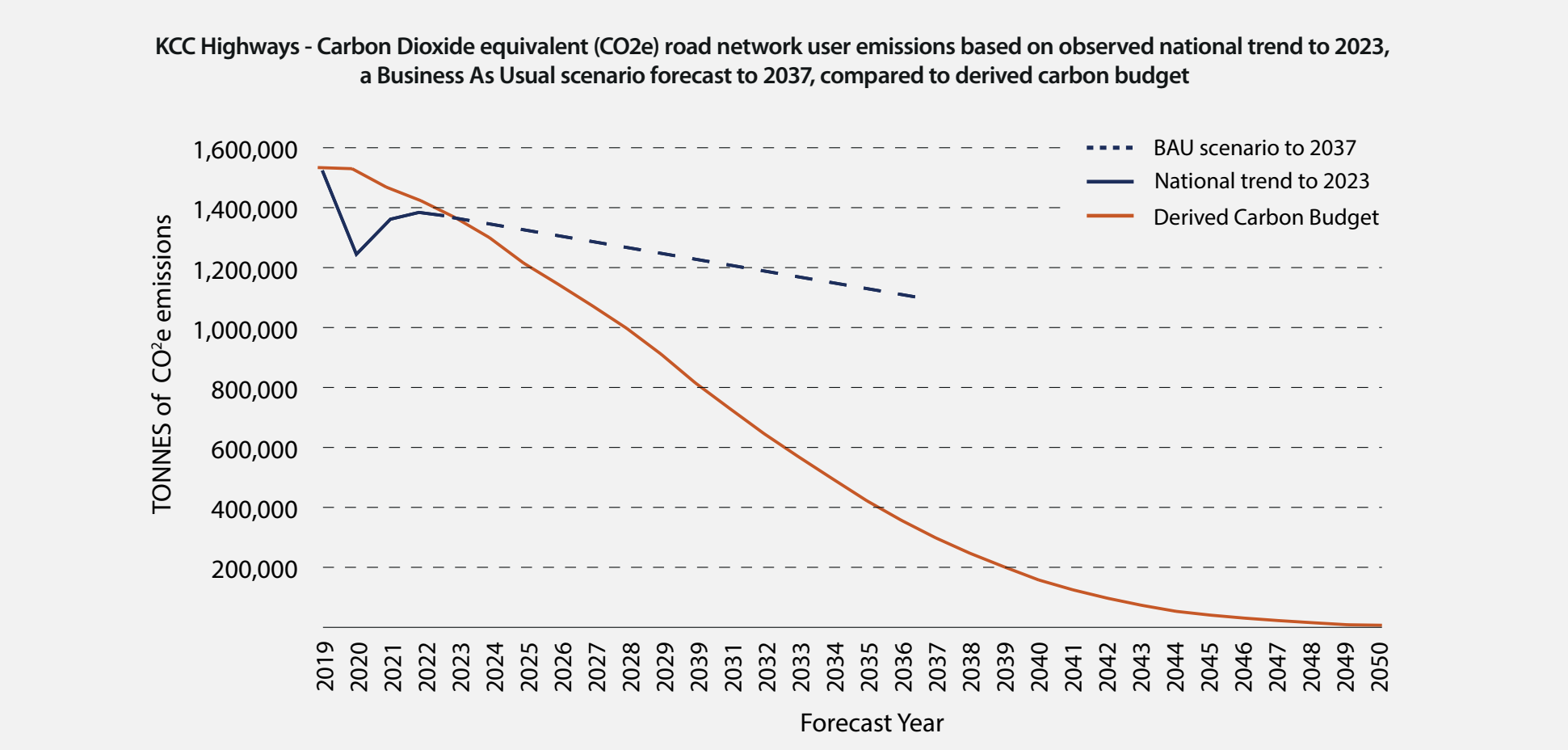
# CONSIDERING THE EFFECT OF OUR PLAN ON CARBON EMISSIONS

In 2019 we recognised the climate emergency and committed to continuing to use our resources and align our policies to address this. This commitment has continued and our Council Strategy 2022-2026: Framing Kent’s Future, has widened our focus to include turning the curve on transport emissions and road pollution.

We estimate that vehicles on the road network we manage are producing around 1.35 million tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent a year based on current

levels of national observed traffic up to the end of 2023 – see Figure 14. This estimate includes consideration of the level of estimated electric vehicles in use, based on national averages estimated by government.

**Figure 14 - Estimated and forecast Carbon Dioxide Equivalent emissions from transport activity on the Kent County Council managed road network.**



What we can see is that, if Kent levels of traffic and emissions from vehicles have followed the national picture, emissions have fallen at a rate since 2020 that has kept pace with the likely pathway needed to reach net zero in 2050 and have potentially been below the budget up to 2023. This was due to the reduction in travel during the pandemic and changes in travel patterns since then.

Note that this carbon budget pathway is derived and applied by us, at the level of transport emissions in Kent. The Government does not set carbon budgets and targets at a county level or for specific sectors such as transport. The carbon budget is designed to keep emissions to a level that reduces the likelihood of average global temperatures going above an increase of 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. Doing this is expected to avoid the most severe impacts of climate change assuming all other nations meet their carbon targets. More detail on the national carbon budget and its pathway is available from the Government's Committee on Climate Change and its published 6th Carbon Budget.

In practice over time to 2050, the carbon budget may need to be more or less generous for road based transport. For example, it could be more generous over time because other sectors of the national economy that produce emissions may achieve higher rates of decarbonisation that enable road based transport emissions to go over the budget we have shown, whilst still achieving net zero at the national level.

In Figure 14, the future levels of emissions we have forecast for 2037 are shown. Since emissions have fallen greater than the rate we forecast between 2019 and 2037, our forecast to 2037 may be overestimating the volume of carbon emissions produced by road vehicles in Kent. However, the extent of the gap over the long term to 2037 means that if our forecasts are an overestimation, the volume of road-based emissions on use of our road network may still exceed our derived budget pathway to that point.

Since traffic volumes and mileage day to day are not measured in detail for the Kent road network (or indeed most road networks in the country) we cannot be certain that the emissions we are estimating are precise and so it may also be

the case that in Kent the trend in emissions reduction has been slower than the national trend. This could be because volumes of traffic in Kent may be higher than average, or that electric vehicle mileage may be lower than average.

Since we cannot be sure with the information available to us and therefore our forecasts remain an informative guide. They inform us about the rate of decarbonisation that may occur and the scale of the challenge of supporting road-based transport emissions in Kent to keep following a declining trend towards net zero 2050, that supports achievement of the interim carbon budgets.

For more detail on how we have forecast future carbon emissions to the national target of net zero by 2050, please see our Evidence Base that is published alongside our emerging Local Transport Plan.

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

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



There is an upward pressure on carbon emissions which risks turning the curve in the wrong direction. Major changes to the road network designed to add capacity and improve journey times may lead to new vehicle trips. As it becomes easier to make journeys to different destinations, because the time it takes falls, demand to travel increases.

The proposals for our Local Transport Plan are not all developed enough to know with high accuracy what their effect on carbon emissions could be. What we have therefore done is consider whether the proposals may have potential to reduce carbon emissions or increase carbon emissions, in order to understand the balance of potential effect of our plan.

The opportunities and risks of our different strategic proposals are shown in Figure 15. Not all proposals have been determined to have a clear likely impact towards either reducing or increasing emissions. For the full reasoning behind the conclusions reach and presented in Figure 15, please see the Supporting Evidence Base we have published.

Given there are a range of proposals which could reduce carbon emissions as well as a range of proposals that could increase carbon emissions compared to our business as usual scenario, the future trend in carbon emissions from road users in Kent likely lies within a range of uncertainty like that shown in Figure 16.

The potential for emissions to be substantially higher than our current forecasts is less likely than the potential for a greater reduction than forecast because there are well-established push factors bearing down on emissions now, driven by the legislated sales targets and 2035 ban on new petrol and diesel vehicles. These mean that the vehicle fleet will become increasingly low emission which limits the extent to which schemes increasing vehicle mileage could lead to increased emissions.

**(Right) Figure 15 - Potential impact of the Local Transport Plan proposals on transport sector carbon emissions**

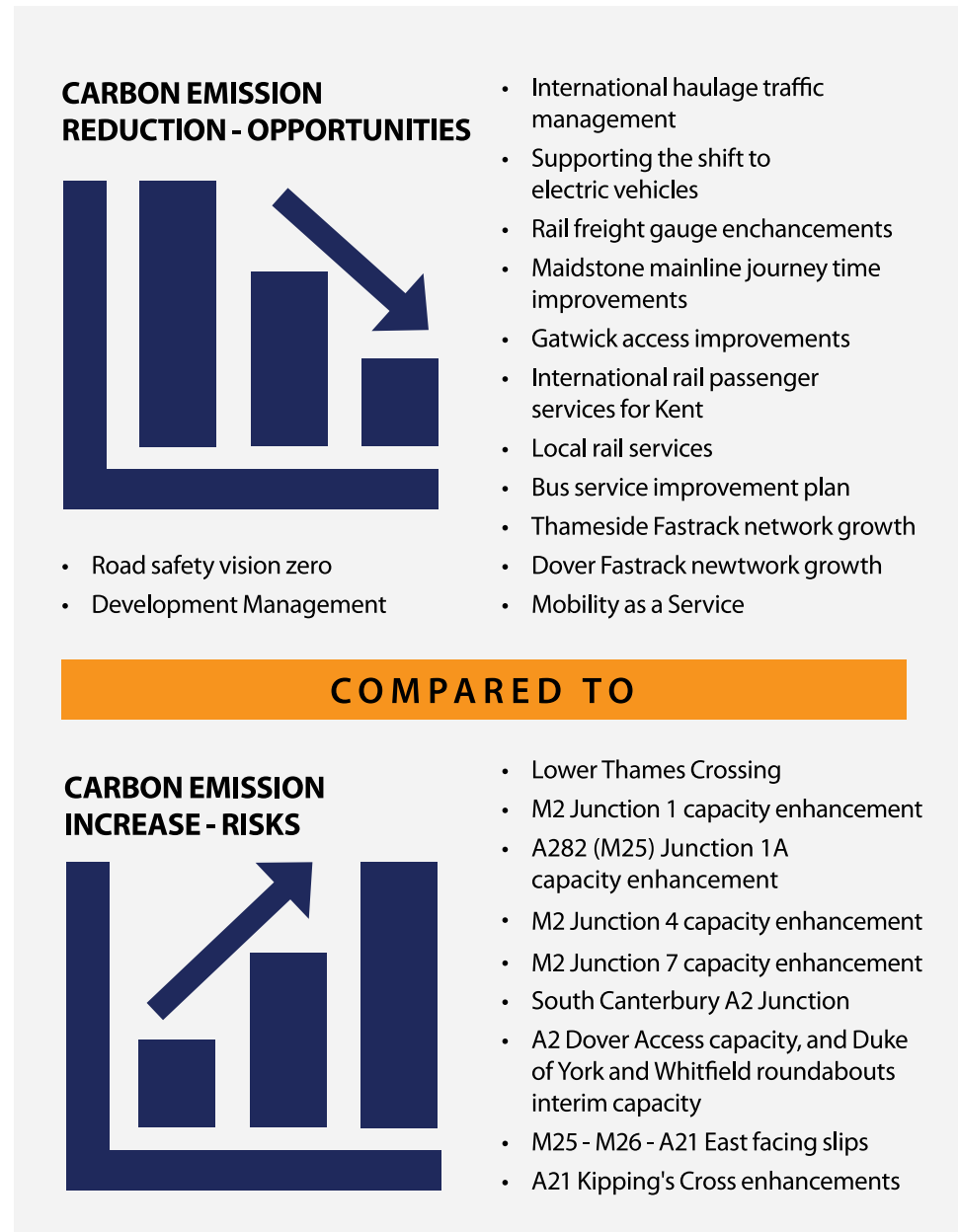
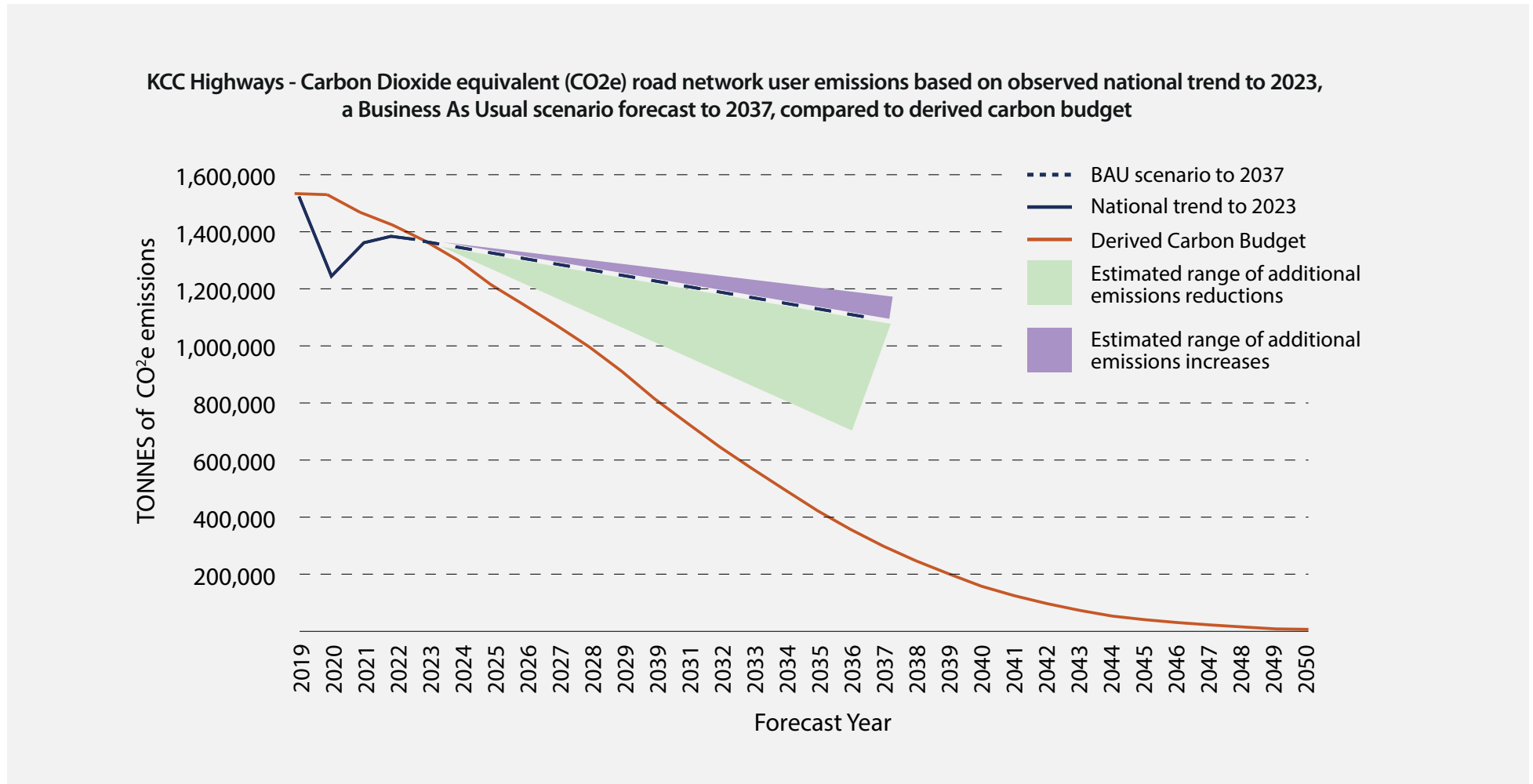


