

## **PROPOSED BUS-STOP CLEARWAYS – PALMERSTON AVENUE, WALMER.**

To: Dover Joint Transportation Board – 4 June 2015

Main Portfolio Area: Highways & Transportation: Public Transport

By: Policy & Strategy Manager

Classification: Unrestricted

Ward: Walmer

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**Summary:** To recommend that members approve the designation of a bus stop clearway on Palmerston Avenue, Walmer, Deal

**For Decision:**

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### **1.0 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 Bus stop clearways are provided to allow buses to pull up alongside the kerb at bus stops where indiscriminate parking would otherwise prevent this. This then allows bus drivers the ability to correctly approach and line up with the bus stop to enable the use of facilities such as low floor technology, to be used to their maximum potential. The object is to make it easier for passengers with mobility impairments, wheelchairs, buggies and heavy shopping etc... to board and alight the bus.
- 1.2 Since 2004, legislation no longer requires a traffic regulation order (TRO) to be made to implement a bus stop clearway, but it is deemed good practice to carry out the same level of consultation.

### **2.0 The Current Situation**

- 2.1 Towards the end of 2014 (9<sup>th</sup> October 2014) Kent County Council (KCC) were contacted by a resident of Kelvedon Road who raised concerns about the bus stop located on Palmerston Avenue, adjacent Wellesley Avenue. Concerns included the lack of hard standing at the bus stop location and the inability of buses to fully serve the stop.
- 2.2 KCC liaised with the bus company Stagecoach to gauge their opinion who confirmed that problems with cars parking at both the bus stops on Palmerston Avenue (opposite and adjacent Wellesley Avenue) resulted in buses stopping in other less suitable locations.

- 2.3 It was agreed that the installation of bus stop clearways at both stops would assist in resolving the parking problems, along with the installation of a small area of hard standing at the bus stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue.
- 2.4 Notices were sent to all properties (please see appendix A) that could be directly affected by the installation of bus stop clearways, in line with council policy. The notices detailed that the bus stop clearways would be 31meters in length with parking restrictions in operation Monday to Saturday 7am-7pm at the stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue, and Monday to Sunday 7am-7pm for the stop opposite Wellesley Avenue. Due to the route operated by the Sunday bus the stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue is not served hence restrictions were proposed Monday to Saturday only.
- 2.5 Following the consultation on the proposals, 4 single objections were received and a joint objection signed by 8 different residents. The objections raise a number of different issues largely relating to parking on the highway, relocating both bus stops and the use of the old bus stop in Kelvedon Avenue. Council policy is not to relocate a bus stop unless there are extraordinary factors which are usually health and safety related. A relocation is only considered if a new location can be established that will not disadvantage existing bus passengers or have an impact on neighbouring properties. In this instance both bus stops have been in situ for a number of years without incident (please see the crash data in appendix B) and the bus company is happy with the current location. It has not been possible to find suitable alternative solutions to the problems raised by local residents that will not either a) disadvantage existing bus passengers or b) have an impact on neighbouring properties.
- 2.6 Please see appendix C for a summary of the objections received
- 2.7 Only one objection was received in relation to the proposed clearway opposite Wellesley Avenue which did not raise a valid safety concern or objection and as such KCC intend to progress with this clearway as proposed.
- 2.8 KCC note the following options available in relation to the bus stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue:

### **3.0 Options**

- 3.1 To recommend that members approve the implementation of the proposed bus stop clearway at the location detailed in the notice (Appendix A).
- 3.2 Relocate the bus stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue nearer to the junction with Balfour Road, avoiding the dropped kerb vehicle accesses as high kerbs are required to make use of low floor technology. This would see the stop located outside another property which could give rise to further objections. KCC's Civil's Contractor have confirmed this as a possible option although we would note this is in conflict with current council policy which states that stop relocations will only be considered where there are safety concerns identified by a qualified KCC Engineer.

