

**Report on Guard Railing Assessment to the Planning  
and Transportation Advisory Board on 22 February  
2011**

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING and TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**22 February 2011**

**Report of the Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 PEDESTRIAN GUARD RAILING – TONBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE**

**Summary**

**The County Council is proposing to remove lengths of pedestrian guard rail that it considers have little justification on highway safety grounds. The Board is invited to approve a response to the County Council that is broadly supportive of the concept subject to some modification of the detailed proposals to meet particular local circumstances.**

**1.1 Introduction**

1.1.1 The County Council is currently reviewing pedestrian guard railing in a number of Kent districts aimed at assessing whether there is scope for removing some without adversely affecting highway safety. This reflects a general sentiment nationally that a considerable improvement in the appearance of town centre main streets can be achieved by 'decluttering'; that is, removing street furniture that serves no useful purpose and just makes the appearance of places rather unattractive. In many town centres, pedestrian guard railing is one of the elements of street furniture that contributes significantly to the clutter and, more critically, presents a positive obstruction to reasonable access and movement. Current levels of guard railing in many town centres stems from a time of rather severe approaches to highway railings whereas a more proportionate approach has been the more recent trend.

1.1.2 The sole reason for installing pedestrian guard railing should be to preserve road safety. It almost always has a detrimental effect on the visual amenity of a street but this is tolerable and can be justified, on balance, if there is a clear necessity in providing it to steer pedestrians to particular crossing points or to protect them at locations where large vehicles might otherwise overhang the footway while manoeuvring round a corner.

**1.1.3 Where there is no clear road safety justification, it is reasonable, if not essential, to challenge why guard railing has been installed.**

This is the fundamental premise of the current exercise by the County Council and I recommend it to the Board as a reasoned and valid principle to be adopted and endorsed.

**1.2 Pedestrian Guard Railing in Tonbridge**

1.2.1 As far as Tonbridge is concerned, there does appear to be considerably more guard rail than many comparable towns in the south east. Why this might be is a legitimate question and, if the answer is that there is no clear road safety justification, then there is a straightforward opportunity to reduce the amount installed.

1.2.2 The judgement that there is such an opportunity is supported by work that the Borough Council has been carrying out as part of the Streetscene Action Plan. This involves an audit of all street furniture in the High Street and some neighbouring streets to identify what is superfluous and could be removed and, if an item needs to remain, what its state of maintenance is. The exercise has yet to be completed and, when it is, I will be reporting the findings to a future meeting of the Environmental Management Advisory Board. In the meantime, the early draft of the report points clearly to the adverse impact that such a preponderance of railings throughout the High Street has on the feel and ambience of the town centre.

1.2.3 One reason why there might be so much guard railing in Tonbridge is that it is a consequence of the high degree of risk aversion within design standards and regulations in years gone by. It was not uncommon in public consultations on schemes for local residents and businesses to comment adversely on the guard railing that accompanied proposals for items such as controlled crossings, only to be told that this was an essential requirement of the design rules that applied at the time, 'in the interests of road safety' without the case being justified.

1.2.4 This was frustrating at the time because there was no room for judgement, just the application of rigid rules, and it meant that many lengths of rather stark and unattractive pedestrian guard rail were installed with questionable justification.

1.2.5 Those regulations and design rules have been relaxed in recent years as a result of detailed assessment and study of the real impact and value of guard railing. Much of this work is encapsulated in Local Transport Note 2/09 and this is reflected in a number of pioneering schemes such as one frequently referred to at Kensington High Street where almost all guard rail and many other items of street furniture

have been removed by the local highway authority with no adverse consequences for road safety, but ironically, if anything an improvement. [A copy of this document has been placed in the member library for reference].

- 1.2.6 The assessment work on design standards and the experience from the many schemes across the country aimed at removing unnecessary clutter in town centres has had a major consequence. It has demonstrated that the matter is far more complex than pitting visual improvement against personal safety. Making town centres more liveable, civilised places by removing guardrailing has even been shown to be beneficial in terms of road safety.
- 1.2.7 In summary, the current design guidance and standards provide engineers with an opportunity to carry out highway and traffic management schemes with more thought and balance when considering guard railing. The standards focus on what is really essential in highway safety terms rather than rigid and inflexible application of rules. This design framework has been reflected in the County Council's own draft 'Barrier and Guardrailing Policy' reproduced at **Annex 1**.
- 1.2.8 Perhaps the most fundamental consideration in assessing the County Council's proposals for reducing the extent of guardrailing installed in the town centre is that it is tightly aligned to our own adopted policies. The Quarry Hill Conservation Area Appraisal states:
- *There are a large number of prominent railings within Quarry Hill Conservation Area. An audit should be carried out with the highway authority to see how many remain necessary. Wherever possible, the aim should be to remove the railings.*
  - *One example of a particularly prominent railing is along the centre of Quarry Hill Road. Removal of the railings would reduce the visual barrier which subdivides the public space at the centre of the conservation area and detracts from the setting of the church and the surrounding important visual spaces.*
  - *Other locations requiring careful consideration include Waterloo Road close to the church and the cycle barriers on the Quarry Hill Road footpath.*
  - *The Conservation Area is particularly afflicted by a proliferation of utilitarian railings which detract from the setting of historic buildings, including St Stephen's church; intrude into landscaped areas and visually subdivide public spaces.*

1.2.9 This exercise therefore represents an opportunity to achieve streetscene improvements explicitly sought within the Borough Council's adopted operational policy.

### **1.3 Detailed Consideration of the Proposals**

1.3.1 The detailed proposals for guard rail removal are contained in the County Council's report, produced by its consultant, Jacobs, **Annex 2**. In late November the County Council invited comments from the Borough Council but, before responding, I sought views from local Members and from the Civic Society since there had been no earlier broader consultation exercise on what was being proposed.

1.3.2 The general response has been one of general support for the proposals, subject to specific caveats on the detail. However, two Members registered clear and firm views against any removal of guard railing. I am therefore seeking the views of the Board on the proposals.

1.3.3 The Civic Society helpfully provided comments and it too is broadly supportive, albeit with some reservations on the detail. Interestingly, it indicated another couple of sites that it considers merit assessment and I share its view. These are at the Dry Hill Road/London Road corner and at the Shipbourne Road/Dry Hill Park Road/Yardley Park Road junction.

1.3.4 **Annex 3** contains an assessment of the 12 sites contained in the County Council's report and recommends a Borough response to each of them. I have incorporated these recommendations into the draft reply to the consultation contained in **Annex 4**.

### **1.4 Scheme Coordination**

1.4.1 I mentioned that the Borough Council is itself conducting an exercise similar to this one as part of the Streetscene Action Plan. The aim is to refresh the appearance of the town centre by getting rid of as many redundant signs, posts and other items of street furniture as possible and to encourage the County Council to carry out maintenance works to tidy up those elements of street furniture that remain.

1.4.2 There is therefore potential for some joint working on the proposals that come from the streetscene project and from the final version of the guard railing scheme adopted by the County Council. This could help cut down the aggregate cost of both initiatives and I will be working with officers at the County Council to try and achieve this.

1.4.3 I should just comment that when the Borough Council directly promoted schemes under the Kent Highway Partnership arrangements, such as

this guard railing assessment project, we would automatically have sought wider community engagement through a public consultation exercise. Those arrangements came to an end some years ago and it is now the County Council, as local highway authority, that decides the style, content and scope of consultations for the projects it is responsible for. Nevertheless, I am suggesting in the draft response that the County Council might wish to consider some wider survey of local sentiment because local residents and businesses are sure to have an interest in these proposals.

## **1.5 Legal Implications**

1.5.1 None for the Borough Council.

## **1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

1.6.1 None directly for the Borough Council.

## **1.7 Risk Assessment**

1.7.1 Implicit within the commentary on the proposals for each location.

## **1.8 Equality Impact Assessment**

1.8.1 See 'Screening for equality impacts' table at end of report.

## **1.9 Policy Considerations**

1.9.1 Community.

## **1.10 Recommendations**

1.10.1 That the Cabinet be requested **TO ENDORSE** the draft response at Annex 4 to the County Council guard railing consultation.

The Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Michael McCulloch

Local Transport Note LTN 2/09

Steve Humphrey  
Director of Planning, Transport and Leisure

<b>Screening for equality impacts:</b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Explanation of impacts</b>
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	The decision recommended is a response to a consultation by the County Council. It requires no direct action by the Borough Council. Nevertheless, the potential actions arising from the County Council's proposals are neutral as far as equality impacts are concerned.
b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	N/A	See previous comment.
c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		N/A

*In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above.*

**Note annex 1 to the original report not included because it is not relevant**

## Kent Pedestrian Guard Railing Assessment

### Tonbridge – Consultation Report



November 2010


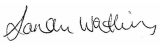


Project Number B1555300

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**1 Foreword**

Jacobs UK Ltd has received a request from Kent Highway Services to complete a Pedestrian Guardrail Assessment in Tonbridge.

There is an increasing emphasis on improving the streetscape by removing street clutter and providing better pedestrian accessibility whilst maintaining road safety. It is recognised that where pedestrian guard railing is badly sited or over installed it not only alienates pedestrians but also looks unsightly, easily becomes damaged which in turn leads to increased maintenance costs and complaints.

Guard railing can be the right solution when the objectives of installing it (and in the right amount) are fully considered. The main purpose of guard railing is to improve safety by trying to prevent pedestrians from crossing the road at an inappropriate place or from straying into the road inadvertently. Guard railing can also be used to offer some protection to pedestrians at locations where the swept path of large vehicles, such as buses and heavy goods vehicles, takes the vehicles close to the footway, sometimes overhanging it.

This report contains recommendations to retain, partially remove or wholly remove pedestrian guard railing from 11 sites across Tonbridge and 1 site in Hildenborough.

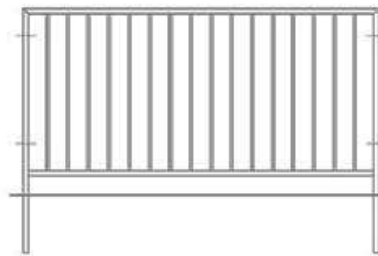
The assessments were conducted within an approximate 750metre (820yard) radius (1 mile diameter) of the High Street to incorporate the main pedestrian thoroughfares in the town centre (see figure 1). Following a request from T & D the assessment was extended to cover the pedestrian guard railing at a site in Hildenborough also.

Each site has been assessed by a fully qualified road safety auditor and a road safety engineer. Records of each site will be maintained by the KHS Signs, Lines and Barriers Asset Manager.

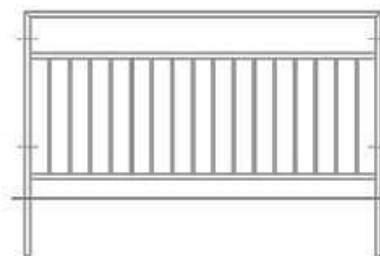
The surveys have allowed sufficient adjacent road space to be included; the exact length of road surveyed to make up a site has been dictated by the existence of side roads, major entrances / exits and the current extent of the existing guard railing.

The type of pedestrian guard railing assessed has been categorised into one of three types as shown below:

**Standard type**



**'See through' type**



**Decorative type**

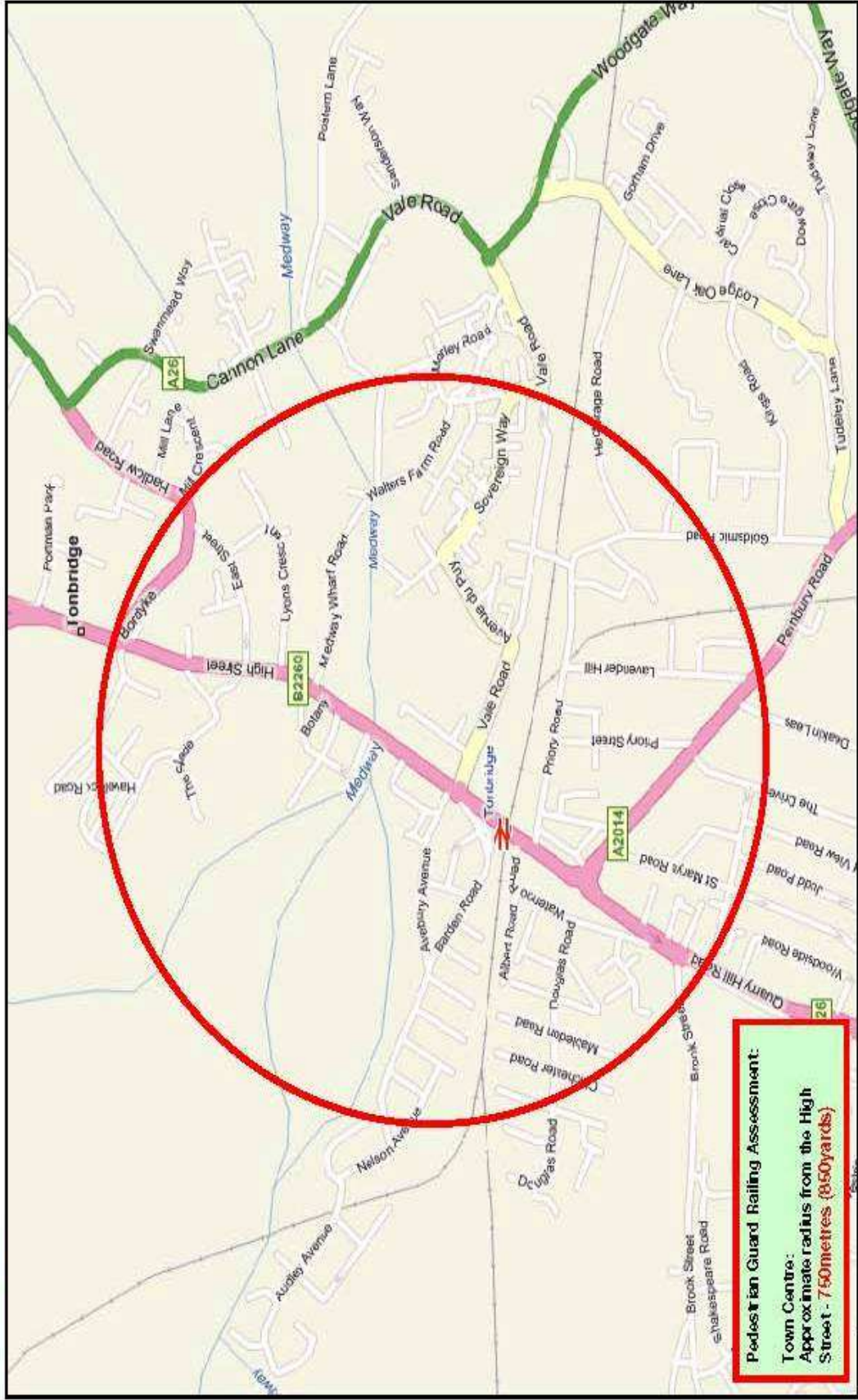


The decorative type of railing has a number of variations.

The site assessment was conducted by assessing the effectiveness of individual guardrails within the site and effectiveness as a whole. Photographs were taken and all technical data pertaining to the site was recorded including guard rail measurements, carriageway and footway width, proximity of junctions, type of pedestrian crossing and proximity to other crossings etc. Local trip attractors and generators have also been identified to assess pedestrian desire lines.

Where appropriate the width of the carriageway and its arrangement into lanes has been recorded as this relates to the degree of difficulty that people have in crossing. The width of the available footway has also been taken and consideration given to the effect the guard railing has on reducing the effective footway width.

Illustrated diagrams indicating pedestrian guardrail locations, any proposals to install additional guardrail panels, the replacement of any damaged panels and to remove or retain the guardrails have been included.