Figure 16 - Future uncertainty concerning transport carbon emissions over time





### What does this mean for our Local Transport Plan?

Our assessment demonstrates that we have a balanced plan that has a range of proposals that can make a positive impact on reducing emissions if, importantly, we and delivery partners are able to secure the funding needed to deliver them.

The largest generator of carbon emissions, private cars, are an important part of how millions in Kent travel. The proposals we have set out would increase the ease of using electric vehicles and also making it easier to choose to use alternatives like trains and buses that would lead to reductions in emissions. If those improvements can be delivered soon, then the impact could be greater and make transport's contribution to staying within the national carbon budget easier.

It is important to recognise that in a county with disperse low density communities, private vehicle use will remain an essential part of Kent's transport mix. Our plan recognises this and is why getting more access to public charging sockets is an important part of the long term approach to reducing emissions.

This approach is aligned with the government's strategy called Decarbonising Transport. Government monitors transport industry emissions and will determine over time whether emissions are falling fast enough in transport, taking in to account falls across the other sectors of the economy.

By striking a balance, our plan means we think we can continue to deliver improvements across the transport mix that fulfils our ambitions and outcomes including reducing carbon emissions from transport.



# DISTRICT SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

## ASHFORD

Ashford experiences unique impacts associated with international connectivity from Kent's proximity to Europe. The outskirts of Ashford town host an inland border facility for processing goods vehicles' cargoes, and the town has an international station which can enable stopping services to destinations across Europe.

Growth in the District is currently focused on the Ashford town, with large scale new suburbs of housing and town centre commercial development for businesses that trade internationally. Some of the transport infrastructure needed to accommodate the growth is not yet delivered, awaiting funding from developers. The Local District Council is beginning work to review the local plan and consider delivery of growth sites up to 2041 – its current Local Plan horizon is to 2031.

The District was one of the first in Kent to have a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and elements of that remain to be delivered. It has its own Walking and Cycling Strategy which has a horizon to 2029, aiming to increase the volume of cycling trips to 6% of all journeys made.

Beyond Ashford town, Ashford has a further town in Tenterden which relies on road network connections. Smaller villages to the north and south of Ashford town are connected into Ashford by the road and rail network. Most people in Ashford travel by car day to day, although the high-speed rail link has made the town an attractive location for commuting to the capital.

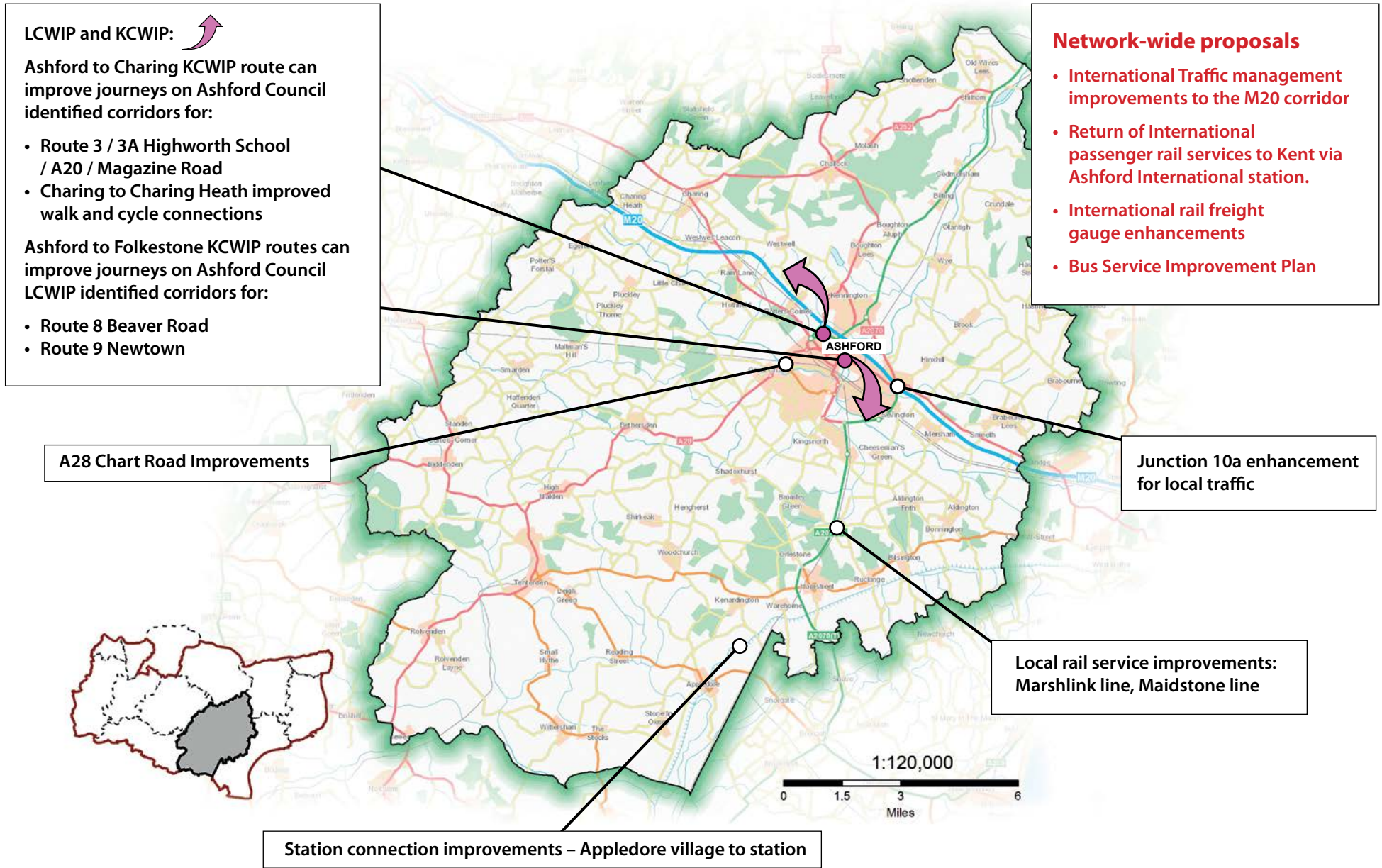
As the proposals indicate – the focus for Ashford is in ensuring the rail network continues to provide the domestic, local and also international connectivity, and that the road network is upgraded to support growth from development and international traffic on the M20 corridor. Within Ashford town and out towards areas across the district and beyond, there are local transport improvements that would be progressed once funding is available.



Ashford International Railway Station



Tenterden High Street



## CANTERBURY

Canterbury district has unique features and varied places, from popular coastal towns, the historic city centre of Canterbury, and smaller rural villages. The visitor economy is particularly important to the district and international connectivity from proximity to Europe as well as connectivity across Kent from the wider country is important.

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

The focus of consented growth is on the outskirts of Canterbury city, meaning the city will substantially grow in area, with new journeys having longer distances to the city centre. Further potential growth sites are also under consideration by the new Local Plan meaning the city will spread further. Connecting these new suburbs well to the city centre and to the nearby A2 corridor for fast and easy access for longer distance journeys will be important to avoid deterioration in traffic congestion and reduce the burden of traffic on the ring road around the historic city.