- 3.3 Request officers give consideration to the removal of the bus stop located adjacent Wellesley Avenue in favour of the defunct bus stop in Kelvedon Road. This may transfer perceived parking problems and give rise to further objections. This could also disadvantage bus passengers who are unable to walk the extra distance to the Kelvedon Road stop (approximately 364 feet) and mean that the distance from the next closest stop on route 13 (Forelands Square, adjacent) will increase to approximately 0.4 miles. Stagecoach have identified that the bus stop is currently used by a number of elderly passengers who may find this additional distance problematic. In addition to this, some buses will be unable to serve this location due to their route (82A journeys which turn right into Balfour Road). This option is not popular with Stagecoach.
- 3.4 Request officers give consideration to the removal of the bus stop located adjacent Wellesley Avenue in favour of a new bus stop closer to the junction with Downs Road, alongside a large brick wall. This option could also be considered alongside bringing the stop on Kelvedon Road back into use, resulting in more evenly spaced stops on the service 13 route. This option could however give rise to further objections and would be in conflict with current council policy which states that stop relocations will only be considered where there are safety concerns identified by a qualified KCC Engineer.
- 3.5 No further action. This could lead to potential difficulties for elderly and less mobile passengers wishing to board or alight at either stop and negate the benefits of new low floor buses.
- 3.6 The various options above can be seen on the map in Appendix D.

#### **4.0 Corporate Implications**

##### **4.1 Financial**

4.1.1 None, funding from existing budget.

##### **4.2 Legal**

4.2.1 Bus stop clearways are authorised under part 1 of schedule 19 to the traffic signs regulations and general directions 2002

##### **4.3 Equity & Equalities**

4.3.1 Provision of a bus stop clearway at the locations mentioned will assist the elderly, mobility impairments, buggies, heavy shopping etc... in accessing the bus service as an alternative to the car.

#### **5.0 Recommendation**

- 5.1 Members are asked to recommend that a bus stop clearway is installed at the bus stop located adjacent Wellesley Avenue as initially proposed (option 3.1).

5.2 Members are advised to also give particular consideration to alternative option 3.2 although we would note this is in conflict with current council policy which states that stop relocations will only be considered where there are safety concerns identified by a qualified KCC Engineer.

Contact Officer: Shane Hymers: Policy & Strategy Manager

[Shane.hymers@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Shane.hymers@kent.gov.uk)

Tel: 03000 413 681

# Highway Improvements in Your Area

## Introduction of Bus Stop Clearways



### What are we planning to do?

Kent Highway Services are planning to install a bus stop clearway at the bus stop located on Palmerston Avenue, Walmer adjacent Wellesley Avenue.

Bus stop clearways help keep the bus stop clear of any parked vehicles, enabling the buses to pull up next to the kerb and allow easy access on to and off the buses for wheelchair users, people with small children and prams, the elderly and the less mobile. The clearway marking will terminate 5 metres (16 feet) beyond the bus stop itself and will be a total of 31 meters in length. Restrictions will apply Monday to Saturday 7am – 7pm.

### Where will the works take place?

Palmerston Avenue, Walmer, Deal

### Why do we want to do this work?

KCC has been contacted by a local resident who has raised concerns that buses are regularly unable to serve the bus stop due to parked cars. The purpose of this scheme is to keep the bus stop clear of parked cars and to provide bus drivers with the ability to correctly approach and line up with the bus stop, to enable the new facilities such as low-floor technology to be used to their maximum potential.

### How will we carry out the work and how will it affect you?

Generally, the works will involve localised coning and barriers in order that the work can be carried out safely.

### When will the work start and how long will it take?

We intend for the works to be completed by the end of the current financial year. The work should take no longer than one day to complete.