**Site 1 Location:**

Site 1 is located at the junction of Vale Road /Angel Lane.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

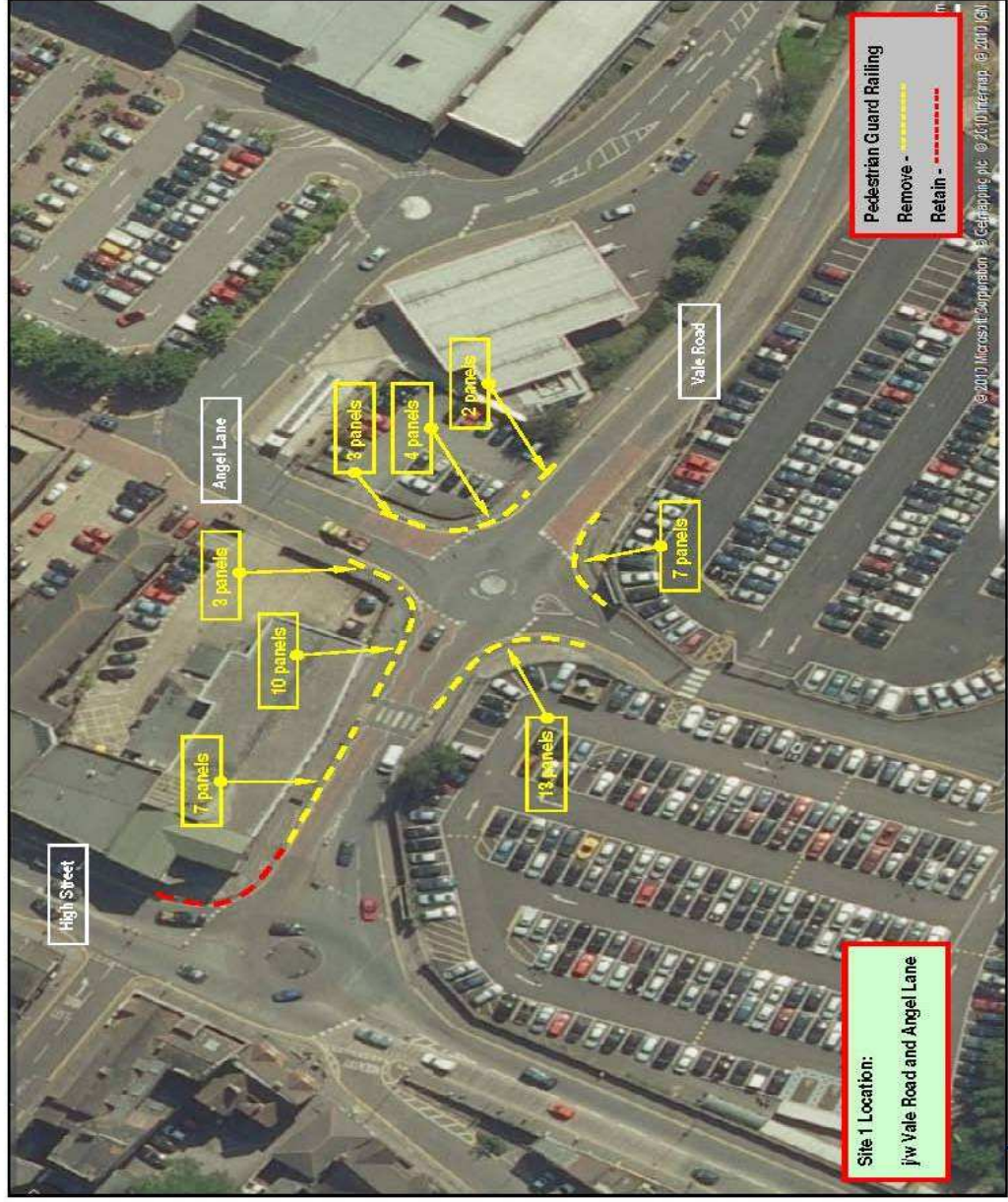
Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes		

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

Angel Lane is an access to a shopping complex and opposite is a large car park with both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

A section of pedestrian guard railing located on a wall that separates the lower elevation footway from the carriageway should be retained. The remainder of the pedestrian guard railings at the site offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 1.**





**Site 2 Location:**

Site 2 is located at the junction of Railway Approach / Priory Road / Waterloo Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

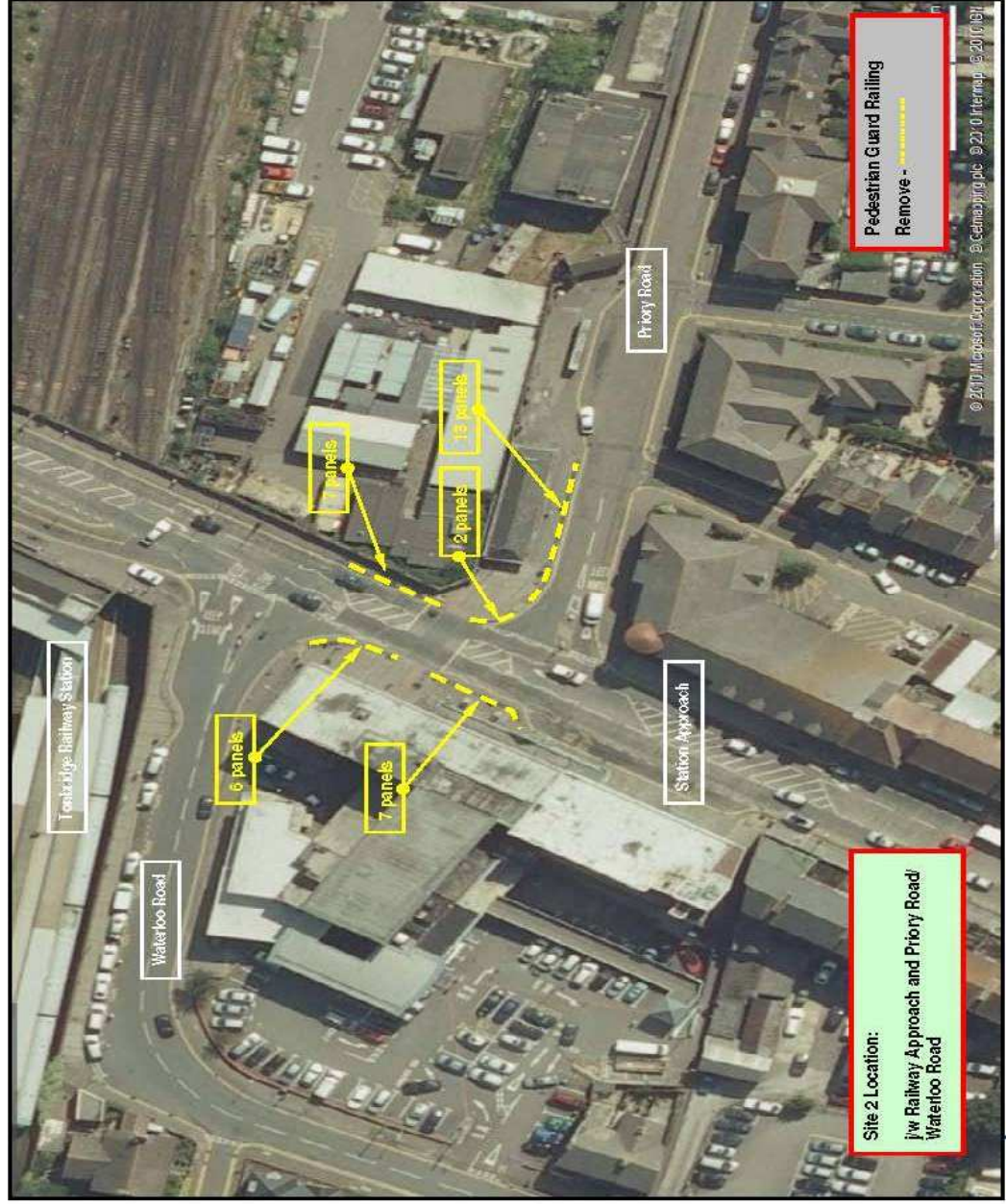
Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The site is adjacent to Tonbridge Railway Station there are some retail outlets to the south and residential properties to the east. High vehicular and pedestrian movements were observed here.

The pedestrian guard railings at the site offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 2.**



**Site 3 Location:**

Site 3 is located at the roundabout junction of Quarry Hill Road and the A2014 Pembury Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>See through</b>	<b>Decorative</b>
Yes	Yes	