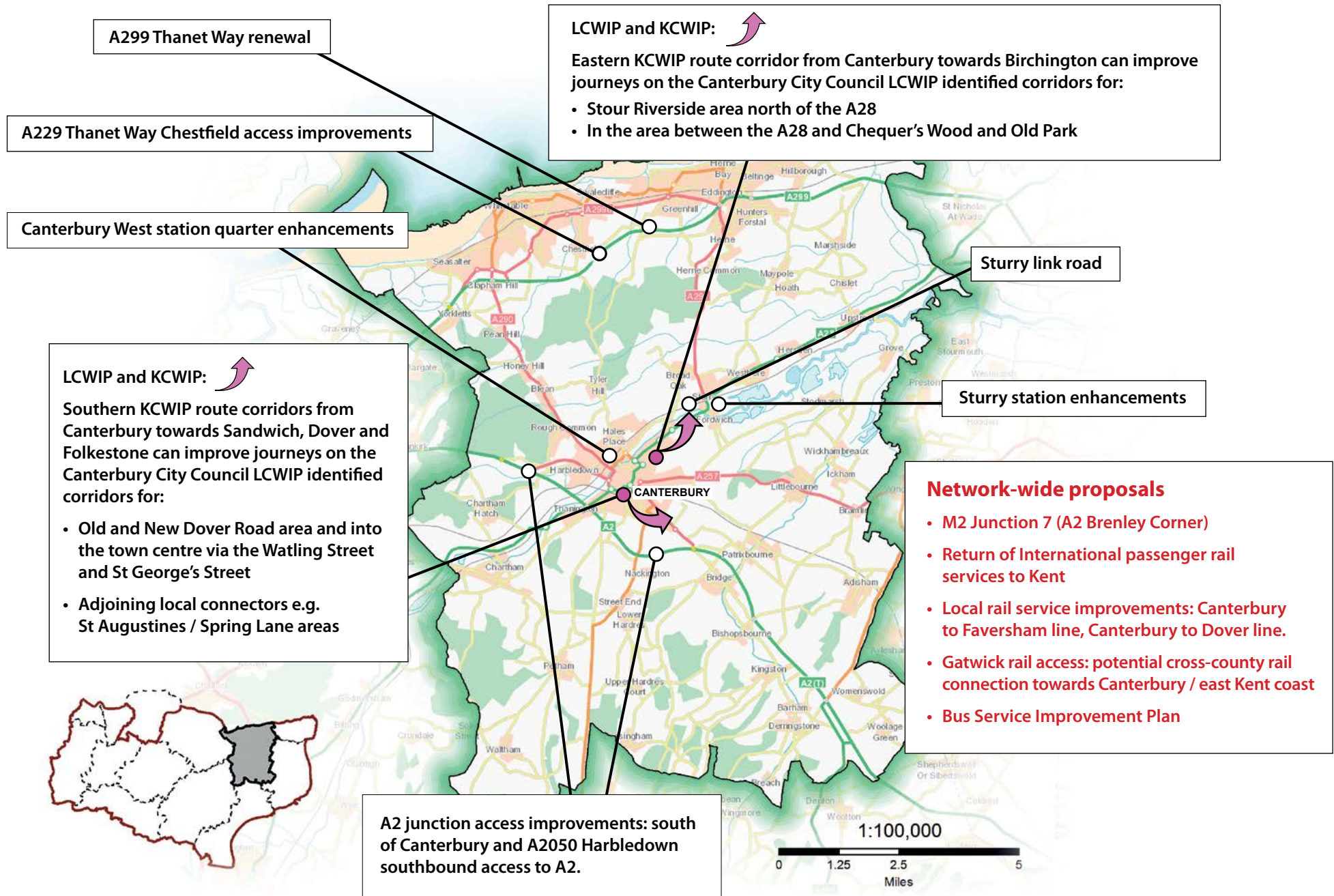
The city has the advantage of being relatively flat and increased efforts have been made between us and the City Council to invest in walking and cycling to improve visitor experiences in the city and support its UNESCO heritage status. The opportunity to compound the benefits of recent investment are recognised through the supplemental proposals within this plan. Some existing bus priority is in place around the town centre and the City Council has identified further

improvements to better connect new developments which our Bus Service Improvement Plan can support delivery of. The district as a whole is also well served by rail lines connecting the city, villages, towns and further afield towards London.

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



Canterbury Town Centre



## DARTFORD

Dartford's transport system is dominated by its position on the periphery of London, with the Strategic Road Network (SRN) crossing the area, including the critical Dartford Crossing of the Thames. The SRN and its proximity and heavy use relative to the local communities in the district, generates challenges which the Local Transport Plan sets out proposals to address. Delivering these proposals to improve the impact of the SRN on the quality of life in the district is essential and will require National Highways to keep working with us and the Borough Council to achieve those outcomes.

The Borough has seen some of the highest growth in the county through housing delivery over the last two decades, and also hosts part of the large new Ebbsfleet Garden City which continues to build out. The growth in the area has enabled public transport to be integrated into new developments, with Kent Thameside Fastrack network serving the heart of residential and commercial development areas and reducing pressure on general traffic on the road network.

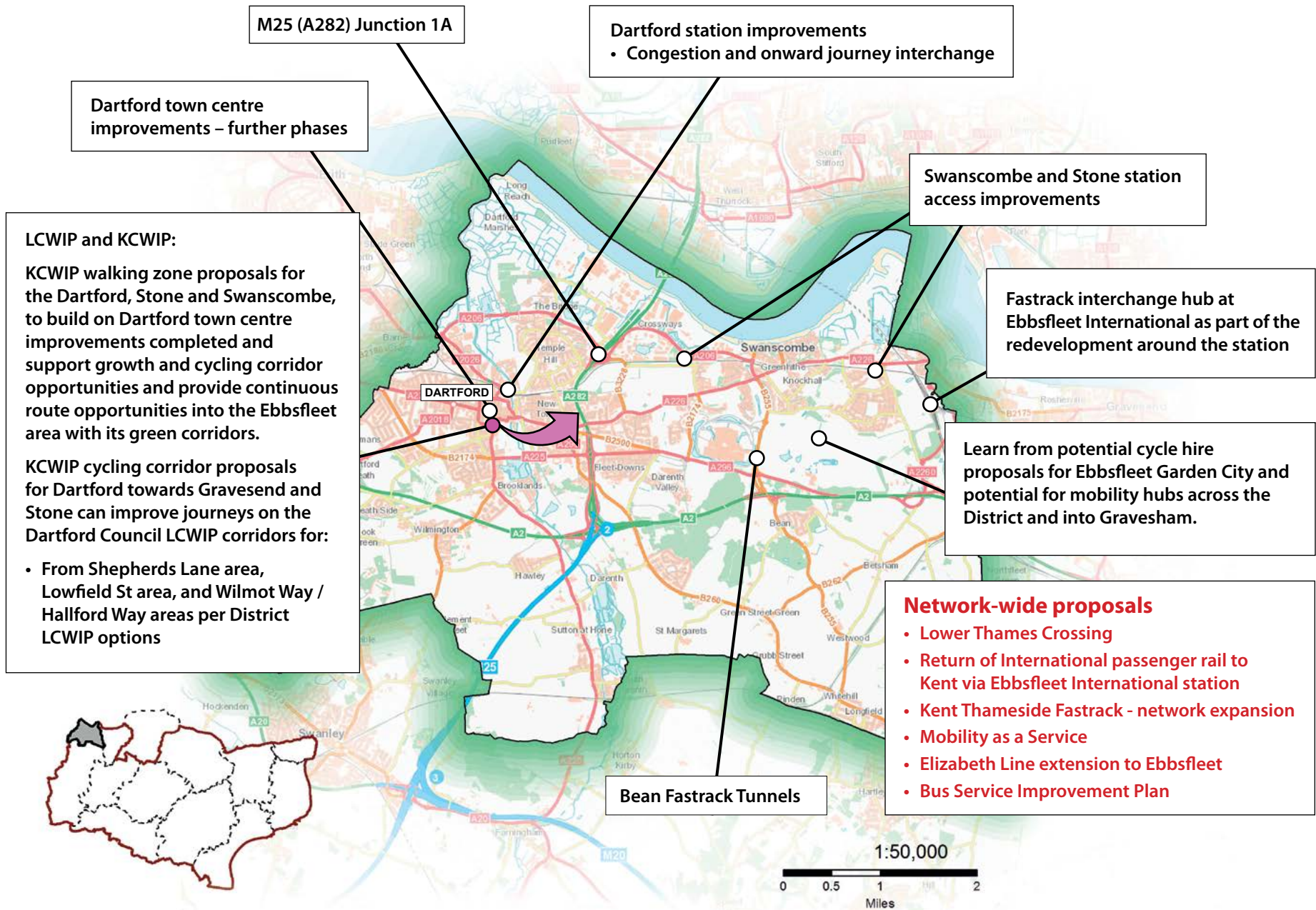
The Borough has developed a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and initial phases of improvements to the town centre have been delivered. More opportunities exist for improvements to local transport associated with future growth and supporting Dartford town centre.

Dartford as a whole is relatively well served in terms of routes and frequencies, owing to the proximity to London. Growth in the District will add weight to the case for improving the quality of local stations aside from the major stations at Dartford and Ebbsfleet International. A major risk is the continued uncertainty of whether international rail services will return to stopping at Ebbsfleet International – which would be damaging for business investment and growth opportunities in the area, as well as on the quality of life for residents in the District and more widely.

The proposals for the district in our plan reflect the diversity of the existing town centres and existing networks and the opportunity to further improve those, alongside the opportunity for new and innovative approaches to transport as part of the Ebbsfleet Garden City. Our approach concerns ensuring that opportunities from the Garden City are learned from and that their benefits can be spread across the wider north Kent area where appropriate.



Approach to Dartford Crossing



## DOVER

Dover District has a unique and nationally significant transport challenge given the Port of Dover, which provides the UK's closest and fastest water-borne crossing to Europe. The Port enables trade of c. £150 billion of goods each year, carried by 2 million freight vehicles. The Port provides employment opportunities to the area and supports over 20,000 jobs more widely. Ensuring the impact of traffic to and from the Port is well managed and that alternatives to road transport exist are essential to ensure that the local communities in Dover town and the wider district can travel when they need to for school, their jobs, or to enjoy their leisure time.

Our plan is focused on addressing this strategic challenge as the impacts at the local level are clear and have been occurring for years. The proposals in our plan would need to be delivered within Dover to deliver this outcome, as well as proposals for the wider Strategic Road Network across the rest of the county, such is the scale of the challenge.

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

New homes are being delivered in smaller towns and villages such as Aylesham, Sandwich and at the Discovery Park science park area. The rail network serves many of these locations and along the coast it hosts the High Speed rail service which provides fast connections to north Kent at Ebbsfleet and London at Stratford and St Pancras International stations.

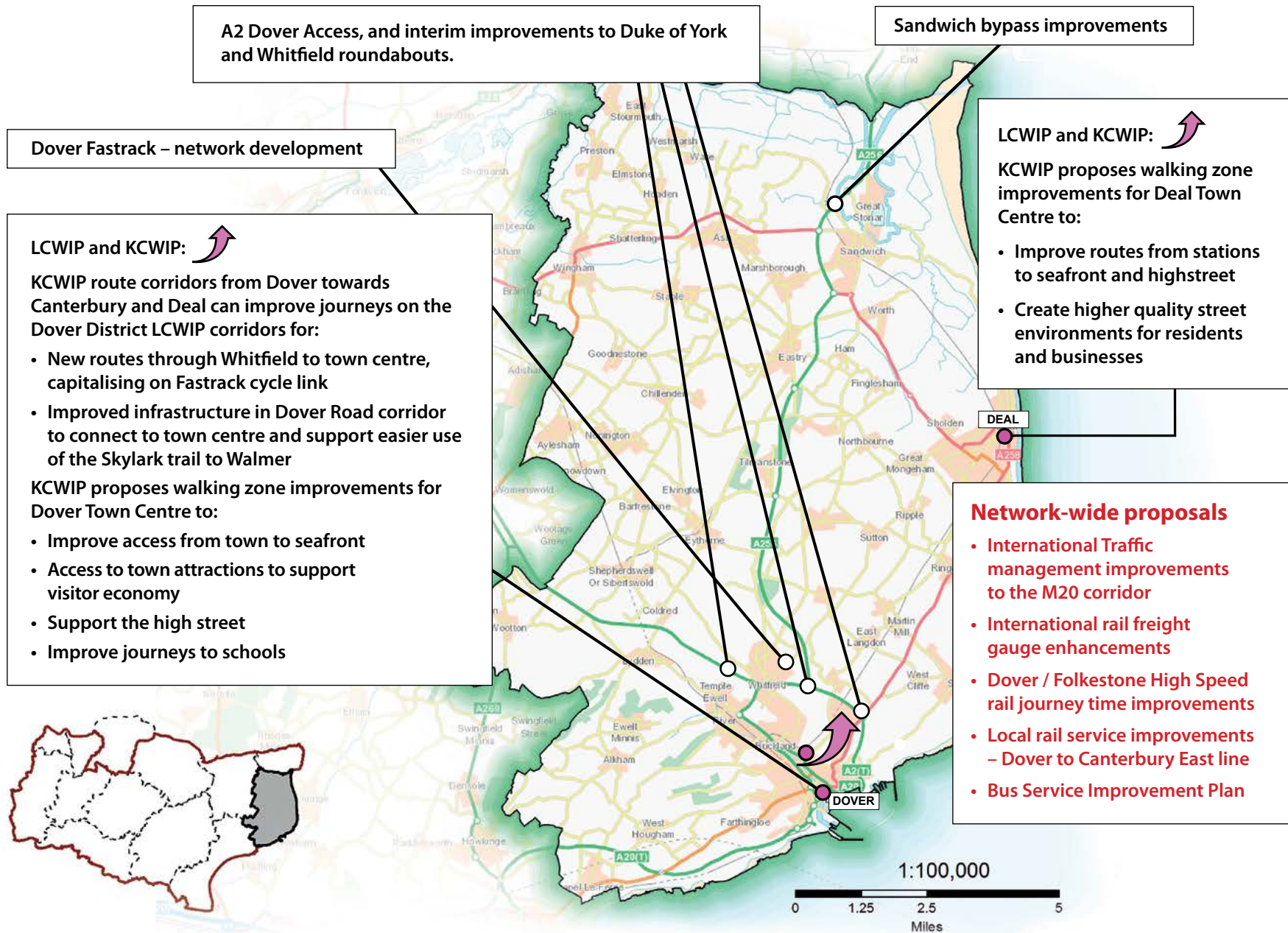
The district is preparing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which will help us to deliver improvements that make short journeys easier to do. At the same time these improvements will help to build a larger continuous network that supports the corridors identified in our Kent Cycling and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



