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Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Maidstone Borough Council

November 2024

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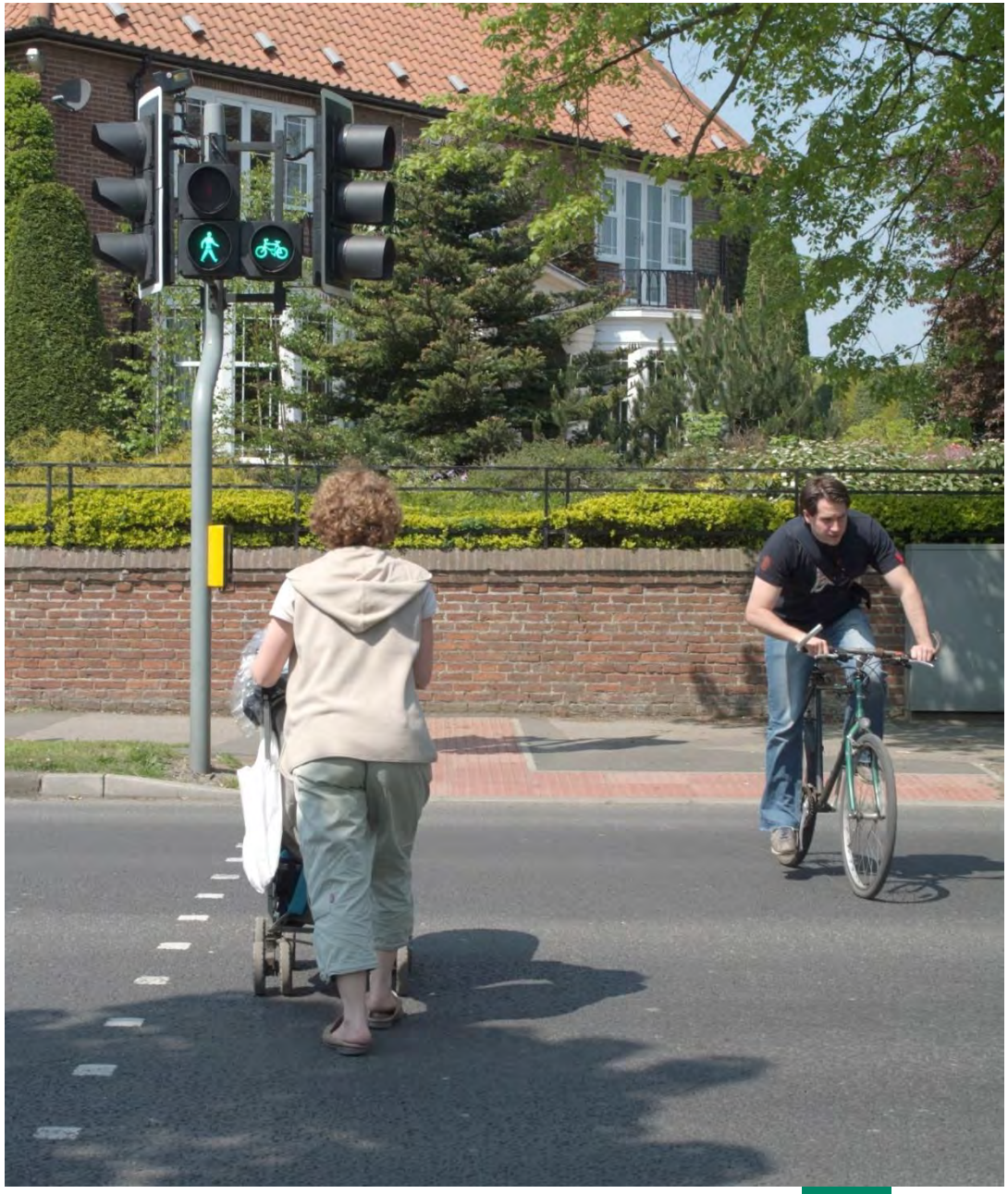
Introduction

Introduction



Active travel is becoming increasingly important as challenges around climate change become more pressing and the demand for active travel solutions grows. Investment in cycling and walking can have wider positive impacts on people and places, making roads quieter and safer, improving air quality, improving physical and mental wellbeing and creating attractive places for people to travel within and between.