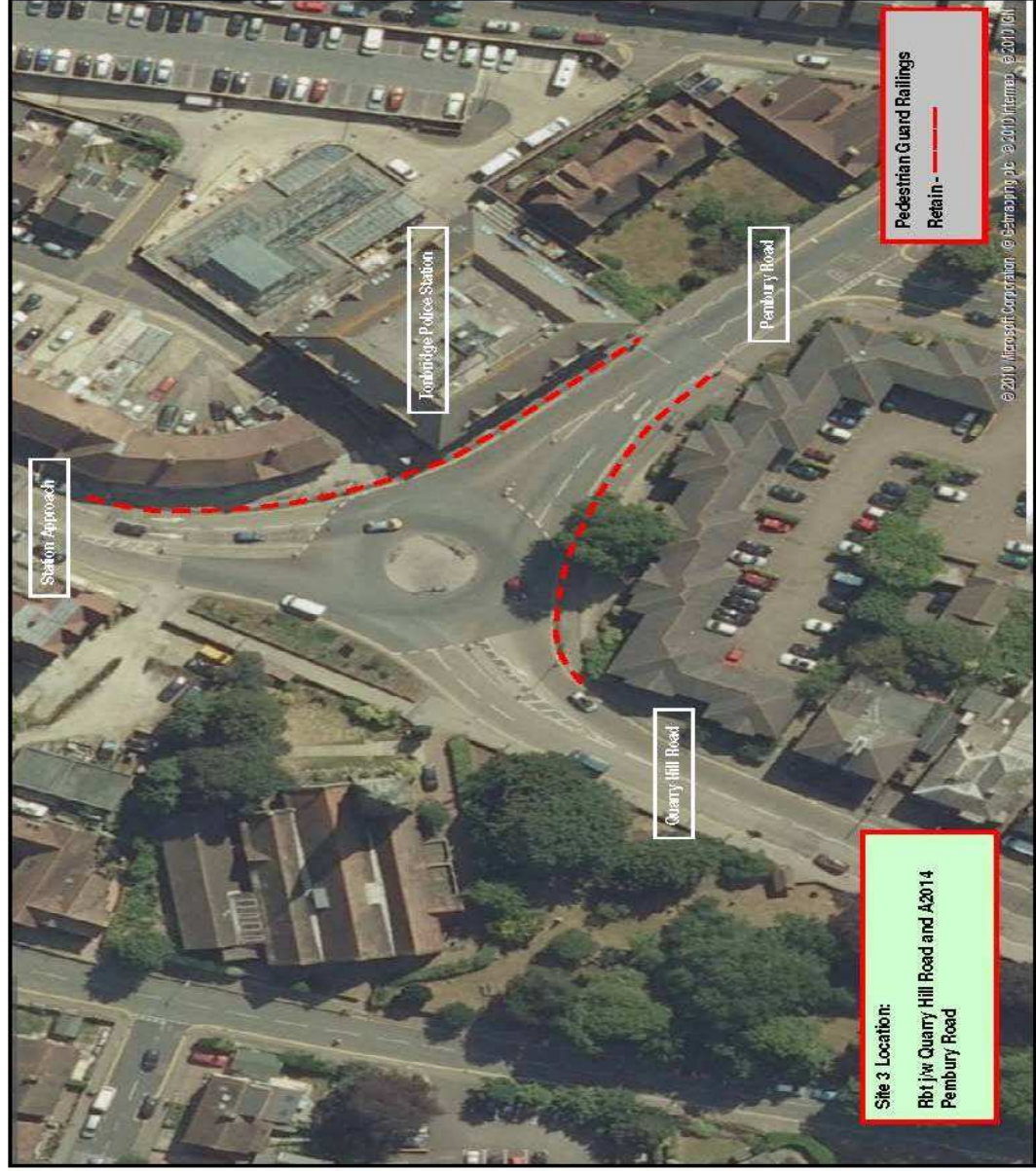
**Conclusions / Recommendations**

Located within the site is Tonbridge Police Station, some retail outlets and residential properties.

The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing at the site offers a benefit as a guide and as a protective device.

- **It is recommended to retain the pedestrian guard railings at site 3.**



Site 3 Location:  
Rbt jwr Quarry Hill Road and A2014  
Pembury Road

Pedestrian Guard Railings  
Retain - - - - -



**Site 4 Location:**

Site 4 is located on Quarry Hill Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

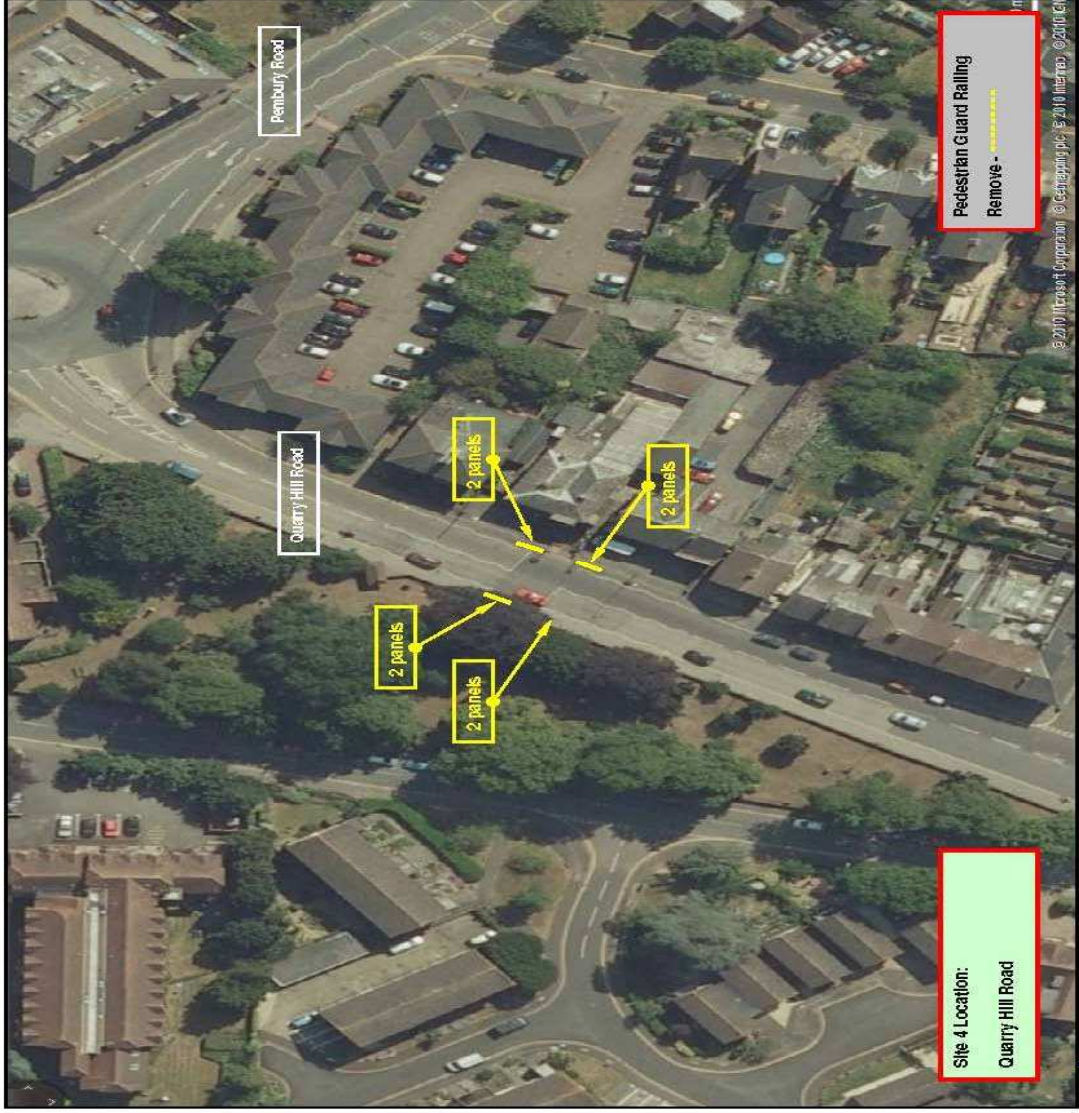
Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes		

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

On the western side the site is located outside the grounds of the St Stephen's Church and on the eastern side there are some small business premises. The site is an access to and from the West Kent College and residential properties in the south. The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing at the site offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 4.**



**Site 5 Location:**

Site 5 is located at the junction of Quarry Road/Waterloo Road/George Street and the roundabout junction of Quarry Hill Road and Brook Street.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes	Yes	

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

A petrol garage, a public house and some small business premises are located on the eastern side of the site and on the western side beyond a wide footway/cycle facility are residential properties.

