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## SANDWICH TOWN HIGHWAY REPORT - RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

To: **Dover Joint Transportation Board, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

Main Portfolio Area: **KCC – Enterprise and Environment**

By: **Director of Highways and Transportation, Kent County Council**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Sandwich** Division: **Sandwich**

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**Summary:** The report shows the outcome of the site visit with the local Member Fund Highway Engineer, and recommendations for highway improvements throughout Sandwich. This report is for information only, and has been compiled in answer of various highway concerns raised by residents.

### For Decision

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## 2.0 Sandwich Town Report

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October Ryan Shiel from Kent County Council (KCC) Highways and Transportation met with the Sandwich Town Team to discuss the various highway concerns that have been raised by local residents and carry out a detailed walk through around the town. Whilst on site comprehensive observations were made at various locations and recommendations put forward about how to alleviate highway safety issues in each location, these were then discussed in full with the working group.

### ***Main issues and targets:***

Various overarching issues seemed to have a knock on effect to many of the smaller highway enquiries. The main aim of the Sandwich Town Team and the proposals outlined in this report are to reduce the amount of *rat running* through the town, stop heavy goods vehicles (HGV's) and larger vehicles from using the town as a through route, and rationalise the size / number of buses.

### ***Proposal 1 – Refresh existing markings in High Street around the Toll Bridge, and on approaches***

The High Street and area in front of the toll bridge is one of the busiest areas in Sandwich. There are several different traffic movements taking place here as the point where various roads meet, including Strand Street and Ramsgate Road. The existing markings are needed to ensure that drivers and pedestrians are aware of how this space should be used; these markings do fade over time due to the amount of traffic in this area. The Highway Operations Team at KCC have been contacted to request that the white markings around Strand Street / High Street and the busy junction be refreshed. This will ensure that all who use this area will know where they need to be to ensure its safe use. This is not deemed to have any negative impacts as it is simply maintaining what is already in place.



**Proposal 2 – Improvements to existing weight limit signage on all entry points into Sandwich**

Drivers of larger vehicles frequently travel through Sandwich, usually because they are directed to do so by Satellite Navigation devices which have not been updated or are unsuitable for larger vehicles. This is a national issue and suitable restrictions are being explored. However, to help advise drivers accordingly the Town Team have asked if the existing weight limit signs and other HGV signage could be improved, or enlarged to ensure that it is clear and visible on all approaches into the town. This would include introduction of signage on junctions / roundabout approaches to Sandwich, such as at the Deal Road / Dover Road, at points where drivers can safely turn to use correct routes.



**Positive effects:**

- Could help to reduce the number of larger vehicles entering Sandwich, and encourage drivers to use the by-pass.

**Negative impacts:**

- Will increase sign clutter in the area.
- Effect could be minimal, as drivers may continue to follow satellite navigation devices.
- To be truly effective the scheme may require physical measures, but any narrowing's or barriers would be prohibitive to bus services.

Detailed design and investigation costs: £1,500 to assess signs on all four approaches and identify new sign designs, sizes and post requirements.

Potential scheme cost dependant on outcome of detailed design: Ranging from £500 to £4,000 per site dependant on the size of the signs required and the traffic management requirements to carry out the works.

**Proposal 3 – The introduction of a system of raised tables / humps**

Vehicle speeds have been reported by many residents as a major safety issue, along with the large volumes of traffic travelling through the town without stopping, or any purpose for coming into Sandwich.

Due to the historic nature of Sandwich it was agreed that many forms of traffic calming and road features would not be suitable or in keeping with the area. However, it was outlined that raised table features could be installed without causing too much visual obtrusion and still provide a traffic calming feature and enhanced pedestrian crossing provision. Raised tables have been used in other conservation areas and can be constructed from heritage materials. To be legally and safely installed at least two traffic calming features are required in a road to ensure that a system is in place, and not an isolated table or hump. With this in mind two sites were located in each of the main roads forming the one way system in Sandwich. The individual sites and reasons for their selection have been detailed below:

Site 1 Strand Street, junction with Pillory gate:



A raised table in this location would provide a crossing point to the river front footpath, and help slow driver speeds at the point where the footway narrows.