Port of Dover

Photo credit: Dover Harbour Board





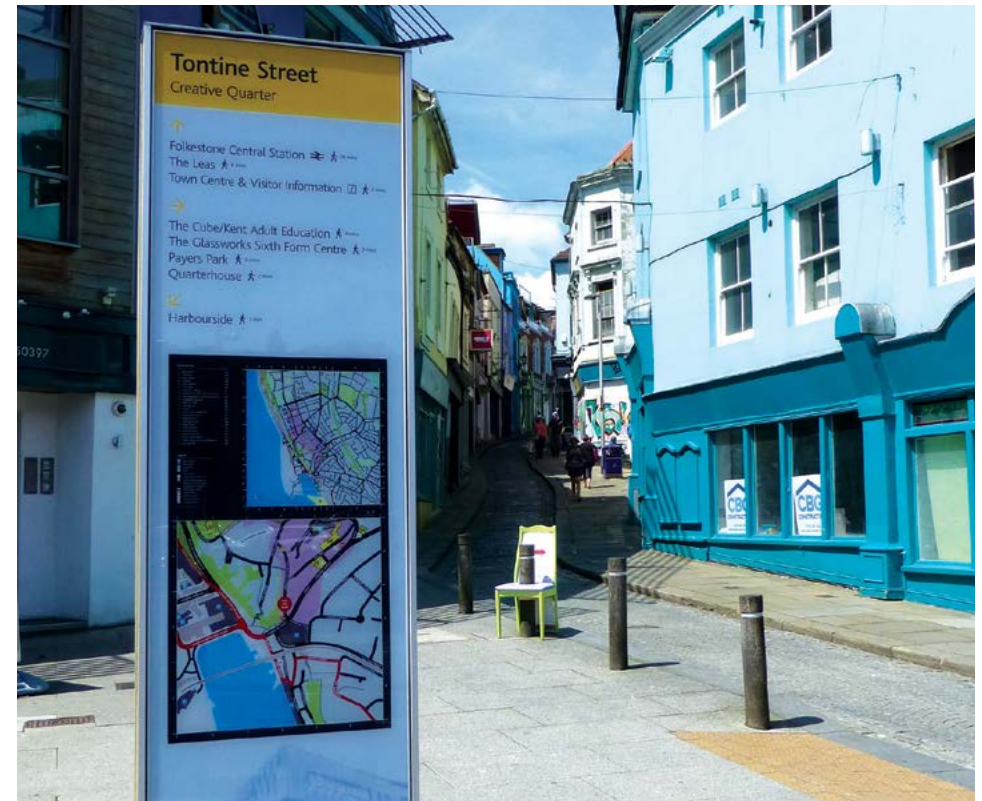
## FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE

The district joins Dover in hosting one of the UK's most important international gateways, with the Eurotunnel to France providing the fastest crossing to the continent, of just 35 minutes. Folkestone and Hythe's challenge is not just the traffic impacts associated with passenger and freight traffic at Eurotunnel, but the knock-on effects of traffic management for vehicles destined for the Port of Dover. Our plan is focused on a range of proposals to reduce the burden of international traffic on the district and local journeys, by making international traffic better managed and shared across the strategic road and rail networks. This includes ensuring the Alkham Valley Spitfire Way junction interchange can meet future demands from growth and international traffic diversions.

The district has one of the largest new development proposals anywhere in Kent and the wider south east – known as Otterpool Park. The development proposals, providing around 8,500 homes and 9,000 new jobs, look to capitalise on the fast rail links towards London through a significant upgrade of the station to enable full length High Speed rail services to stop at a full accessible station, as well as the local and strategic road access from the A20 and M20. As with Dover, our plan has set out how the rail network could further work to the benefit of residents by providing faster journeys and reducing the burden on the road network from international freight traffic.

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

The proposals in our plan can make a positive contribution to local transport through localised improvements within the existing communities of the district, whilst also having a positive effect by helping to address the impacts of the high international traffic flows through the district. Partnership working with National Highways and Network Rail will be important for realising some of the proposals for the district.



Folkestone town centre

**LCWIP and KCWIP:** ↗

KCWIP route corridor towards Canterbury can improve journeys on the F&H LCWIP corridors for:

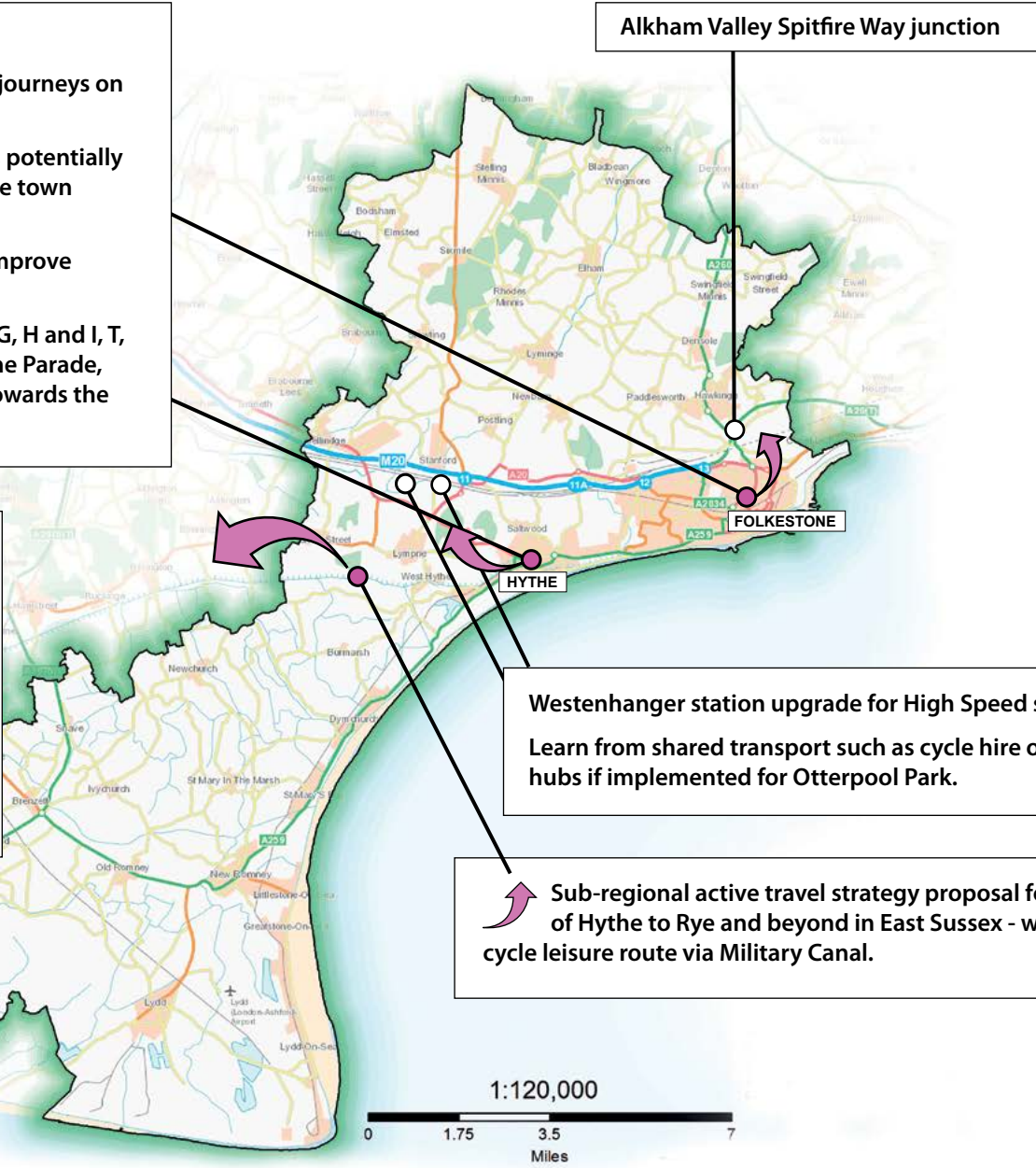
- LCWIP route D in the area around the A259 and A260, potentially including the former Harbour branch line between the town centre and towards Hawkinge

KCWIP route corridor towards Ashford and Hythe can improve journeys on the F&H LCWIP corridors for:

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

**Network-wide proposals**

- International Traffic management improvements to the M20 corridor
- International rail freight gauge enhancements
- Folkestone / Dover High Speed rail journey time improvements
- Return of International passenger rail services to Kent via Ashford International station
- Bus Service Improvement Plan



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

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

## GRAVESHAM

Gravesham borough's position on the Thames means it is the site of National Highway's planned new crossing of the Thames, known as the Lower Thames Crossing. The district will therefore play a critical future role in the strategic movements of millions of vehicles across the nation each year, as the crossing will improve access between Kent and its international terminals with the Midlands and North of England.

The borough will be balancing the impact of the large-scale construction project for the new crossing alongside the planned regeneration of Gravesend town centre and the challenge of new growth in the district including the transformation of the Ebbsfleet and Northfleet areas associated with the progress of the Garden City. The borough also borders Medway which will also need to accommodate growth of new housing and commercial development, some of which may be located close to Gravesham and rely on the highways and public transport networks within the borough.

The A2 corridor cuts across the district east-west, with three north-south arteries between Gravesend to the north and the smaller communities such as Sole Street, Meopham and Vigo to the south. Gravesend has the benefit of the Thameside Fastrack network for connections towards Ebbsfleet and Dartford. Rail services provide good east-west connections between those same locations as well as the Kent coast and Medway. The new Thames crossing will provide the opportunity for potential new public transport connections – an important factor given the challenges that have resulted in the termination of the ferry service to Tilbury.

The proposals in our plan aim to ensure that the major network change of the Lower Thames Crossing and its benefits can be fully realised across the county. Our plan aims to achieve that by ensuring the M2-A2 corridor and access on and off of it can meet the demands on it drive by the new route options the crossing provides along with the growth in travel from new communities and businesses.

Within the district of Gravesham, our proposals aim to ensure that the Fastrack network within the district can pursue opportunities to expand so that more journeys can have the choice and benefit of the fast and reliable public transport it provides. Alongside that is the potential to pilot new innovative approaches to accessing and paying for transport services through a Mobility as a Service initiative as well as learning from new shared transport service options that could be provided within the Ebbsfleet Garden City. The proposals for walking and cycling improvements can build on the improved connections being delivered within the Ebbsfleet Garden City, helping to provide a more complete network through north Kent.