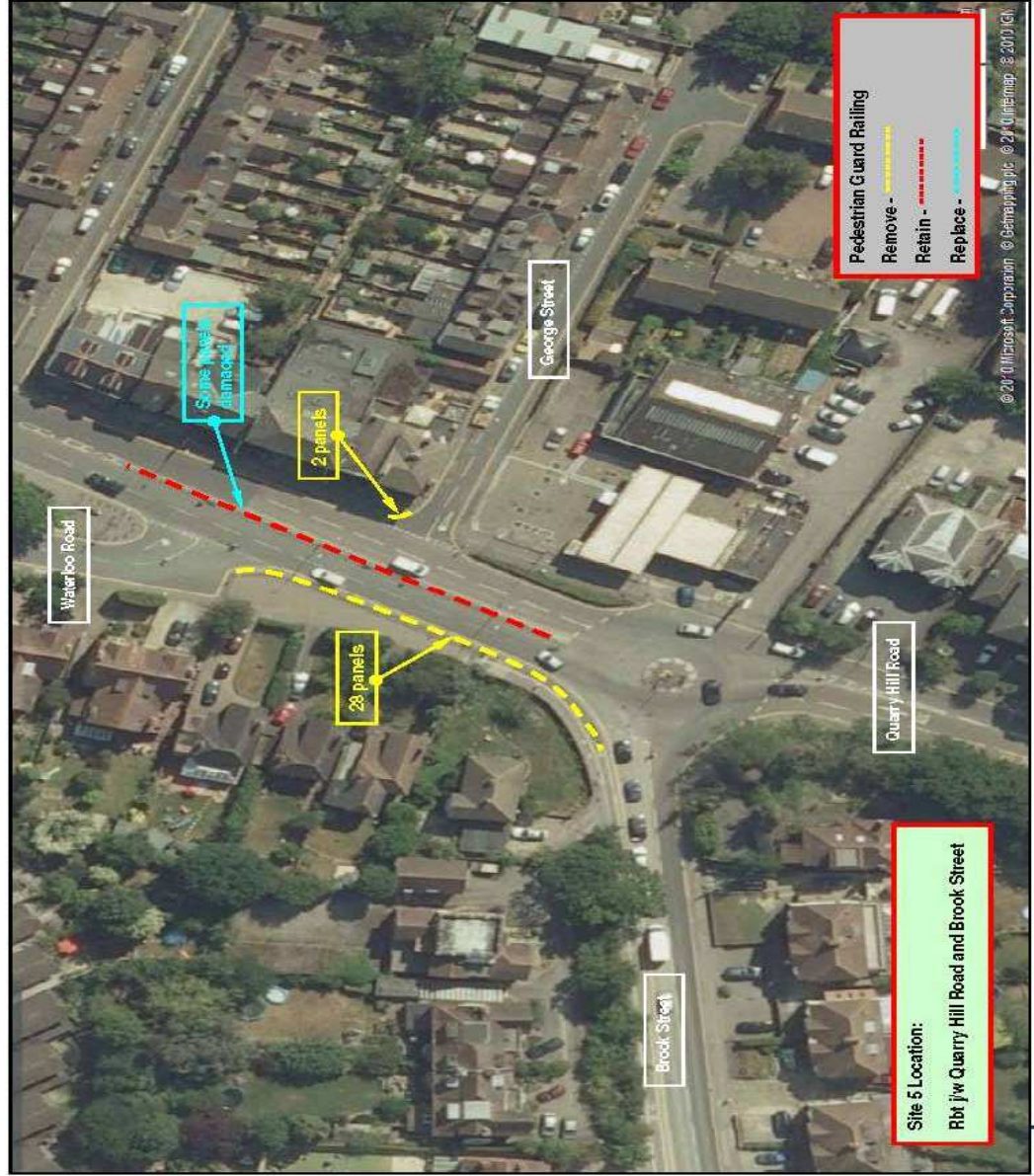
Located on Brooke Street approximately 200metres from the roundabout junction with Quarry Hill Road is the West Kent College.

The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railings on the footways offer little benefit as a guide or protective device, while the central reservation guard railing should be retained.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 5.**







**Site 6 Location:**

Site 6 is located on Station Approach between the roundabout junction of Quarry Hill Road/Pembury Road in the south and Priory Road in the north.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes		

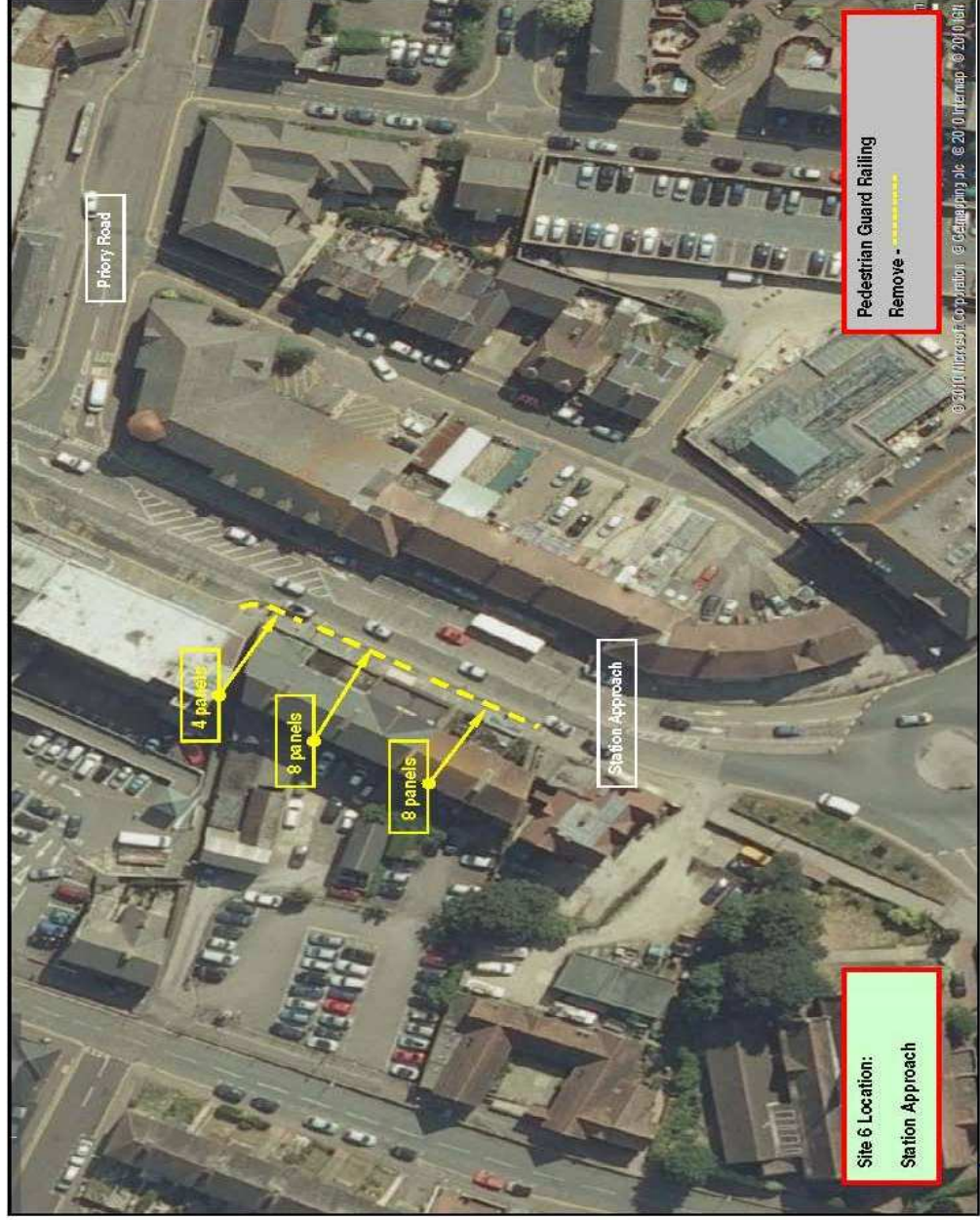
**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The site is on the western side footway, where small business outlets are located. On the northern side adjacent to the site is a bus only bus stop facility.

The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railings on the footways offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 6.**



**Site 7 Location:**

Site 7 is located at Tonbridge Railway Station.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The pedestrian guard railing is located in front of the railway station adjacent to the bus lane with a further section on the southern side on Waterloo Road adjacent to the taxi rank.