In 2017, the Department for Transport (DfT) published their first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). The aim of this was to encourage cycling and walking to become a key mode of travel for shorter journeys or as a stage of a longer journey by delivering better safety, mobility and streets.

Alongside the CWIS, the DfT published practical, strategic guidance on developing Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for local bodies.

LCWIPs outline a “strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at a local level” in order to both encourage and facilitate the modal shift away from motorised vehicles to more active modes, transforming areas in ways which support active travel, reduce congestion, support local economies and improve physical and mental

health in line with sustainable visions at a local to a national level.

The stages of the LCWIP process are:

Stage 1 – Determining Scope: define the geographic scope of the LCWIP and establish governance and preparation arrangements.

Stage 2 – Gathering Information: collect data on current cycling and walking patterns, identify potential new routes, assess existing conditions, and identify barriers.
Review relevant transportation and land use policies.

Stage 3 – Network Planning for Cycling: identify starting and ending points for cycling journeys, create a network of routes based on these points, and determine the necessary improvements for cycling infrastructure.

Stage 4 – Network Planning for Walking: identify key destinations, core walking areas, assess existing pedestrian infrastructure, and determine required improvements for walking.

Stage 5 – Prioritising Improvements: prioritise the identified improvements to create a phased program for future investments in cycling and walking infrastructure.

Stage 6 – Integration and Application: integrate the LCWIP outputs into local planning, transportation policies, strategies, and implementation plans to ensure that cycling and walking considerations are incorporated into broader urban and transportation planning efforts.

The study area covers the Borough of Maidstone, building on a number of planned/ committed active travel schemes, such as the Walking and Cycling Assessment developed by Sustrans in 2018, the Walking and Cycling Strategy Actions (see Appendix A) and the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP).

Kent County Council (KCC) has undertaken a county-wide LCWIP, (the KCWIP) which aims to identify a strategic network of walking and cycling routes across the county and is expected to be published in 2024. There is one proposed KCWIP cycle route which begins/ ends in Maidstone: between Maidstone and Sittingbourne. This route was identified as a priority route through the KCWIP assessment.

The Maidstone LCWIP is designed to align with these various active travel plans to create a coherent and well-connected boroughwide network of walking and cycling routes. The intention is that the LCWIP routes will both compliment already proposed routes and fill any gaps in the existing and proposed network rather than replicating or contesting proposed routes in published/ forthcoming schemes.

This LCWIP responds to and helps to deliver several government strategies and duties and forms part of MBC's wider plans and ambitions for creating and improving active travel routes. These are summarised below:

Government strategies

The Second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy outlines the government's ambition to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys by 2030. It aims to: double cycling, increase walking activity and increase the percentage of children that usually walk to school. [1]

Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation. One of its aims is for half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. [2]

The Transport Decarbonisation Plan sets out the government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonize the entire transport system in the UK. The first strategic priority it sets is "Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport [making them] the natural first choice for our daily activities". [3]

[1] The Second Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy

[2] Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking

[3] The Transport Decarbonisation Plan

The Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) for cycle infrastructure design establishes five design principles for active travel networks and their routes: cohesion, directness, safety, comfort, attractiveness. [4]

Inclusive Mobility is the government's guide to best practice on improving access to public transport and creating a barrier-free pedestrian environment. Creating and maintaining accessible public realm is crucial for ensuring that disabled people are not excluded from playing a full role in society. [5]

Kent County Council strategies

Outcome 5 in Kent's adopted **Local Transport Plan 4**, Delivering growth without gridlock is to "Provide and promote active travel choices for all members of the community to encourage good health and wellbeing and implement measures to improve local air quality." [6]

The draft emerging **Local Transport Plan 5** is proposing a policy objective which incorporates active travel – Policy Outcome 9A: "We will aim to deliver walking and cycling improvements at prioritised locations in Kent to deliver increased levels of activity towards the Active Travel England target and support Kent's diverse economy, presented in a Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan." [7]