Rathmore Road completed improvements in Gravesend

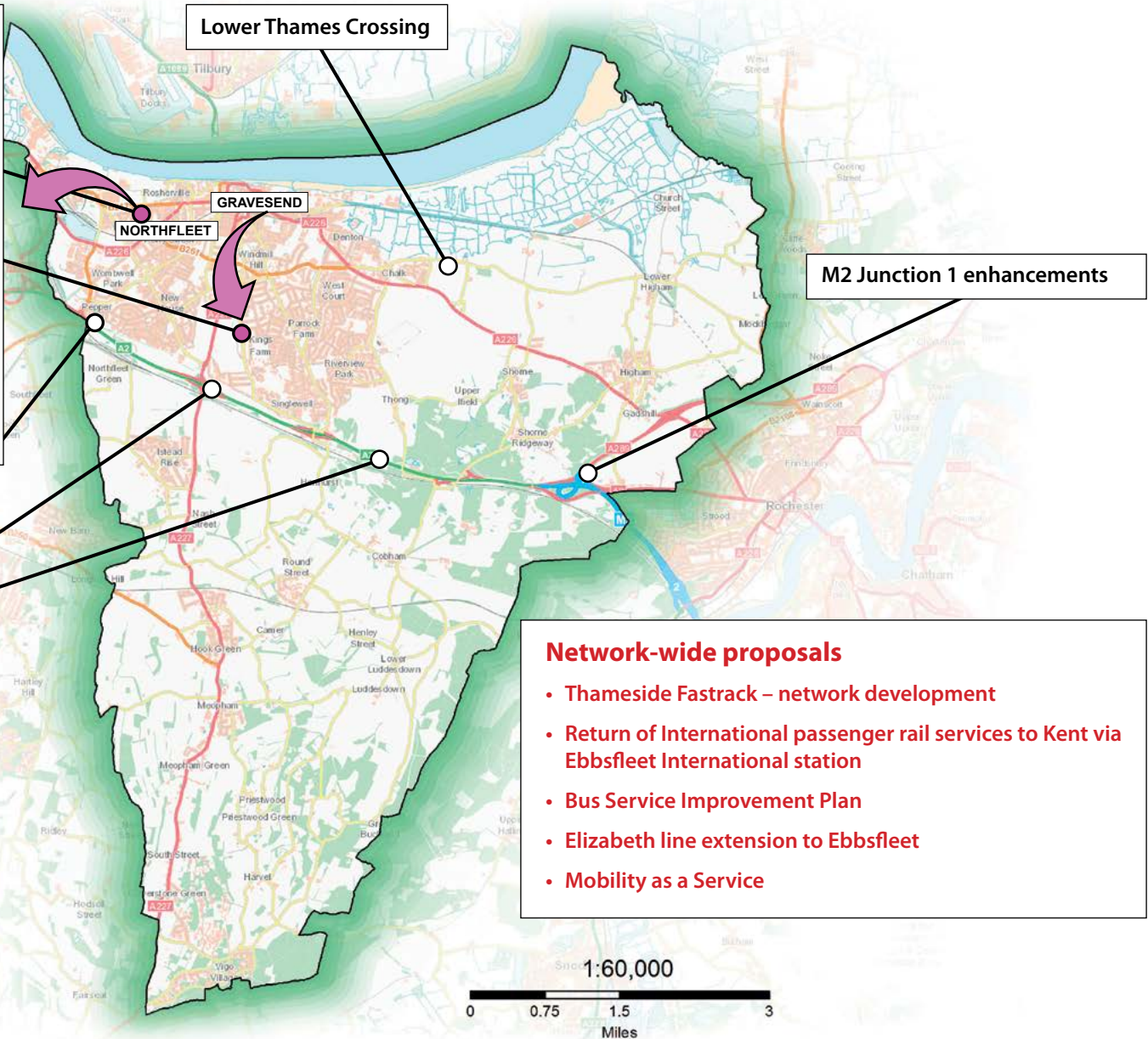
**LCWIP and KCWIP:** ↗

KCWIP route corridor towards Dartford can improve journeys on the Gravesham LCWIP corridors for:

- LCWIP routes 1, 2 and 4 between the Ebbsfleet, Northfleet, Springhead and Gravesend town centre

KCWIP route corridor towards Meopham can improve journeys on the Gravesham LCWIP corridors for:

- LCWIP routes 3, 5 and 6 in the Central Avenue – Singlewell Road – A226 corridor south out of Gravesend



## MAIDSTONE

Maidstone sits at the heart of the county, at the intersection of busy north-south highway routes in the A229 and A249 for Medway and Sittingbourne respectively, and the east-west strategic roads of the M20 and M2. These key highway routes attract much traffic through Maidstone, additional to the local traffic. Maidstone is one of Kent's largest towns – with the urban environment largely continuous east-west running from Bearsted to Snodland (12.5 km across), and from Langley to Sandling (9 km across). These distances and the wide range of destinations for retail, work and services leads to high traffic volumes resulting in queuing and slow journeys through the town and on its approaches such as the A274 and A20. Narrower residential roads are relied upon for journeys that ordinarily would be made on the main routes.

There are no easy or small-scale solutions to the congestion in Maidstone – the built up urban environment and topography of the Medway valley that the town sits in create constraints. A rising population will inevitably bring more vehicle ownership and more travel (Maidstone has exceeded the county wide average level of total vehicles since 2017, with the gap growing), so congestion will likely remain a long-term challenge. Our plan has set out proposals but achieving their delivery will be challenging and require substantial funding, not just to be delivered but to be planned and designed in the first place.

The borough is developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which will supplement the county-wide plan to support delivery of local schemes that also contribute to longer distance routes. The options for improving walking and cycling will be an important part of helping to reduce reliance on vehicle trips for short distance journeys around Maidstone town.

The borough is building on its economic development strategy, with a focus on improving the town centre further in Maidstone. Further new development is planned for Maidstone, most notably the large Maidstone Barracks site, whilst new garden communities are proposed to the east of Lenham and near Lidsing and

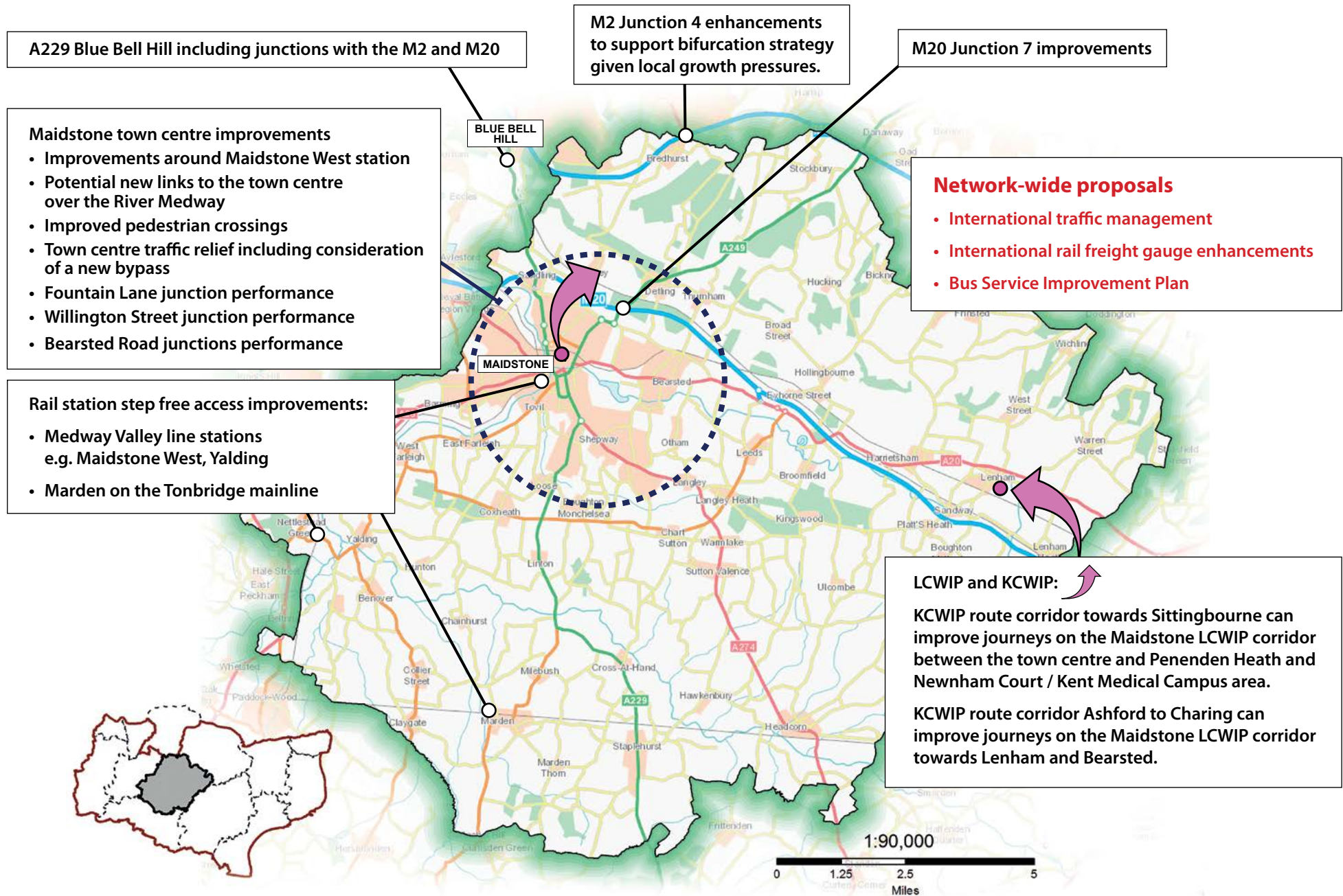
Bredhurst. These proposals will need substantial changes to the rail and highway network and the challenge for developers will be getting those delivered such that they do not worsen travel for local and longer distance journeys.

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

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



Maidstone Bridge and High Street



## SEVENOAKS

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

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

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

The district has Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Sevenoaks and Swanley urban areas, which we have begun delivery of with the district, and our county-wide plan has supplemented these with further priorities to help ensure that urban areas in the district can improve the choice to make journeys within towns by non-vehicular means.

Our plan sets out proposals for the district that reflect the constraints associated with the strategic road network and the constraints on development growth due to the prevalence of green belt land. The main opportunities at a local level, aside from the comprehensive Bus Service Improvement Plan we have, are improvements to local travel within Swanley and Sevenoaks as these locations are large enough that relatively short distance journeys are made by vehicles which adds pressure to the road network. Our plan's proposals for walking and cycling improvements could improve choices so that people can have an easier time choosing to avoid traffic congestion for short journeys.



Swanley Railway Station



**LCWIP and KCWIP:** ↗

KCWIP proposed walking zone in Swanley aiming to provide improved town centre access from suburbs and the rail station, journeys to schools and through improved pedestrian crossing facilities and improved street environments.

LCWIP route 3 and 6 to provide corresponding east-west corridor from Montreal Park to Greatness suburbs in Sevenoaks via the rail station.

LCWIP sets out a cycle network for Sevenoaks with Routes 1 and 5 forming a north-south corridor around the A225 corridor.

M25-M26-A21 – slips for journeys eastwards on M26 to avoid Sevenoaks town centre.

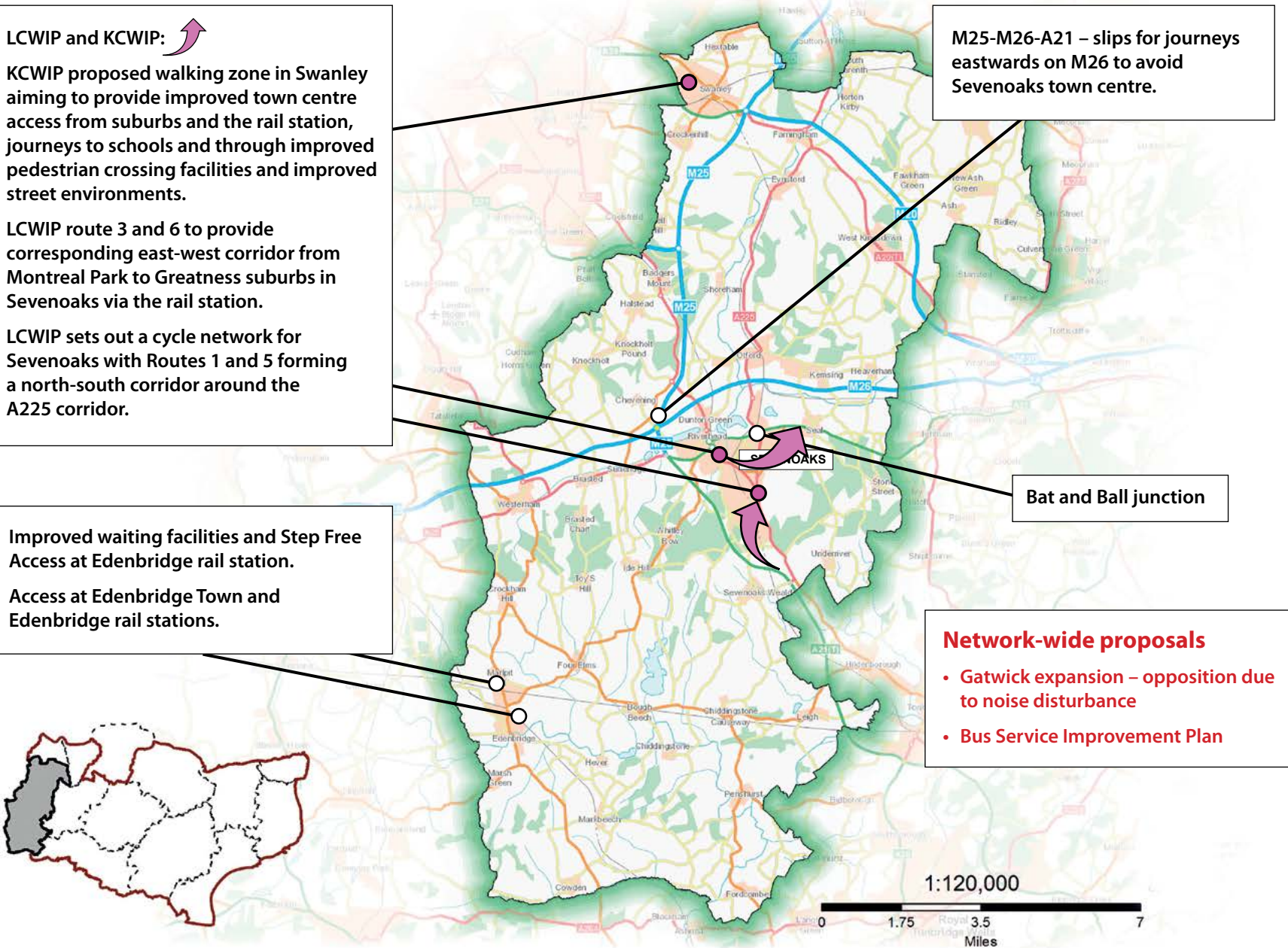
Improved waiting facilities and Step Free Access at Edenbridge rail station.