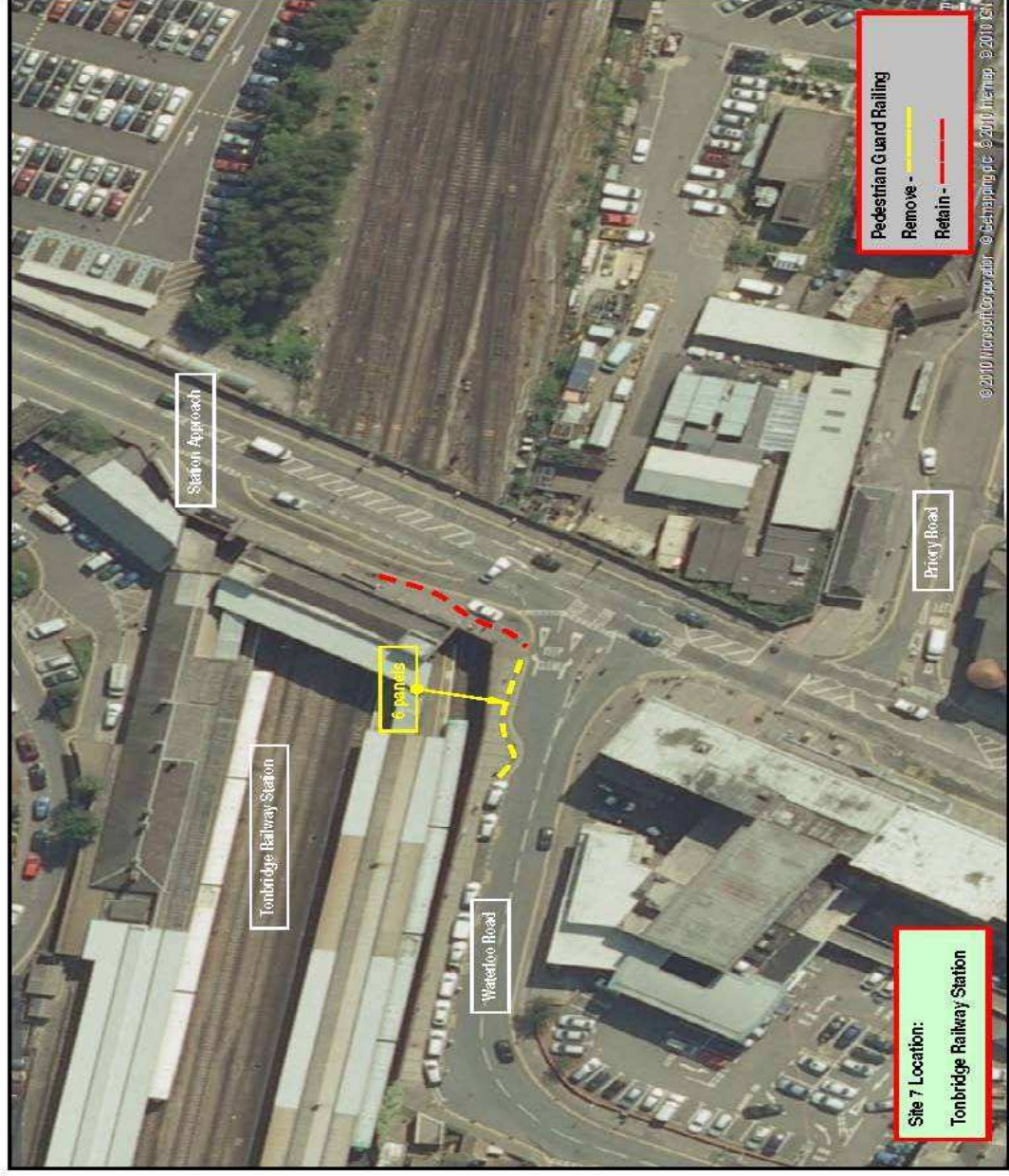
The pedestrian guard railing adjacent to the bus lane should be retained to protect pedestrians from injury by bus wing mirrors.

The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing on the Waterloo Road footway offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 7.**





Site 7 Location:  
Tonbridge Railway Station

Pedestrian Guard Railing  
Remove -  
Retain -

**Site 8 Location:**

Site 8 is located at the roundabout junction of Station Approach/High Street and Vale Road/Barden Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>See through</b>	<b>Decorative</b>
Yes		

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

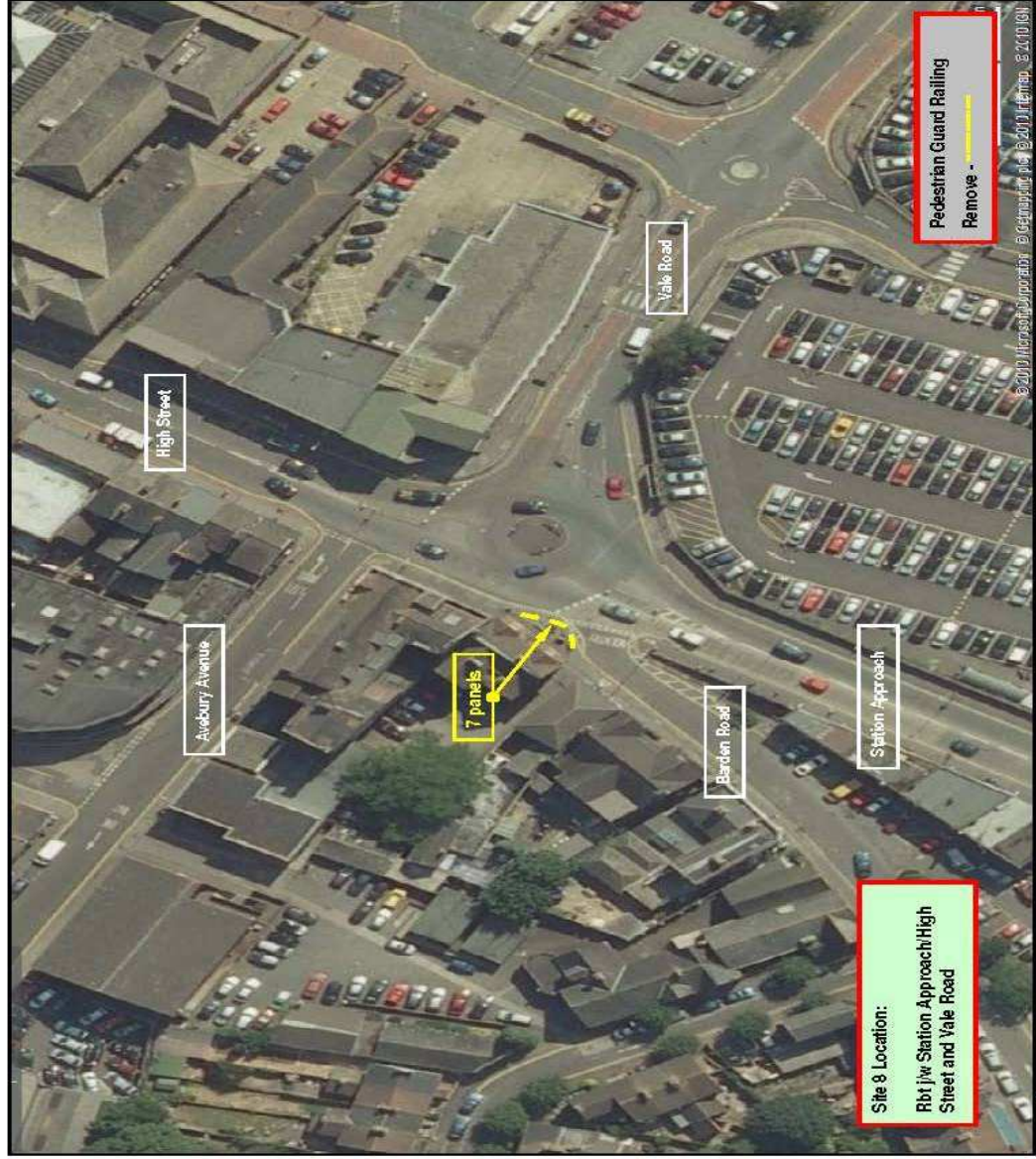
The pedestrian guard railing is located on the western side of the roundabout at the junction of Barden Road outside a restaurant.

The footway widens between the footway and the pedestrian guard railing at this point and accommodates a rest area with a bench.