### How to contact us?

This information is being provided to raise awareness of these improvements. If you have any concerns about how these works will affect you please write to **Kent County Council, Public Transport,, P.O. Box 441, Aylesford, Kent, ME6 9HJ**, alternatively you can email comments to: [bus.stops@kent.gov.uk](mailto:bus.stops@kent.gov.uk). Comments will be received up until noon **on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

*Please respect our workers place and safety by driving carefully and slowly through the roadworks. Feedback from our workers shows that too many drivers go too fast through roadworks. Everyone is entitled to a safe workplace. Our men and women work next to moving traffic and risk injury every day.*



### WARNING – Beware Bogus Callers

Kent Highway Services (KHS) do not allow works to be carried out on private properties. If anyone says they are working for KHS or our specialist contractors and offer to carry out any work for cash they should be treated with caution and you are advised to contact Kent County Council Trading Standards on 03000 414141

**Please keep this in a safe place so you can refer to it. If you need to contact us whilst the works are being done – call us on 03000 418181**

# Highway Improvements in Your Area

## Introduction of Bus Stop Clearways



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### Where will the works take place?

Palmerston Avenue, Walmer, Deal

### Why do we want to do this work?

The purpose of this scheme to provide bus drivers with the ability to correctly approach and line up with the bus stops to enable the new facilities such as low-floor technology to be used to their maximum potential.

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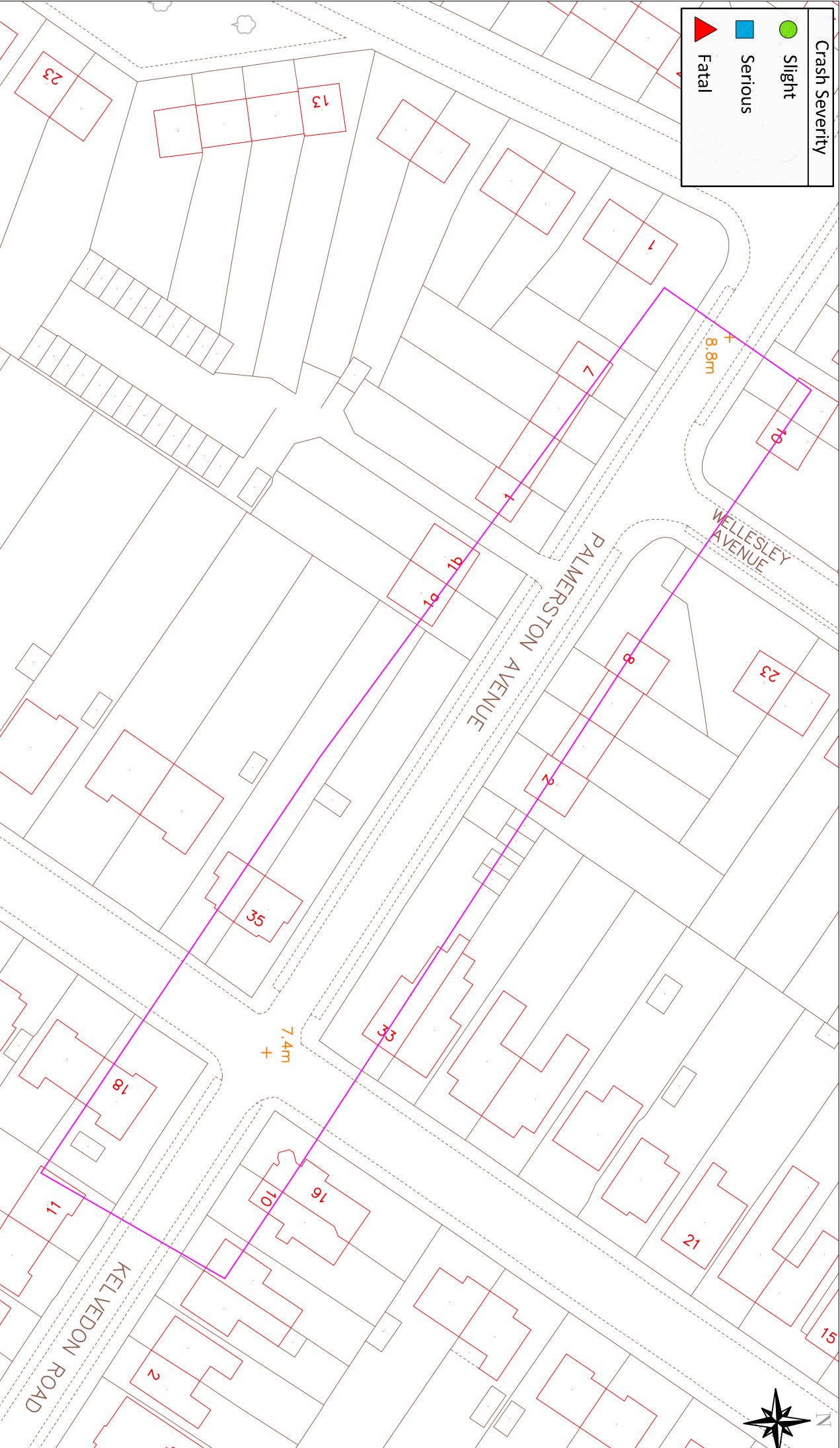
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Crash Severity	
	Slight
	Serious
	Fatal