Access at Edenbridge Town and Edenbridge rail stations.

Bat and Ball junction

**Network-wide proposals**

- Gatwick expansion – opposition due to noise disturbance
- Bus Service Improvement Plan



## SWALE

Swale is comprised of the Isle of Sheppey, connected by major road and rail bridges, as well as the large town of Sittingbourne situated on the A2 which leads to Faversham – a further main town at the eastern boundary of the district. The east-west A2 route is a dominant feature, with communities situated facing the highway along much of its length, although the route has become very busy due to the directness it provides locally compared to the M2 corridor. The A2 is paralleled by the rail network which serves the main towns along the route. It is an important part of the wider corridor strategy we have for balancing the burden of Port traffic across the road network in the county.

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

Sittingbourne has a constrained road network but is experiencing a rising population as homes are built across the area. The district has the highest number of registered licensed private and commercial vehicles out of all Kent districts. Existing investment is delivering upgraded junctions along the A249 to improve access to the strategic road network. Stockbury junction is also being transformed by National Highways. Nonetheless, the focus of traffic movement towards the A249 on the western side of Sittingbourne means traffic pressures for the town and its centre, compounded by a substantial commercial trading estate on the

northern side of Sittingbourne. Plans have existed for new routes to divert traffic away from the A2 road corridor and these are likely to remain beneficial given the limited remaining options for addressing traffic congestion.

Faversham itself is seeing efforts to deliver walking and cycling improvements with strong local community participation, with the support of the district and us. The district has a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for the town. The range of initiatives and infrastructure provide examples of what can be achieved and their effect for learning from for future consideration elsewhere in Kent. For the district more widely, our county-wide plan sets out some further opportunities for walking and cycling improvements.



Faversham Guildhall

LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 KCWIP route corridor Sheerness to Leysdown supplements and can improve the local cycle network including the Explore Kent Sheerness Way Ships and Chips circular route.

LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 KCWIP route corridor Sittingbourne to Faversham supplements local District aspirations for Faversham and provides options supplementing or including the National Cycle Network route to connect into the west side of Faversham.  
 Associated with M2 Junction 7 future upgrade and local area development, improvements to severance to Public Rights of Way between Faversham and Boughton-under-Blean.

LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 A walking zone in Sittingbourne is proposed in the KCWIP. It aims to improve access within the town centre, improve pedestrian safety, access to the retail to the north of the railway line, and to improve journeys to school.

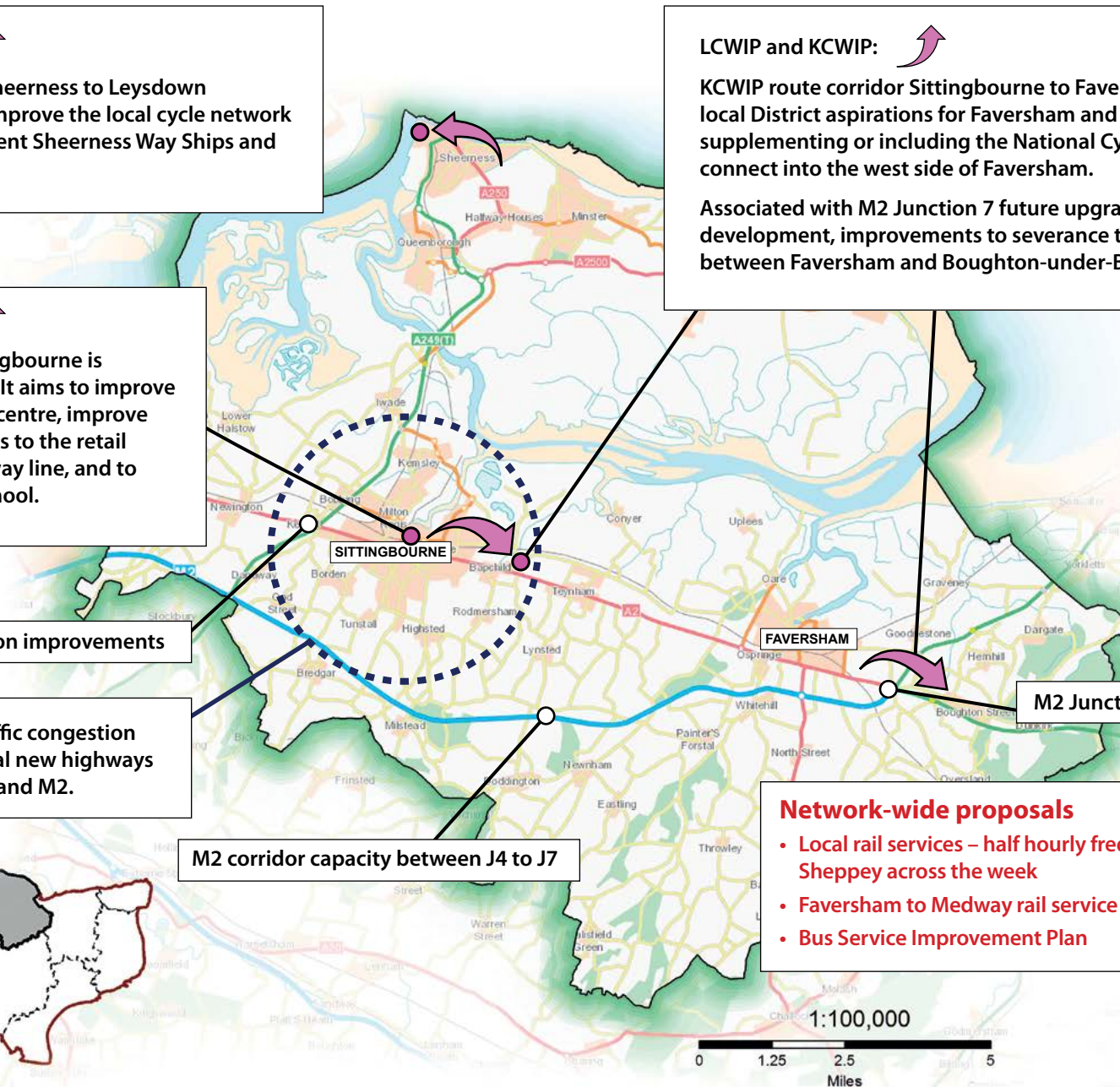
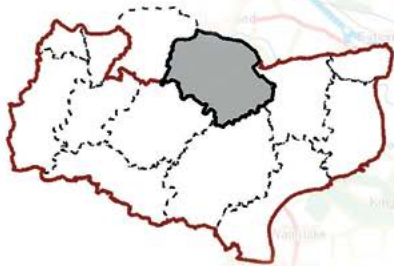
Key Street junction improvements

Sittingbourne town traffic congestion relief including potential new highways routes between the A2 and M2.

M2 corridor capacity between J4 to J7

M2 Junction 7 (A2 Brenley Corner)

- Network-wide proposals**
- Local rail services – half hourly frequency on line to Sheppey across the week
  - Faversham to Medway rail service frequency improvements
  - Bus Service Improvement Plan



## THANET

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

Our plans, already in progress, entail delivery of part of the new road network to provide resilience and additional capacity to support the traffic arising from new development, as well as investment in the bus network to support the well-used Thanet Loop. Development sites will provide new link roads, bringing new connections across the peninsula for local traffic including public transport. The plans will support future uses of the Airport and some of the transport demand that arises from that.

On a similar basis, our former Local Transport Plan proposed delivery of a new rail station and that has been delivered, at Thanet Parkway. The station provides new access to High Speed and local rail services from the area including the airport, and the growing community at Cliffs End and in the north of Dover district.

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

The district has one of the longest continuous off-road cycle routes running along the coastal paths and promenades. The new road network delivered within the peninsula will provide further walking and cycling links. The district is developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which we will

support delivery of. To supplement it, we have developed the county-wide plan which provides some focuses to support improvements. Our plan establishes proposals that address the main road network constraints for future growth in the district, along with opportunities for improving local transport by rail, walking, cycling or bus travel through our Bus Service Improvement Plan.



Ramsgate Harbour

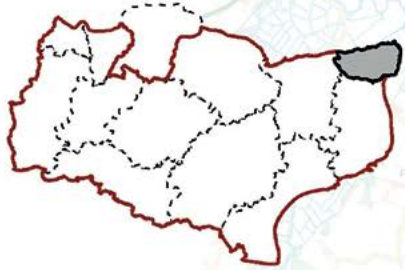
LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 KCWIP route corridor Canterbury to Birchington and Birchington walking zone, aiming to deliver improvements and wayfinding to cycle routes from Birchington seafront to the rail station, and town centre, including improved rail station facilities.

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

North Thanet Link Road

LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 KCWIP walking zone in Westwood, aiming to improve and ease the walking environment for new local communities to the commercial centre, and encourage walking journeys between commercial sites.

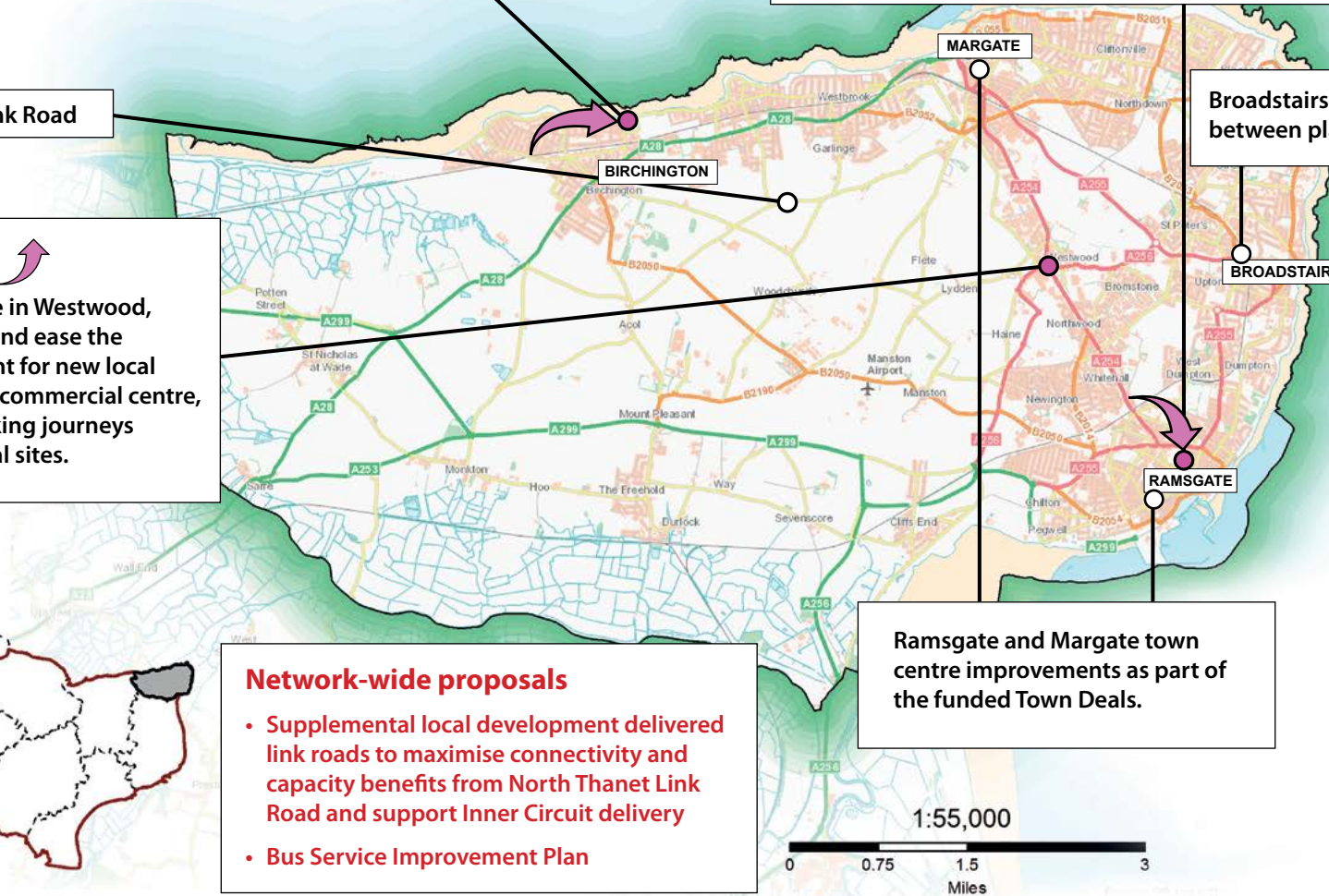
Broadstairs step free access between platforms.