The site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 8.**





**Site 9 Location:**

Site 9 is located on the High Street approximately 60metres north of the roundabout junction of Vale Road and Station Approach/Barden Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

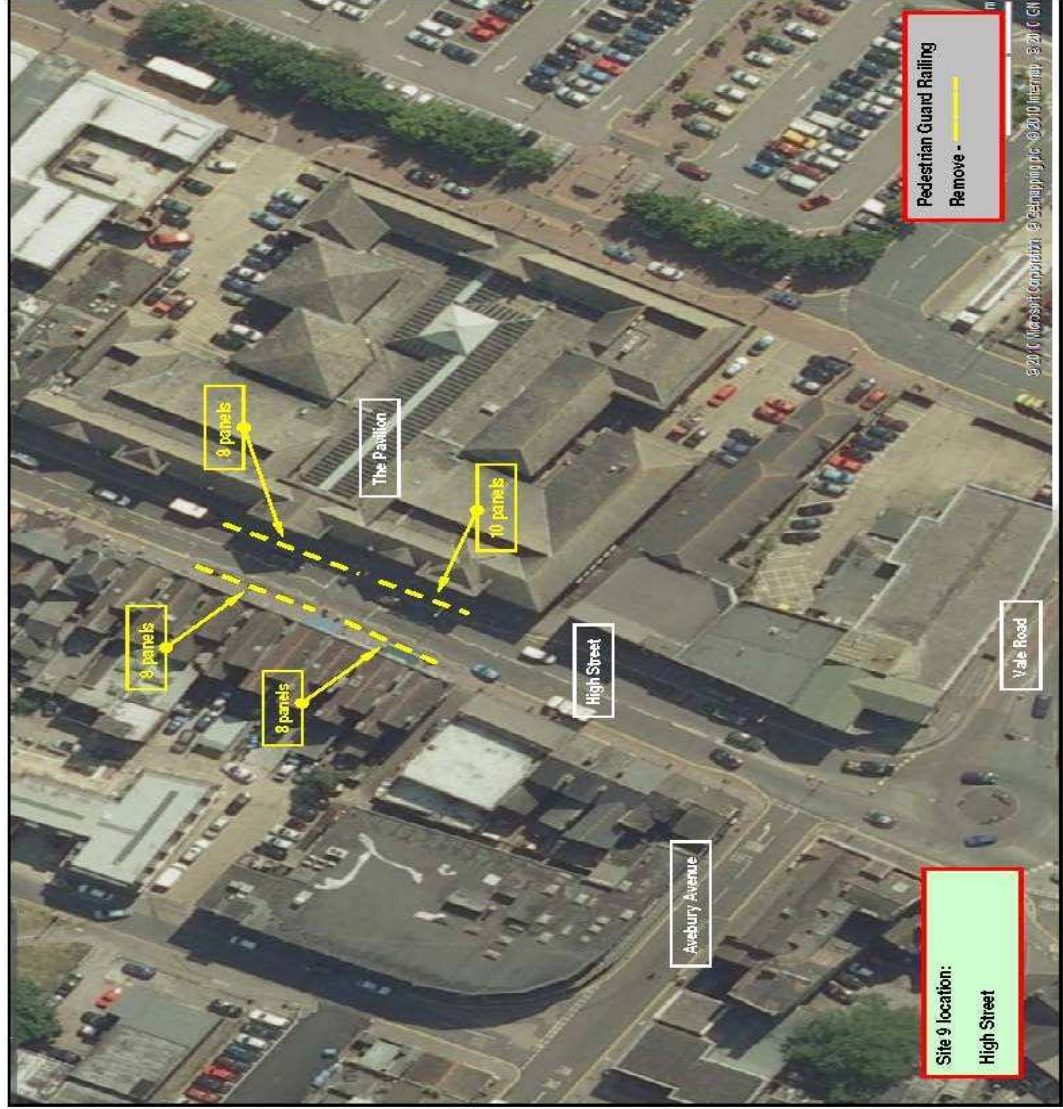
**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The pedestrian guard railing is located in the main shopping area of Tonbridge outside The Pavilion Shopping Centre.

The eastern footway at this point is 4.0metres wide and the site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 9.**





**Site 10 Location:**

Site10 is located on the High Street approximately 10metres north of the lane Lamberts Yard.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>See through</b>	<b>Decorative</b>
	Yes	Yes

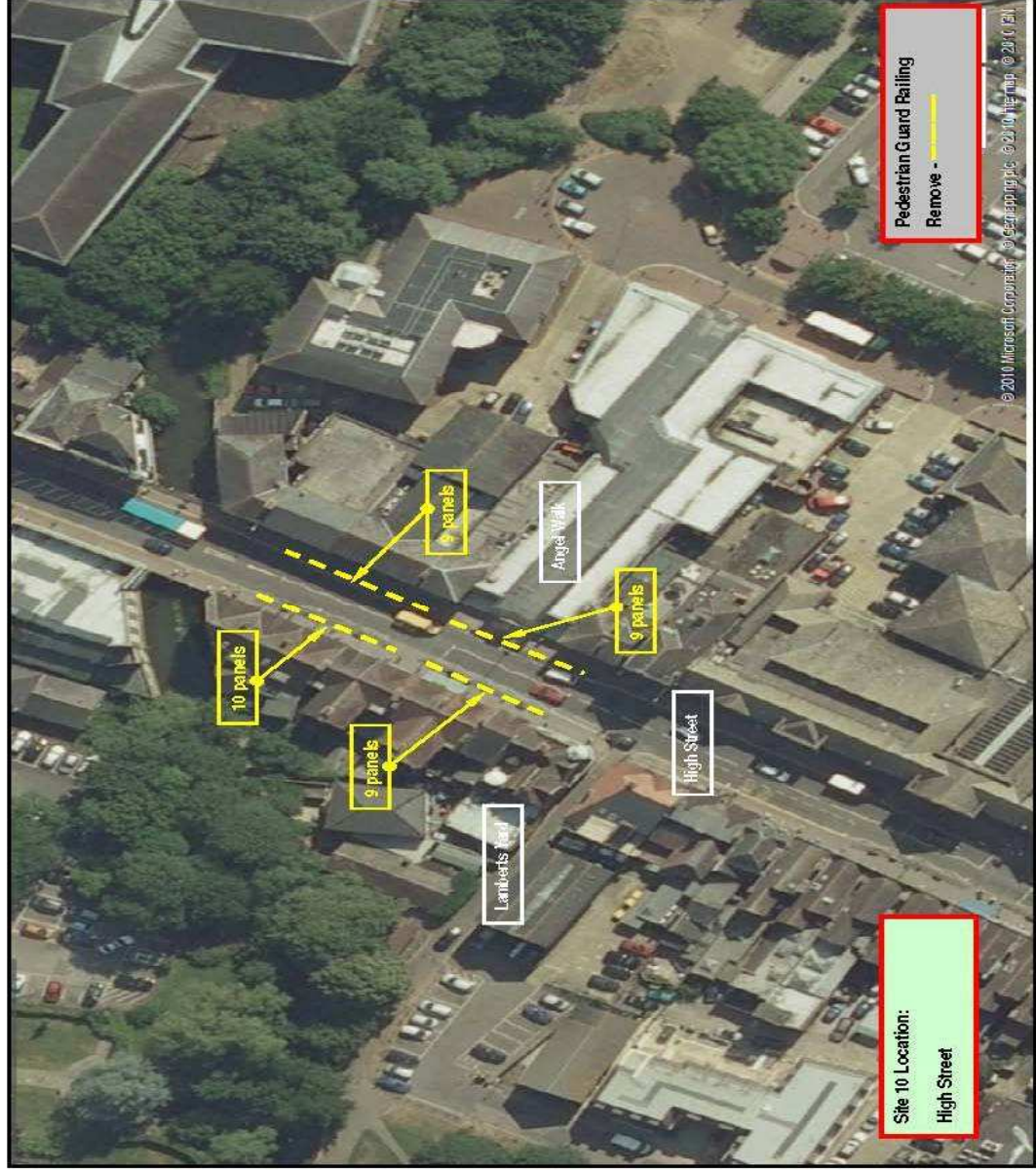
**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The pedestrian guard railing is located in the main shopping area of Tonbridge outside the Angel Walk Shopping Centre.