Site 2 Strand Street, outside number 8:



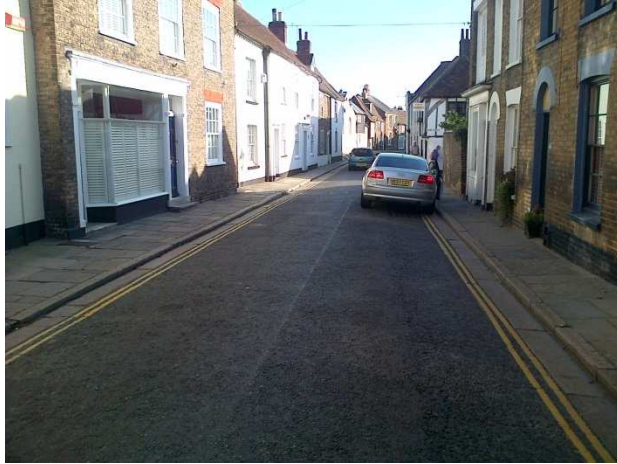
Proposed measures in this vicinity could help reduce driver speeds on approach to the High Street junction.

Site 3 High Street, near Carole Ridley and pedestrian walkway:



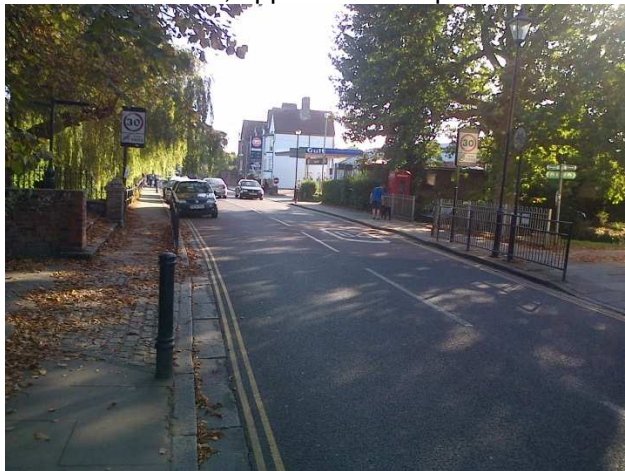
A raised table in this location would provide a crossing point to the town centre footpath.

Site 4 High Street, outside no.47 Wallis House:



Drivers often increase their speed once they pass the row of on street parking in this part of the High Street. A traffic calming feature at this point will advise drivers to keep their speeds low.

Site 5 New Street, opposite the Ropewalk:



A raised table in this location would provide a crossing point to The Rope Walk and Mill Wall footpaths.

Site 6 New Street, outside number 64:



By installing a traffic calming feature at this point, it could discourage drivers from travelling at excessive speeds on the straight approach to the zebra crossing.

Site 7 Moat Sole, opposite the Mill Wall:



A raised table in this location would provide a crossing point to the Ropewalk and The Butts footpath.

Site 8 Moat Sole, near the mini roundabout:



Pedestrians often need to cross to reach the supermarket and Cattle Market car park in this location. A raised table would also help to reduce driver speeds on approach to the mini roundabout.

#### Positive effects:

- Would highlight suitable areas for pedestrians to cross, and enhance visibility of pedestrians to approaching drivers.
- Could help to reduce driver speeds in the area.
- May discourage through traffic and make the by-pass more appealing route to avoid traffic calming.

#### Negative impacts:

- Raised tables may cause noise and vibration to nearby properties, depending on gradients and proximity of property walls / boundaries.
- May be unpopular due to use in conservation area.
- Could lead to drainage issues which will need to be addressed in detail at design stage.

Detailed design and survey costs (traffic counts): £2,650 per road

Potential scheme cost dependant on outcome of detailed design: Ranging from £3,000 per site to install a simple table consisting of black carriageway surfacing and conservation kerbing to £25,000 if drainage alterations are required, or expensive materials such as block paving used. Overleaf are some examples of what the tables can be expected to look like:



### **Proposal 4 option A – Install a one way system on Ramsgate Road Bridge**

There are currently four routes in and out of Sandwich, with the entrances from Ramsgate Road across the river bridge and New Street approaching from Deal, being identified as the main north south route for through traffic. Previous proposals and attempts have been made to reduce the amount of use of the Ramsgate Road Bridge through re-introducing the toll, changing the existing phasing of the traffic lights etc. However, the proposal suggested during the site meeting leading to this report was for the bridge to be made one way allowing vehicles to exit Sandwich heading north. This was seen as the highest priority for the residents group as it would also help achieve most of its main targets outlined above. An injury related crash has been reported on the bridge, relating to pedestrian vehicle conflict.