**Network-wide proposals**

- Supplemental local development delivered link roads to maximise connectivity and capacity benefits from North Thanet Link Road and support Inner Circuit delivery
- Bus Service Improvement Plan

Ramsgate and Margate town centre improvements as part of the funded Town Deals.



## TONBRIDGE AND MALLING

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

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

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

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

The district has a walking and cycling strategy (assembled to act as its infrastructure plan too) which has proposed a series of cycling routes. These provide options in the Tonbridge, King’s Hill – West Malling, Borough Green and A20 corridor towards Maidstone (known as the Medway Gap). Our plan supplements the aims for Tonbridge and the Medway Gap proposals point towards options to help reduce reliance on travel along the A20 in the local area via quiet ways through residential areas, and for journeys further on into Maidstone town centre.



Tonbridge High Street

Improving journeys in the Medway Gap, including walking and cycling network connections to better link growth areas, and access towards Maidstone.

A228-A264 road corridor improvements

LCWIP and KCWIP: ↗  
 KCWIP walking zone in Tonbridge aiming to improve journeys to school and easier access to the high street by increasing pedestrian crossing provision and improving the walking environment. Supplements proposals in District strategy for cycle corridors:

- Lower Haysden
- Vauxhall
- Hildenborough

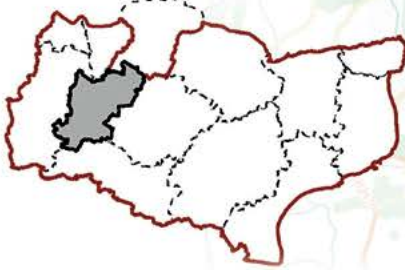
A229 Blue Bell Hill

WEST MALLING

TONBRIDGE

**Network-wide proposals**

- Maidstone rail journey time improvements including improved links to Tonbridge and faster journeys on the Maidstone mainline via West Malling and Borough Green and Wrotham
- Improved rail access to Gatwick from Tonbridge
- Bus Service Improvement Plan



## ROYAL BOROUGH OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS

The district is largely rural with villages and market towns set within the High Weald National Landscape. Of the two main towns (Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood), Paddock Wood will be a focus for residential and employment growth through the Borough Council's Local Plan. As with Tonbridge and Malling, the A228 corridor which skirts the western side of Paddock Wood will be very important for accommodating new journeys by all forms of travel generated and attracted by growth in the town, with development likely to provide new links directly onto the corridor.

The A228 leads to the A264 at a busy set of junctions around Pembury Hospital. The A264 route, especially into Tunbridge Wells, has queueing and congestion, creating overly long journeys for a comparatively short stretch. It is a disadvantage to Tunbridge Wells, which is a popular town with its heritage as a Spa Town and retail offer. Our plan sets out proposals for addressing the pressures along the A228 and A264 corridor arising from within the district and more widely. These would be beneficial for bus journeys too, further to the existing plans we have set out in our comprehensive Bus Service Improvement Plan.

The district has a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and has been working with us to develop and deliver schemes. Our plan supplements this with its focus on the ease and quality of the walking environment in Southborough – a suburb of Tunbridge Wells.

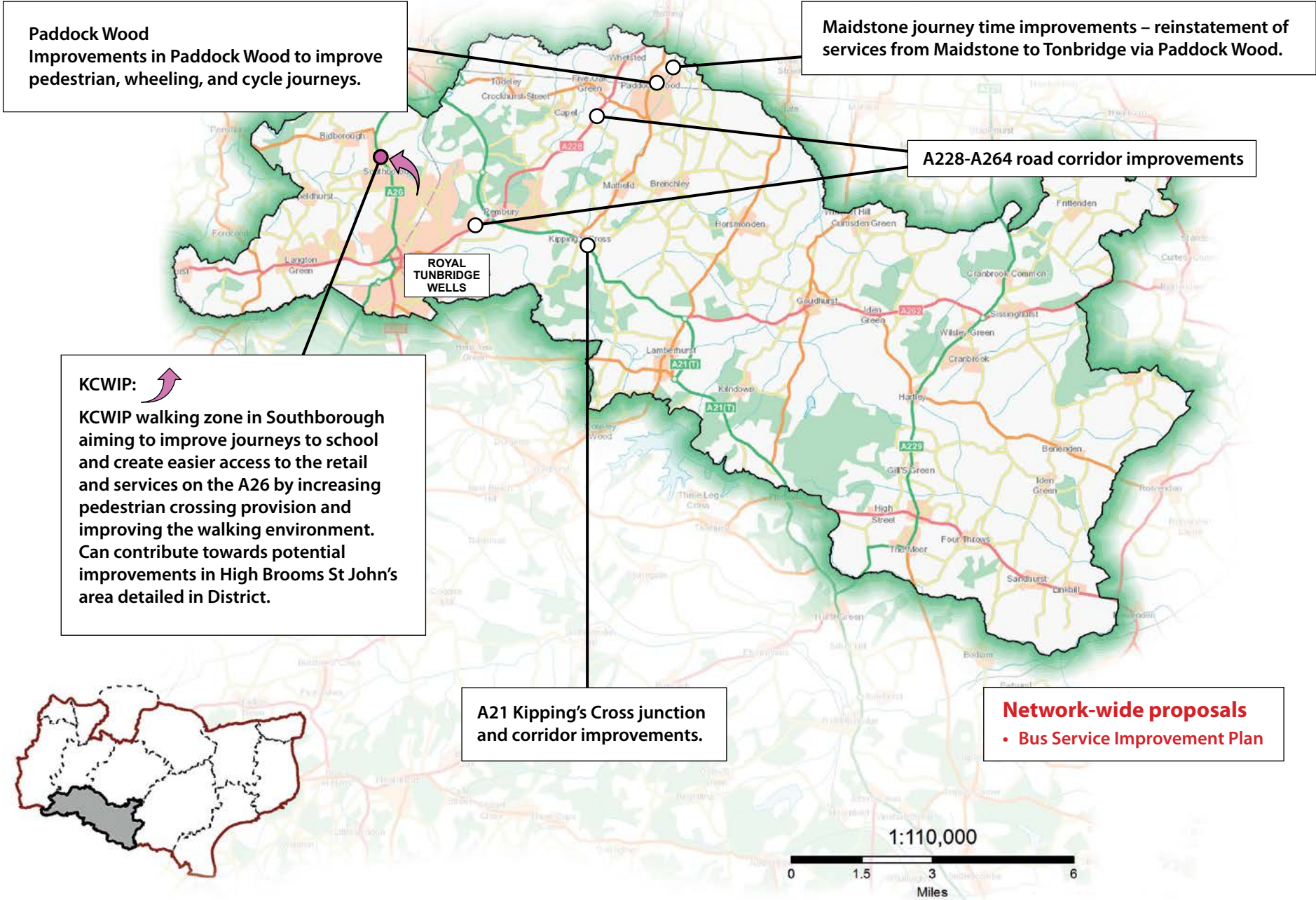
The main towns in the district are served by rail lines with frequent services, although the eastern rural part of the district has no rail network with reliance on journeys to stations such as Staplehurst and Etchingham. Connections from the east towards Tunbridge Wells are reliant on the road network and the A21 corridor is designated as part of the national Strategic Road Network. This designation recognises the important strategic role it provides as the main road corridor carrying high traffic volumes from the coastal area around Hastings

towards the M25 around London. The road also runs through the High Weald National Landscape which has limited the number of highways routes. The A21 corridor is important for both strategic and local traffic and our plan includes proposals to ensure that the A21 supports local journeys and their growth in the future.



Public realm improvements at Fiveways, Tunbridge Wells





# THE FUNDING WE NEED FOR OUR PLAN

By constructing this new Local Transport Plan, we are able to set out clearly what the level of funding is that is needed to invest in our existing highways network, as well as funding new transport infrastructure on both the highways and public transport network. Our Plan will help ourselves and the government to understand what we can and cannot deliver if we receive little funding, or if our funding could be increased.

We annually re-establish our long term capital plan and publish this within our budget book, available from [kent.gov.uk/budget](http://kent.gov.uk/budget). In updating our Local Transport Plan, we have strengthened our understanding of the pipeline of investment we are proposing, what it would deliver in terms of the outcomes aimed for by our plan, and what funding is needed to deliver the improvements.

If we want to make substantial progress to deliver the proposals of our plan, delivering on our ambition and outcomes for residents and businesses across the county, we estimate we will need an additional c.£2.6bn to c.£3.1bn to deliver those transport improvements that we are responsible for as the local transport authority. Our estimate of funding over time is shown in Figure 17.

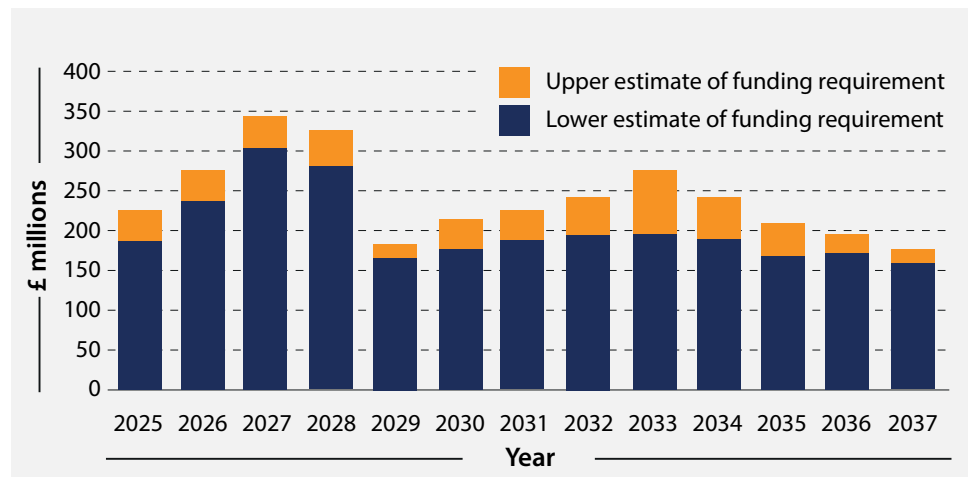
**It is important to note that this is not all the funding we need - the current expected baseline budget set out in our published annual budget book details the funding we expect to have for maintenance and other improvements to the network based on existing funding plans and so is not included in this estimate.**

**The estimate in this plan reflects only the funding needed for the proposals we would deliver in our capacity the local transport and highway authority.** It therefore excludes improvements that our plan proposes for the strategic road network and national rail network which would be funded by government through National Highways, the rail operators, and Network Rail. If that funding were included, the total investment we estimate is needed for transport as a whole in Kent would be substantially larger. For example, the Lower Thames Crossing alone is expected to cost at least c.£9bn.