The eastern footway at this point is 4.0metres wide and the site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 10.**



**Site 11 Location:**

Site11 is located on the High Street between the junctions of New Wharf Road and Medway Wharf Road.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	Yes

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

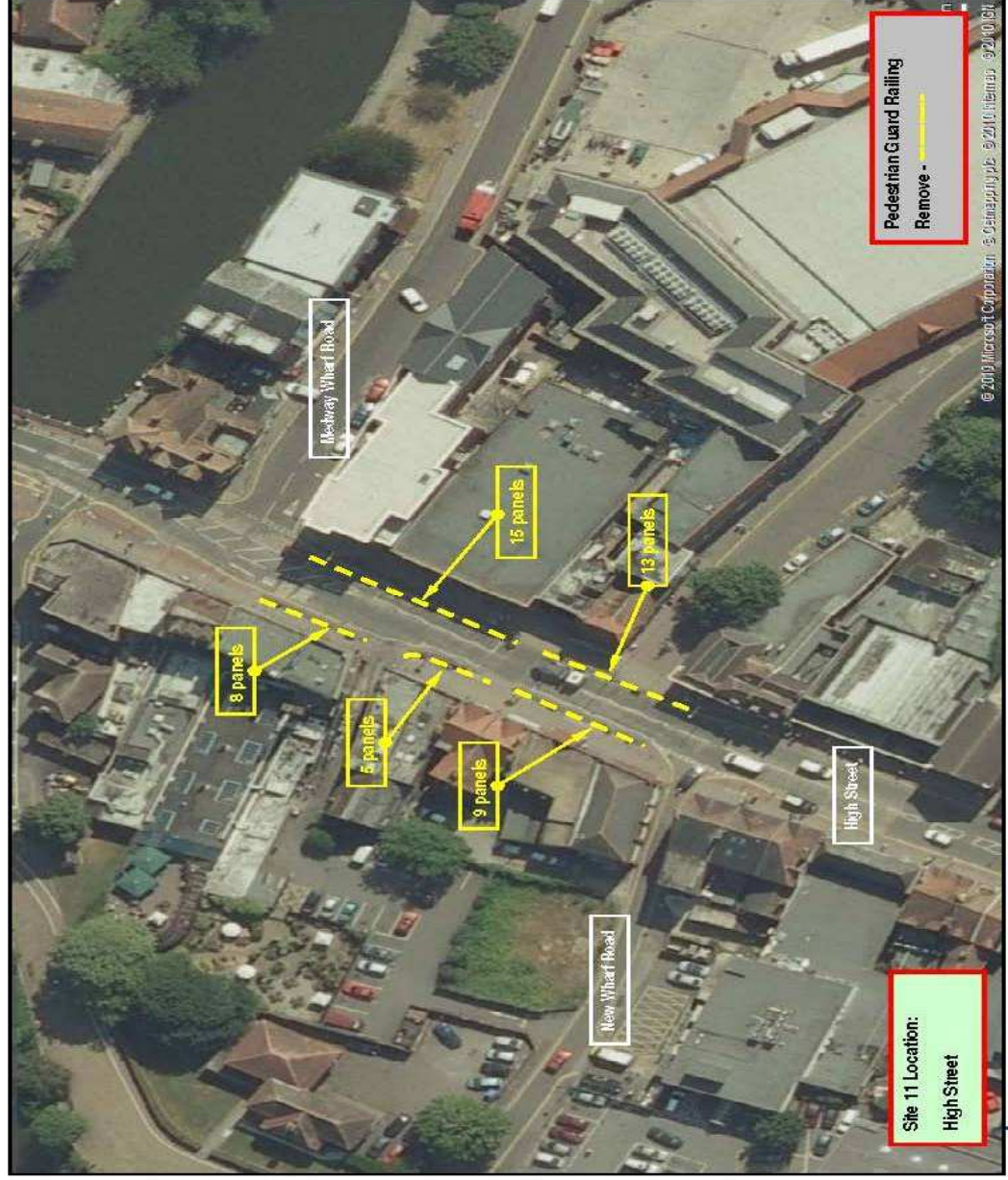
The pedestrian guard railing is located in the main shopping area of Tonbridge near Starbucks Coffee shop and Peacocks Clothing Store.

The footways at this point are 3.0metres wide and the site has both high vehicular and pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 11.**





**Site 12 Location:**

Site12 is located in Hildenborough on Tonbridge Road at the junction of Goldharbour Lane.

**Types of Guard Railing:**

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	Yes

**Conclusions / Recommendations**

The pedestrian guard railing is located outside Hildenborough Medical Centre. The southern footway width is restricted by a hedge and the guard railing, rendering the footway only 1.90metres wide.

The site has high vehicular and low pedestrian movements.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railings at site 12.**



Site 12 Location:  
j/w Tonbridge Road and Coldharbour Lane

Hitlerborough Medical Centre

Tonbridge Road

Coldharbour Lane

3 panels

7 panels

Pedestrian Guard Railing  
Remove -

Site	Location	Assessment and Recommendation
1	Vale Road/Angel Lane junction	<p>The Jacobs recommendation is to remove all the guardrailing except the length in front of 'Poundstretcher'</p> <p>The length to be retained separates the lower area of footway from the higher level carriageway. Retaining guard rail at this location is possibly justified but what is there at the moment is of poor quality and should be replaced using some of the better looking guard rail to be removed elsewhere in the High Street.</p> <p>The rest of the proposal merits support.</p>
2	Waterloo Rd/Quarryhill Road/Priory Road	<p>The Jacobs recommendation is to remove the four stretches of guard rail round this junction.</p> <p>This is a straight road with good visibility and the guard railing currently installed is difficult to justify particularly as there is a risk of people walking within the carriageway on the outside of the fencing. Therefore I recommend the Borough Council supports this proposal.</p>
3	Quarry Hill Road/Pembury Road junction	<p>There are two substantial lengths of guard rail at this junction. The Jacobs report proposes to retain these.</p> <p>In any future remodelling of this junction, to create a better 'gateway' into the town, removal of guard-railing will undoubtedly feature as part of the scheme aims. For the moment, the layout is thoroughly dominated by the needs of vehicular traffic and there is precious little concession to the needs of pedestrians or the streetscene. It is difficult to make any justification for the complete length of railing on the southern side of this junction and I recommend the KHS be requested to remove this. Also, I consider there is scope for at least reducing the extensive length of guard rail on the northern side of the junction by six panels within Pembury Road.</p>
4	Quarry Hill Road – crossing to the south of the Pembury Road junction	<p>The Jacobs report recommends removal of the guard rail at the crossing.</p> <p>The guardrailing adds little, if anything, to road safety and it is a legacy of previous design standards that obliged such lengths of railing to be installed as a matter of course. I recommend the Borough Council supports</p>



		the removal as proposed.
5	Quarry Hill Road/Waterloo Road/George Street	<p>The Jacobs report recommendation is to remove the length of guard rail between Brook Street and Waterloo Road and also at the George Street corner. The length of guard rail along the centre of the carriageway is recommended for retention.</p> <p>The proposal to remove the guard rail between Brook St and Waterloo Road has attracted particular comment and this has been prompted by concerns about the need to provide a degree of containment for the considerable numbers of students and pupils from the college and schools along Brook Street. Perhaps a short length could be justified at the Brook Street corner where the footway is narrow but further along the footway widens out and there is no case to be made for retaining the full length that is currently installed.</p> <p>In any event, there is a clear desire within the Borough Council's adopted document for the Quarry Hill Conservation Area for a reduction in the amount of guard railing. Consequently, it is recommended that the County Council be requested to reconsider the guardrailing along the centre of the road and that this be removed if at all possible (page 17 of the Conservation Area Appraisal).</p> <p>The proposal to remove the guardrailing at the corner of George Street is recommended for support.</p>
6	Quarry Hill Road adjacent to Quarry Hill Parade	<p>The report recommends that this stretch of guardrailing be removed. It has little, if any, utility as a guide for pedestrians. It can even lead to people being marooned on the carriageway side of it as they perhaps misguidedly try to cross from the other side of the road and it is safer on balance to remove it completely. Consequently, this proposal is recommended for support.</p>
7	Waterloo Road/Tonbridge Station	<p>The Jacobs proposal is for removal of a short length of guardrailing in Waterloo Road and retention of the length on front of the station. Recent work on the taxi ranks in Waterloo Road is still settling down and it is premature to be considering altering any of the arrangements in this location. Therefore, I recommend that Site 7 be left unaltered.</p>
8	Barden Road/Station	<p>The Jacobs report proposes removal of the short length</p>



	Approach junction	of railing at this junction. The footway is wide at this point and guard railing has little justification. Therefore I recommend that the Borough supports the removal.
9, 10, 11	High Street	<p>The proposal is for the removal of the guard rail associated with the three pelican crossings in the lower High Street.</p> <p>The Borough Council installed all of these lengths of guard rail in the early nineties as part of an environmental enhancement and traffic management scheme in the lower High Street. The then current design standards frustrated the preferred option of installing the crossings without the guard railing. Given the less prescriptive design approach that now prevails, I recommend the Borough Council should support this proposal to remove these lengths of guard railing.</p>
12	Tonbridge Road, Hildenborough near Coldharbour Lane	<p>Jacobs proposes removal of the guardrailing associated with the road crossing.</p> <p>This guard rail has no readily discernible benefit but, more critically, it obscures the sight line to drivers turning right out of the Medical Centre. Consequently, I recommend that the Borough Council supports this proposal.</p>

## 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	The Borough Council supports the proposals in the

	to the south of the Pembury Road junction	document for removing the guard railing at this location.
5	Quarry Hill Road/Waterloo Road/George Street	<p>The Borough Council requests that a short length of guard railing should be retained around the 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.