The draft **Kent Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP)** provides a county-wide strategic plan for walking and cycling. It proposes long, medium and short-term high-level improvements to meet current walking, wheeling, and cycling demand and serve future demand. The proposed routes in the KCWIP have been considered as part of the development of this District-level LCWIP. [8]

Maidstone Borough Council strategies

This LCWIP aligns with **Maidstone Borough Council's Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS)** 2011 – 2031. The ITS assesses the key current and future challenges affecting the transport network, while also outlining a vision and objectives for the network. Additionally, the ITS identifies a detailed program of interventions that align with the measures set out in the Maidstone Local Plan Review. [9]

The LCWIP works in unison and integrates fully with the **Maidstone Cycling and Walking Strategy 2011-31.** It seeks to fill the gaps left by this plan, and this was part of the route selection process. The Maidstone Cycling and Walking Strategy aims to increase the proportion of journeys made by active travel modes. It brings together policies and actions to promote walking and cycling, as well as the delivery of active travel infrastructure in Maidstone Borough. [10]

This LCWIP integrates with the **MBC Local Plan Review**, which was adopted in March 2024. The Local Plan Review outlines policies and plans to guide future development up to 2038, of which active transport infrastructure is key to unlocking. The Local Plan Review forms part of the overall Development Plan for the Borough. Development Plans, which include adopted Local and Neighbourhood Development Plans are crucial in the decision-making process around developments and land use. [11]

[4] Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20)

[5] Inclusive Mobility

[6] Kent Local Transport Plan 4

[7] Emerging Kent Local Transport Plan 5

[8] Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

[9] Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031

[10] Maidstone Cycling and Walking Strategy 2011-2031

[11] Maidstone Local Plan Review 2021-2038

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02

Stage 2: Data Collection

Stage 2: Data Collection

Study Area

Maidstone is one of 12 districts in Kent, it is bounded by Medway, Swale, Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, and Tunbridge Wells. The LCWIP study area covers the whole district, and can be seen in Figure 2-1.

Maidstone Borough is centred on the town of Maidstone, the largest town in Kent. The Borough extends to the villages of Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn in the south and the market village of Lenham in the east.