We have built our estimate through benchmarking the cost of schemes we have delivered or currently have developed designs for, as well as considering inflation over time. But it should be recognised that overall, our total estimate is based on an initial simplified approach – the true cost of planning, designing and constructing proposals cannot be known with accuracy until we can spend time and obtain the funding we need in the first place to working designing proposals in more detail.

If we average the spending needed over the time period shown, we can say that it equates to between c.£200m to c.£24m per year. Since the additional highways maintenance funding we think we will need is c. £100m per year, it leaves a need for additional funding for new or upgraded transport infrastructure in the region of c.£100m and c.£140m. This would primarily entail upgrading and building new roads and junctions, providing public transport improvements, and delivering improvements to streets and public rights of way to help pedestrians and cyclists and other users.

**Figure 17 - Additional funding required to deliver Local Transport Plan schemes that are the responsibility of Kent County Council**



As we have developed our Local Transport Plan, we have also identified some major transport schemes which are currently being both planned by developers of land such as for new homes and commercial land uses, or which have been proposed by private transport operators for whom there is not a sufficient commercial case for them to fully fund an improvement.

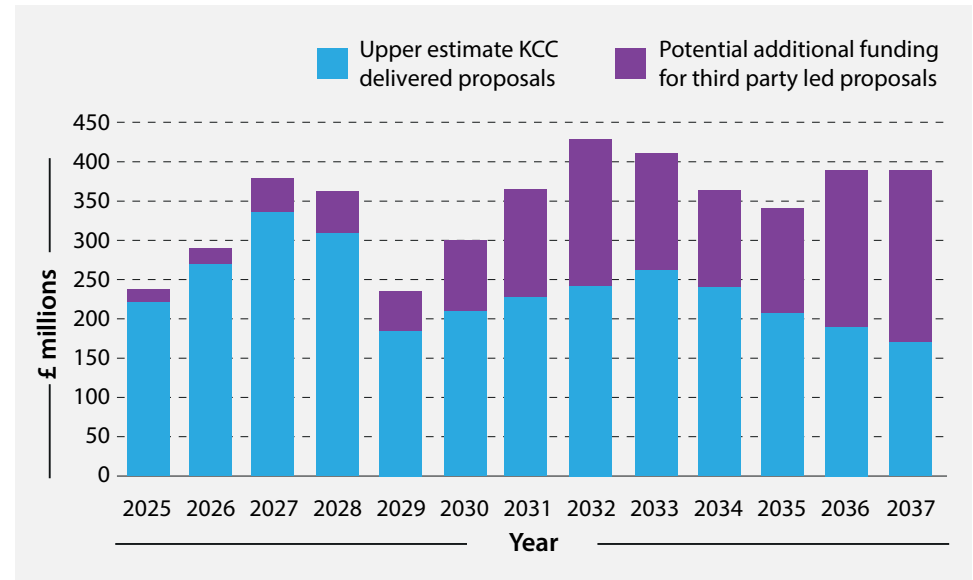
The schemes under consideration, such as a new junction to access the A2 for the south of Canterbury City, or a new relief road for Sittingbourne linking the A2 to the M2, could also provide benefits to existing users of the transport system irrespective of whether new development is actually delivered. The challenge is how these schemes will be delivered – typically a transport body including a local transport authority, National Highways or Network Rail would lead delivery of major new transport schemes in Kent.

There is also a risk that, given their potentially high cost as proposals are developed further, funding the transport network changes becomes a barrier to enabling new development to occur. Lastly there is also the challenge of ensuring that major new road schemes are effectively integrated into our road network and provide the outcomes we need as a local highway authority.

We have considered what further funding these schemes may need if we use our role as the local transport authority in securing government funding support for them, alongside the planned funding from the developments. We have acted in this way in the past, such as by supporting delivery of the Dover Fastrack scheme to the Whitfield development area by securing government funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

The impact is shown in Figure 18. We estimate that the additional cost of these schemes could be between c.£0.9bn to c.£1.4bn, and we have considered inflation over time as part of these estimates. This would equate to a further c.£100m per year of funding needed. Altogether, considering both the upper estimate for the KCC delivered proposals and the potential additional funding required to support delivery of proposals currently led by third parties (such as developers), the total additional funding need per year would be up to c.£320m per year.

**Figure 18 - Further potential funding requirement to deliver major schemes currently led by third parties (such as developers)**



The funding we will need is substantial. If excluding maintenance funding, the annual requirement of £100m at the lower end of our estimate is of a similar order of magnitude to the funding we secured through the former devolved Local Growth Fund. That our estimate is higher reflects partly the inflation that has occurred since the period over 2015 to 2021 in which the Local Growth Fund was available. The Local Growth Fund and the match funding we secured alongside that, supported investment of around £66m a year on new transport infrastructure.

Funding of local transport has been going through a substantial change in the last three years. There has been an increasing number of Councils across the country negotiating or receiving substantial funding settlements.

These have been through transport funding settlements for new local government structures, like Combined County Authorities, existing structures such as single county council settlements (such as Norfolk and Suffolk), or settlements unrelated to local government structures such as the reallocated funding to the authorities in the midlands and north arising from the cancellation of the second phase of High Speed 2.

When considering the scale of transport settlements that some parts of the country have been securing from government as part of the Levelling Up

reforms and devolution, we consider it is realistic and proportionate that we could secure funding that is of a similar scale to our estimate of c.£200m to c.£240m a year. If we can secure such a level of funding, what specific proposals we would deliver first from our Local Transport Plan would be taken on a case by case basis given the circumstances and their contribution to the plan, along with the assessment of their relative delivery of the outcomes and objectives of our Local Transport, following the implementation and prioritisation framework outlined in the Supporting Evidence Base to this Plan.

## TO CONCLUDE

This plan is our draft full plan – no final decisions have been taken. We will consider the feedback we receive during the consultation and use that to support the remaining work we do to finalise the draft and vote as a Council on whether to adopt it.

Our plan proposes how we would like to achieve improved journeys for the variety of journeys and places across Kent. It is designed to strike a balance between the investment needed to improve the economy of Kent, to make living and working in Kent a better quality experience, whilst also preparing our transport networks and ensuring they contribute to addressing the environmental challenges facing the county.

What is clear from our plan is that the proposals we have proposed will require sustained and sufficient funding from government so that we can progress the planning and design of those schemes we would be responsible for delivering. We would also be able to support and drive progress with partners like the national transport bodies National Highways and Network Rail who are responsible for critical parts of the transport network in Kent and so will have a bearing on our ability to achieve our ambition.

Following the adoption of our new plan, we will focus our delivery on the proposals it contains, confident that our activity will be contributing to the needs of Kent and supporting national government in the delivery of its own policy objectives.

# GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
<b>Air Quality Management Plans</b>	Plans held by District and Borough authorities setting out actions to reduce air pollution to within legal limits.
<b>Borough authorities</b>	Borough authorities are the same as District authorities but cover predominantly urban areas e.g. Dartford and Gravesham Borough Councils.
<b>Business-as-usual scenario</b>	This scenario considers what may happen to the volume and nature of travel in Kent if our current funded and committed schemes for transport occur and Kent's population grows.
<b>Carbon pathway</b>	This is the trajectory of future emissions of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent, the trajectory dependent on the scenario considered.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns.
<b>CO<sup>2</sup>e</b>	Carbon Dioxide equivalent – a metric used to cover all greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. Methane, Nitrous Oxide) by converting greenhouse gas emissions into Carbon Dioxide using scientific conversion factors.
<b>Department for Transport</b>	The government department that has responsibility for transport policy for local transport and for national networks.
<b>DfT</b>	See Department for the Transport.
<b>District authorities</b>	District authorities are the local planning authorities in Kent, of which there are twelve. Some Districts have a formal title of being a Borough.
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan's policies and proposals on people with protected characteristics classed within the Equalities Act 2010, required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
<b>Eurostar</b>	This is the name of the international rail service that operates between London and Europe, formerly with stops via Kent at Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International.
<b>Eurotunnel</b>	This is the name of the tunnel connecting Folkestone, in Kent, with Calais in France.
<b>Framing Kent's Future</b>	Kent County Council's strategy covering all its functions for the period of 2022 to 2026.
<b>Gear Change</b>	The Government's vision for Walking and Cycling in England.
<b>Getting Building Fund</b>	This is the name of a government provided fund to support the economy through infrastructure investment during the Covid-19 pandemic.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Health Impact Assessment</b>	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan’s policies and proposals required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
<b>HGV</b>	Heavy Goods Vehicle
<b>High Speed 1 / HS1</b>	This is the name of the high speed rail link running to London St Pancras International from Kent, via Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International.
<b>Housing Infrastructure Fund</b>	This is the name of a government fund designed to support delivery of housing and the infrastructure housing needs.
<b>Infrastructure Delivery Plans</b>	Plans help by District and Borough authorities setting out proposed infrastructure, including transport, needed to support delivery and mitigate the impact of changes to land use including new development.
<b>LGV</b>	Light Goods Vehicle
<b>Local Plan</b>	A document held by District and Borough authorities which details policies to manage the use of land and its development.
<b>Local Transport Authority</b>	This is the name for a local government authority, such as a County Council, who has responsibility for local transport policy and delivery based on law which includes the Local Transport Act and Highways Act.
<b>LTP</b>	Stands for Local Transport Plan.
<b>National Highways</b>	The government company which plans, designs, builds, operates, and maintains England’s motorways and major A roads, known as the strategic road network (SRN).
<b>National Highways</b>	The government company which plans, designs, builds, operates, and maintains England’s motorways and major A roads, known as the strategic road network (SRN).
<b>National Travel Survey</b>	A survey run by the Department for Transport to monitor journeys across different forms of transport across the country.
<b>National Infrastructure Commission</b>	The National Infrastructure Commission is an Executive Agency of government, providing government with impartial, expert advice on major long term infrastructure challenges including transport.
<b>Net Zero</b>	This is a target the UK has of reducing its net carbon emission to zero by 2050.
<b>Parish Council</b>	A Parish Council is a civil local authority in England which is the lowest tier of local government sat below District Councils. They are elected bodies representing civil parishes. In Kent there are over 300 Parish Councils.

Term	Definition
<b>Public Health Observatory</b>	The Public Health Observatory is a function run by Kent County Council that manages and publishes statistics about the health of the County's residents.
<b>Public Rights of Way</b>	A right of way is a path that anyone has the legal right to use on foot, and sometimes using other forms of transport. Kent County Council is the responsible authority in Kent for Public Rights of Way.
<b>Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan</b>	This is a statutory plan that Kent County Council must have explaining how improvements to the public rights of way network in the authority's area will provide a better experience for its users including walkers, cyclists, horse riders, horse and carriage drivers, people with mobility problems, and people using motorised vehicles.
<b>Quantifiable Carbon Reductions</b>	This is the name given to an assessment of carbon emissions (generated by the delivery, maintenance, and use of transport networks) that the Department for Transport is intending that Local Transport Authorities undertake as part of their Local Transport Plan.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment</b>	An assessment of the expected impacts of the plan's policies and proposals required to be undertaken to inform decision making on the adoption of the plan.
<b>Strategic Road Network</b>	The strategic road network comprises the motorways and trunk roads in England.
<b>Sub National Transport Body</b>	An organisation established under or for the purpose set out in The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act, which makes provision for the establishment and constitution of a Sub National Transport Body for any area in England (outside of Greater London). Sub National Transport Bodies are designed to address regional, cross boundary transport challenges and opportunities to support the work of Local Transport Authorities within their region and national Government.
<b>Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)</b>	TROs are legal documents that restrict or prohibit the use of the highway network, in line with The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
<b>Transport for the South East (TfSE)</b>	This is the name of the Sub National Transport Body for the region that includes Kent. See Sub National Transport Body glossary entry for further information.
<b>Trunk road</b>	A road designated by National Highways as a route of strategic importance.
<b>Trunking</b>	This is the term used to describe the changing of the status of a locally managed road to a road of strategic importance which will therefore be managed by National Highways.
<b>Vision Zero</b>	Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

# LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 5

## STRIKING THE BALANCE

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