Location: Palmerston Avenue, Dover

3 years personal injury crash data up to 30/09/2014

KCC Ref number: INT/052/15

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### 1) Concern over the loss of parking and subsequent impact:

There is concern that the installation of a bus stop clearway adjacent Wellesley Road will result in the reduction of available car parking space, with a lack of alternative provision located nearby.

“My parents are elderly and not in the best of health, both have a history of heart problems and my stepfather has a problem with his foot, causing impaired mobility. I worry about how they will cope with carrying shopping etc if they are unable to park outside their own home and, from my understanding, other parking spaces in the street will be limited so the likelihood of them being able to park anywhere near their property is not good”

“This together with the plan to do the same across the road will almost wipe out the parking spaces used by the residents. The road is only wide enough for single side parking. My husband and myself are in our seventies and not in the best of health. When we had the option to have a dropped kerb when the pavements were recently resurfaced we declined as we could park outside the house, With this proposal we will not be able to park outside our house and lose the right to have a drive and dropped kerb”

“The new 31 metre length of the clearway will mean that the 5 or 6 vehicles of residents that currently park in that space ( both during day and night time) may well be obliged to park further down Palmerston Avenue toward the crossroad junction with Balfour Road. This creates two problems:

- 1). Double-decker buses turn left from Balfour Road onto Palmerston. Their swing circle means that currently if any vehicles are parked near the junction that the buses are either unable to turn left without doing a difficult and potentially dangerous manoeuvre or they cross the grass verge. The effects of this can be seen in the attached photos, taken today.
- 2). The crossroads are a dangerous area. There have been at least three accidents there in the past three years, the most recent being last New Year's Eve. Visibility at the junction is already difficult and the effect of cars having to approach from Palmerston on the wrong side of the road can only make the problem worse”

“We have a mix of residents who will be affected by the proposed lack of parking, including some in ill health, and those with young children or who are elderly, and would be unable to move their cars, either before 7am or after 7pm. They have been very stressed by the proposed changes. Indeed, none of us leave before 7am or return after 7pm.”

“There is already considerable pressure on parking in Palmerston Avenue with residents of Downs Road parking here in the evenings as they run out of space in their own street. We cannot park in Wellesley Road as the residents there already park in the limited spaces available. Even when there is space during the day, we are mindful of the fact that there are many elderly and disable residents there who are unable to walk very far and who need to have access left for their families and taxis to collect them and drop them off again”

### Kent County Council Public Transport comment:

***“Whist it is appreciated that residents prefer to park as close to their property as possible, the highway is a public road and parking provision is not guaranteed. Kent County Council Public Transport do consider parking availability when planning new bus stop locations or upgrading existing infrastructure however as part of its duty to consider infrastructure changes to support public transport there is sometimes a need to install bus stop clearways. The clearways enable buses to pull up safely to the bus stop boarding point and allow for new on bus technology concerning low floor access to be utilised.”***

### 2) The availability of nearby alternative bus stop options.



Some residents have raised the possibility of alternative bus stop locations which they feel will be more appropriate and have less of an impact.