#### Positive effects:

- Will reduce the amount of through traffic entering the town as drivers would be forced to use the by-pass when travelling from Discovery Park towards Deal / Dover.
- Reduce the amount of vehicle movements around the High Street and town square near the archway.
- Will make the bridge safer for use by pedestrians and cyclists, encouraging more economic forms of travel.
- Reduce difficult manoeuvres for buses and other vehicles around the archway which has led to ongoing damage to the bridge and other buildings.

#### Negative impacts:

- Local traffic / residents (as motorists) would be unable to access the town by the bridge from the Discovery Park direction.
- The bus service would have to be rerouted along the by-pass

Detailed design, advertisement and writing of Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and survey costs (traffic counts): £2,995. The outcome of the TRO consultation is not assured success.

Potential scheme cost, dependant on outcome of detailed design: Ranging from £2,000 for simple signing and introduction of a one way traffic regulation order (TRO) to £15,000 if junction alterations are required at the roundabout next to the bridge to allow for larger vehicles / buses to turn back towards Discovery Park.

### **Proposal 4 option B – Amend phasing of the existing traffic lights at the Ramsgate Road Toll Bridge**

There have been previous proposals to amend the phasing of the traffic lights at the Ramsgate Road toll bridge. There are various ideas behind this, one of them being to simply assist the flow of traffic by changing the length of times green phases are active, i.e. less changing of lights for longer green and red phases so more traffic can pass in one phase. Alternatively, it has been suggested that the traffic lights be amended so they work more in favour of vehicles leaving Sandwich to discourage through traffic and make the by-pass a more appealing alternative.



**Positive effects:**

- Could reduce the amount of through traffic entering the town as drivers might choose to use the by-pass when travelling from Discovery Park towards Deal / Dover.
- May reduce the amount of vehicle movements around the High Street and town square near the archway.

**Negative impacts:**

- Local traffic / residents (as motorists) may be inconvenienced by the increased waiting times at the traffic lights.

With the exception of the two options in proposal 4, the proposals detailed in this report could be used in conjunction with each other or individually based on funding and final decisions by relevant officers and elected officials.

***Other measures discussed / suggested***

- Introduction of bollards on the western side footway in High Street at various intervals where the footway is more than 2m wide. This could help to reduce vehicle speeds, as it has a narrowing effect, as well stop drivers from mounting the footway when travelling at speed, or to park. Bollards can be supplied and installed for between £200 and £400 each depending on size, type and location. Siting would be subject to location of underground utilities.
- Contacting Stagecoach to request that they use smaller buses when entering the town centre, and / or consider reducing the number of buses entering the town to ensure empty buses are not using the narrow roads unnecessarily. – Actioned by Ryan Shiel – This has previously been requested, but Stagecoach said that this would have a knock on effect to many services, particularly school buses which often empty completely when stopping outside the schools etc. Through proposed developments at Discovery Park there have been suggestions that a shuttle bus service could be provided using smaller buses to and from the town and new development in the future.
- Contacting the Highway Operations Team at KCC to request the white markings around the Moat Sole / Cattle Market junction be refreshed. – Actioned by Ryan Shiel – An enquiry has been raised with the Highway Operations Team to ask that the white lining be repainted in this area.
- Speed watch – Local speed watch schemes allow residents to help collect and present data regarding vehicle speeds in their local area. This can highlight repeat offenders and assist Kent Police with their enforcement.

- Introduction of a new North Sandwich coach park. Coaches and foreign buses regularly travel into the centre of the town and become stuck or lost trying to find somewhere to park. The town team highlighted the importance of ensuring tourists can reach Sandwich, but there is a lack of parking on the north and west approaches. However, this is a matter for Strategic Planners and Dover District Council to consider.

\*Please be advised that all scheme costs at this stage are only estimations, and no detailed prices or quotes have been produced at the time this report was written.

\*\*All scheme proposals detailed in this report would be subject to funding and a full consultation with elected officials, local associations and immediately affected residents.

## **2.0 For information only**

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