

Draft response to the County Council's consultation on Guard Railing Assessment

Tonbridge Town Centre – Guard Railing Assessment

Thank you for the Assessment of Pedestrian Guard Railing in Tonbridge that you sent to me under cover of your letter of 23 November. I sought views on this document from local Members and from the Tonbridge Civic Society and, while much of the comment I received was broadly supportive of your proposal, I also received some comment objecting to it.

This made it impossible to adhere to your request for a response by early December because I needed to report to my Members before offering a Borough Council view on the proposals.

The soonest opportunity to do so was the meeting of the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board of 22 February. The Board considered the proposals in your consultation document at that meeting and made the recommendations as set out below that the Cabinet has now endorsed.

Site	Location	Cabinet Endorsed Response
1	Vale Road/Angel Lane junction	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location. The length proposed to be retained is of poor quality and should be replaced using some of the better looking guard rail to be removed elsewhere in the High Street.
2	Waterloo Rd/Quarryhill Road/Priory Road	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.
3	Quarry Hill Road/Pembury Road junction	The Borough Council considers that the guard rail on the south side of the junction should be removed and for six panels at the easternmost side to be removed.
4	Quarry Hill Road – crossing to the south of the Pembury Road junction	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.
5	Quarry Hill Road/Waterloo Road/George Street	The Borough Council requests that a short length of guard railing should be retained around the

		<p>narrow part of the footway from Brook Street into Quarry Hill Road but that it should be curtailed as soon as the footway width becomes wide enough to justify it.</p> <p>The Borough Council also requests that you remove the guard railing along the centre of the road in keeping with the intent of our adopted Quarry Hill Conservation Area Appraisal.</p> <p>The Borough Council supports the proposal to remove the guardrailing at the corner of George Street.</p>
6	Quarry Hill Road adjacent to Quarry Hill Parade	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.
7	Waterloo Road/Tonbridge Station	The Borough Council requests that this location be left unaltered.
8	Barden Road/Station Approach junction	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.
9, 10, 11	High Street	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.
12	Tonbridge Road, Hildenborough near Coldharbour Lane	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the document for removing the guard railing at this location.

The Civic Society mentioned two additional locations that merit assessment and the Borough Council supports this view. They are the corner of Dry Hill Road where it meets the London Road and the Shipbourne Road/Dry Hill Park Road/ Yardley Park Road junction. I hope you can include these locations in an extended assessment.

The comments above represent the formal views of the Borough Council. For a project such as this, where there is likely to be more general interest from residents, shoppers and traders in the town centre, the Borough Council, when it was carrying out such schemes under the old Kent Highway Partnership, would have sought to survey community views more generally through a proportionate public consultation exercise. That Partnership terminated many years ago and it is now for the County Council to decide, scheme by scheme, how and to what depth it wishes to consult the public on its proposed schemes.

In closing, I should make you aware that the Borough Council is carrying out its own similar exercise in the town centre as part of our Streetscene Action

Plan. This involves an audit of all street furniture, signs and lines to identify what is superfluous or redundant so that it can be scheduled for removal. It also includes an assessment of the state of the signs, lines and railings that need to remain to provide a focus for targeted maintenance. Subject to progress and timetable on our separate initiatives, there does appear to be some potential for joint working and I would welcome the opportunity to explore this further with the County Council to achieve savings in the aggregate costs.