“Just across the junction in Kelvedon Road, money has previously been spent on creating a bus stop, raising the kerb and marking the road however the bus stop is no longer in use. Also, there are fewer residents needing to park in the street. Towards the end of last year, Palmerston Avenue had the pavements resurfaced and dropped kerbs created. In the current times of environmental concerns and carbon footprints, isn't it more ethical to use what is already available?”

“As the number 13 bus travels down Kelvedon Road why not make use of the original raised kerb and bus clearway markings which was abandoned but still there?”

“A currently disused bus stop clearway, together with suitably raised kerb already exists approximately 75 metres down from the crossroads in Kelvedon Road. The buses continue down this route anyway, so why not encourage the bus company to restart using this stop. It seems to me that this will avoid any of the sort of danger that may occur by parking changes in Palmerston and it will involve the council in minimum cost.”

“It seems unnecessary to install such a huge bay extending this way along Palmerston wiping out parking, considering that the bus now stops very neatly adjacent to the recently installed dropped kerb forward of the bus stop

One bus driver has commented that it's so much easier for them now with the drop kerb in place. If you were to install a post to attach the bus stop sign to just after the dropped kerb, the bus bay could be put in further down towards Balfour and would not inconvenience anyone. There do not seem to be any restrictions in place in regarding putting the bay adjacent to a dropped kerb as you are planning to install the bay on the opposite side of the road across the dropped kerb outside number 3. It would be no different for drivers entering Palmerston from Balfour or Kelvedon to have the bay there as they regularly meet the bus exiting Palmerston anyway.

A second alternative would be to re-use the, now defunct, Kelvedon Road bus stop where an extended piece of pavement for a bus stop already exists”

#### **Kent County Council comment:**

***Kelvedon Road is not served by all buses which run on Palmerston Avenue. 82A buses turn right onto Balfour Road and as such there would be no stopping point between Downs Road and Balfour Road. This would significantly disadvantage existing passengers, particularly those less mobile. Stagecoach have noted that a number of the users of the 82A on Palmerston Avenue are elderly or have mobility issues.***

***Kent County Council's policy for bus stops states that relocations will only be considered in exceptional circumstances (i.e. health and safety related) and when a suitable alternative location can be identified which will not disadvantage existing passengers or neighbouring properties.***

***The preferred bus stop clearway length of 31 metres offers buses the ability to correctly approach and line up with the bus stop. This enables the use of low floor technology to its maximum potential. The option for moving the bus stop closer to the junction with Balfour Road has been noted as a possible option within the JTB report.***

### **3) Concerns with regards to the presence of a bus stop adjacent Wellesley Avenue in general and its impact on resident's quality of life.**

There are comments noting that the bus stop location in general causes issues for residents.

“From what I can gather from the proposal, the most likely place for the raised pavement, and consequently the queues of waiting passengers, is directly outside my parents' main window. Whilst I accept that the council do not consider that anyone is entitled to a view, I am concerned about the

loss of privacy my parents will experience. Also noise from awaiting passengers early in the morning may be disruptive as they will be directly in front of my parents' bedroom. Should you at sometime decide to erect a shelter, this would truly be an eyesore."

**Kent County Council comment:**

*The Council's original proposal to install a clearway at the stop adjacent to Wellesley Avenue does not affect the current bus stop location which has been long established. Kent County Council's policy for bus stops states that relocations will only be considered in exceptional circumstances (i.e. health and safety related) and when a suitable alternative location can be identified which will not disadvantage existing passengers or neighbouring properties.*

*Matters relating to anti-social behaviour are considered to be just that and ultimately a matter for the police as opposed to being an issue relating to the infrastructure itself.*

