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## **Tonbridge Station Transport Interchange Improvements**

**To:** Tonbridge Joint Transportation Board, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**By:** Tim Read – Head of Transportation, KCC

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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This report outlines the project to improve the Tonbridge Station Transport Interchange.

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### **1. Introduction**

Funding of £500,000 has been allocated from the West Kent Local Growth Fund (LGF) to improve the Transport Interchange at Tonbridge Station. The aim is to improve interaction between users at the station, provide more space for pedestrian movements and to create an interchange suitable for one of the busiest station outside of London. The aim is to link the design to other redevelopment projects such as the High Street and Pembury Road.

The programme is forecast as follows:

2016/17 – Consultation

2017/18 – Detailed design

2018/19 – Construction

DHA Planning have surveyed the area and have completed an initial design. Alongside visual images demonstrating the potential changes, these are ready to be taken to the wider public for consultation.

### **2. The Design**

The key proposals include:

**1** - Bus lane removed from outside station entrance and relocated to outside Lidl. This would allow for a much larger pedestrian area in front of station entrance. (the 6 bay 'kiss & drop' to remain)

**2** - 3m wide diagonal pedestrian crossing from the station towards Priory Road following the desire line.

**3** - 3 way traffic light controls (Waterloo Road, B2260 North & South) to allow pedestrians' safe movement, particularly at peak times such as after school. The

lights to be controlled to allow for optimal pedestrian and vehicle flow within the space.

4 - Existing bus layby outside Lidl to be removed and converted to new pedestrian area. New bus stops for three buses to be created using some of the existing carriageway space.

### 3. Consultation

It is expected the consultation will run for six weeks from **November to mid-December**. This is to ensure that it falls within term time to engage with schools particularly, as young people are large users of the station for both trains and buses.

It is important that the consultation influences the design process and is fully inclusive. KCC's Transport Innovation team have started to outline a consultation and engagement plan with the support of KCC's corporate consultation team. This is to ensure all stakeholders have the opportunity to provide feedback on the scheme. This plan will list all the stakeholders to be engaged with and the consultation activities to be undertaken. This will be refined in partnership with TMBC officers and will be made available to district and county members in early October.

KCC are developing the list of key stakeholder groups to consult with, and are likely to include:

- Young People using the train (or buses from outside the train station) to travel to school / college / university / leisure activities
- Commuters
- People travelling for leisure
- Local businesses
- Local community / residents
- County and Local Tonbridge Members
- Parish councils
- Organisations representing passengers
- Access Groups (Kent Association for the Blind, Tonbridge and Sevenoaks Age UK etc.)

We would also seek to engage with key local groups, such as, Tonbridge Town Forum, Parish Partnership, Seniors Forum, Residents Associations, the Youth Hub, TMBC Youth Forum and Kent Youth County Council (KYCC) Members who live and / or study in Tonbridge. KCC would value views from JTB members regarding any key groups or stakeholders that should be consulted with.

Consultation Activities

KCC aims to include as many groups as possible, however the promotional and participation activities selected will be dependent on the budgets and timescales available. These may include:

- Letter drop to businesses
- Leaflet for commuters and leisure travellers
- Questionnaire (online and in hard copy)
- Consultation web page
- Exhibition days
- Online Forum (Stickyworld)
- Banners / posters at station / library / Gateway
- Press release and briefings supported by KCC press office
- Social media, including Facebook and Twitter
- Road Safety Week 'walkabout' with designers and school children
- Workshop(s) with young people from Youth Hub, Forum, KYCC
- Attendance at local partnership meetings and forums

Pre engagement activity

KCC officers met with a group of young people at the Tonbridge Youth Hub to find out how they currently interact with the station, what they like and don't like about the area and their ideas for improvements. Their responses were fed back to DHA Planning for consideration whilst producing the initial design. KCC have agreed to return to meet those young people to discuss the initial design as part of the consultation process.

**4. Recommendation required:**

To give backing to KCC to begin the consultation process and to recommend any key stakeholder groups that should be consulted with as part of the consultation.

<b>Future Meeting if applicable:</b>	A progress report will be presented at the next JTB on 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2016
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