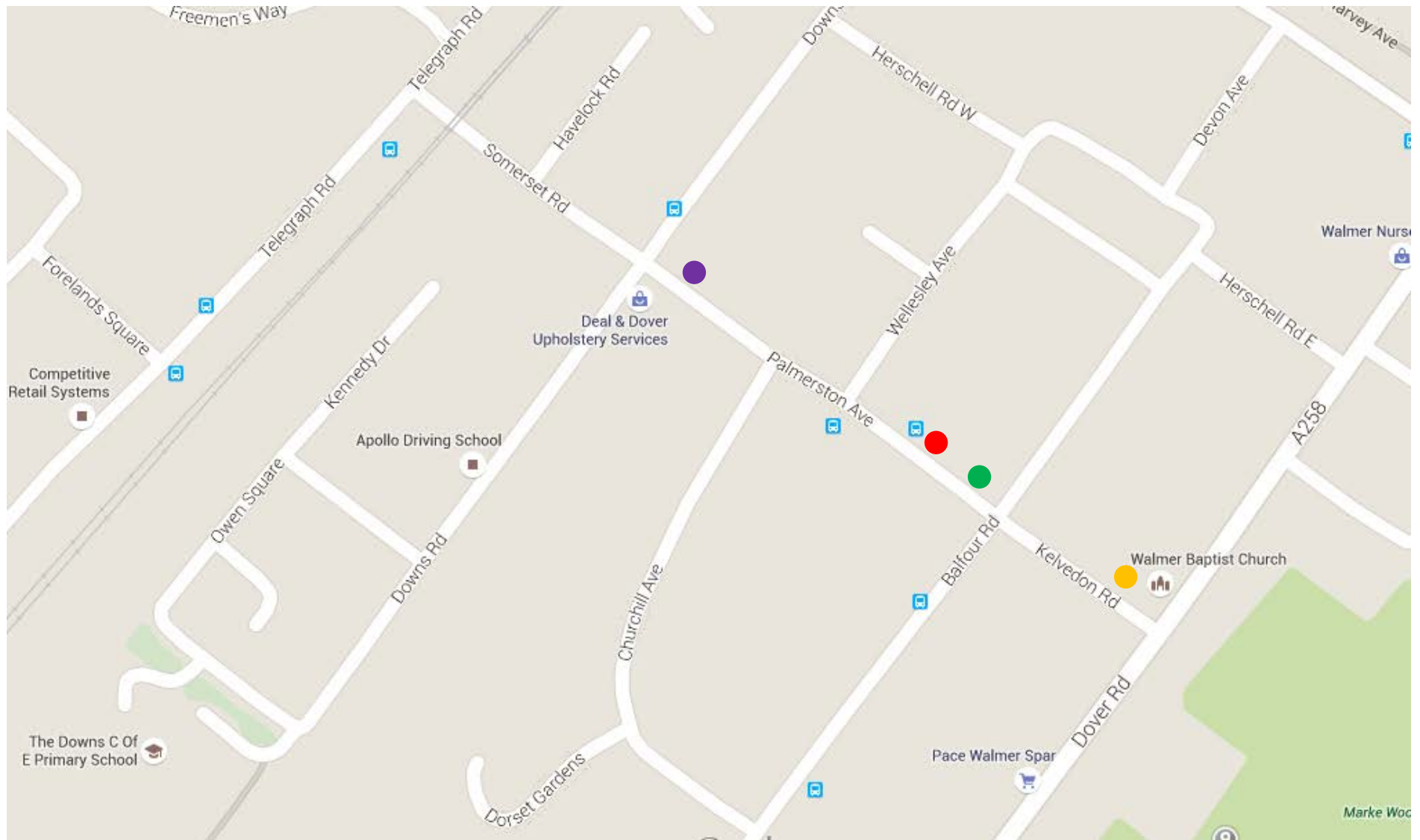
**4) Concerns that the works will result in devalued properties:**

There are comments noting that works would result in a decrease in property values.

"I will be advising my parents to contact an estate agent to ascertain how creating a clearway here will affect the value of their home."

**Kent County Council comment:**

*There is no documented evidence which shows that the presence of bus stops affects property value. Ultimately the highway is owned by the local highways authority who are responsible for ensuring that there is adequate infrastructure for Public Transport.*



- Option 3.4 – New stop adjacent Downs Road.
- Option 3.1 – Install a bus stop clearway at the current location
- Option 3.2 – Move stop closer to junction with Balfour Road
- Option 3.3 – New stop on Kelvedon Road