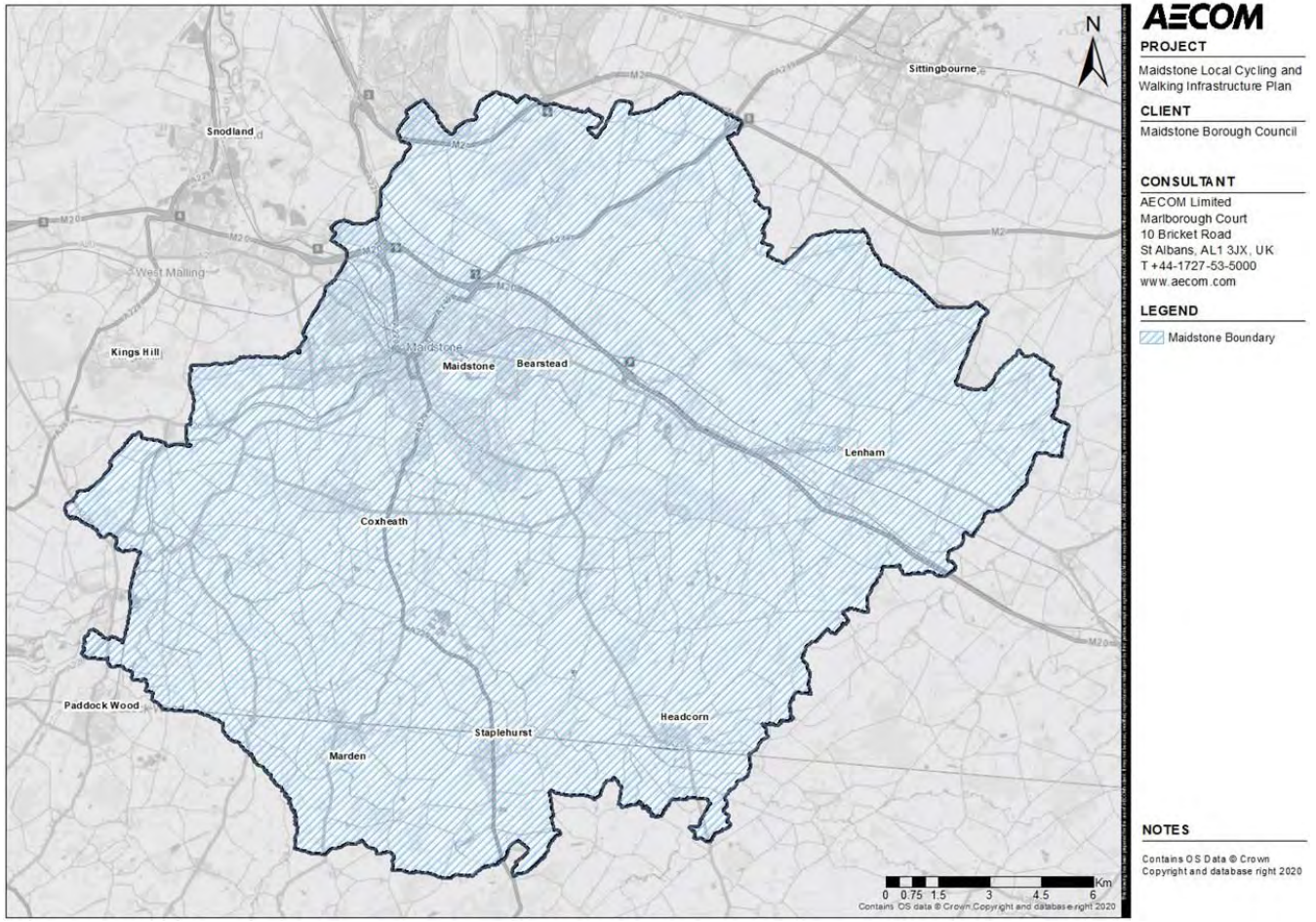

Figure 2-1: Maidstone LCWIP Study Area

Demographics

According to 2021 Census, the population in Maidstone is around 175,800. Whilst the population in Maidstone is growing (13.3% growth between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses) by a greater percentage than the overall population of the South-East (7.5%) and England (6.6%), it is among the lowest 40% for population density across all local authorities areas in England [12].

According to the 2022 mid-year population estimates [13], Maidstone has the largest district population in Kent. Maidstone is comprised of 26 electoral wards, the populations and population densities of which are displayed in Table 2-1.

[12] How life has changed in Maidstone: Census 2021
[13] 2022 Mid-year population estimates: Ward level population in Kent

[1] Table 2-1: 2020 Mid-year Ward Level Population Estimates (MYPE)

Area	2022 MYPE*	Density
High Street	12,210	63.5
North	10,670	44.9
Fant	10,400	42.6
South	10,330	25.5
Marden and Yalding	9,780	1.6
Park Wood	9,660	41.3
Shepway North	9,330	24.2
East	9,200	54.8
Boxley	8,770	3.6
Coxheath and Hunton	8,710	3.1
Bearsted	8,330	29.8
Allington	8,200	30.2
Heath	7,500	40.3
Harrietsham and Lenham	7,400	2.2
Staplehurst	7,090	3
Bridge	6,780	39.1
Headcorn	6,370	1.2
Shepway South	5,990	52
Downswood and Otham	3,700	9.9
Detling and Thurnham	3,380	1.7
Sutton Valence and Langley	3,320	2.7
Boughton Monchelsea and Chart Sutton	3,040	1.6
North Downs	2,680	0.4
Loose	2,670	9.8
Barming and Teston	2,490	4.3
Leeds	2,440	1.9

**Ward estimates have been individually rounded to the nearest 10.*

Source: 2022 MYPE for 2023 Wards, Office for National Statistics (ONS); 2022 MYPE, Office for National Statistics © Crown Copyright

Population Density

Figure 2-2 illustrates the population density across all of the Borough.

The population density is almost exclusively concentrated in the town of Maidstone and its suburbs, reaching a maximum of 11,926 residents per sq km in the centre of Maidstone.

There are also pockets of higher population density in Coxheath, Marden and Headcorn, where the population density ranges between 2,200 and 2,725 but generally, in rural Maidstone, population density is low.

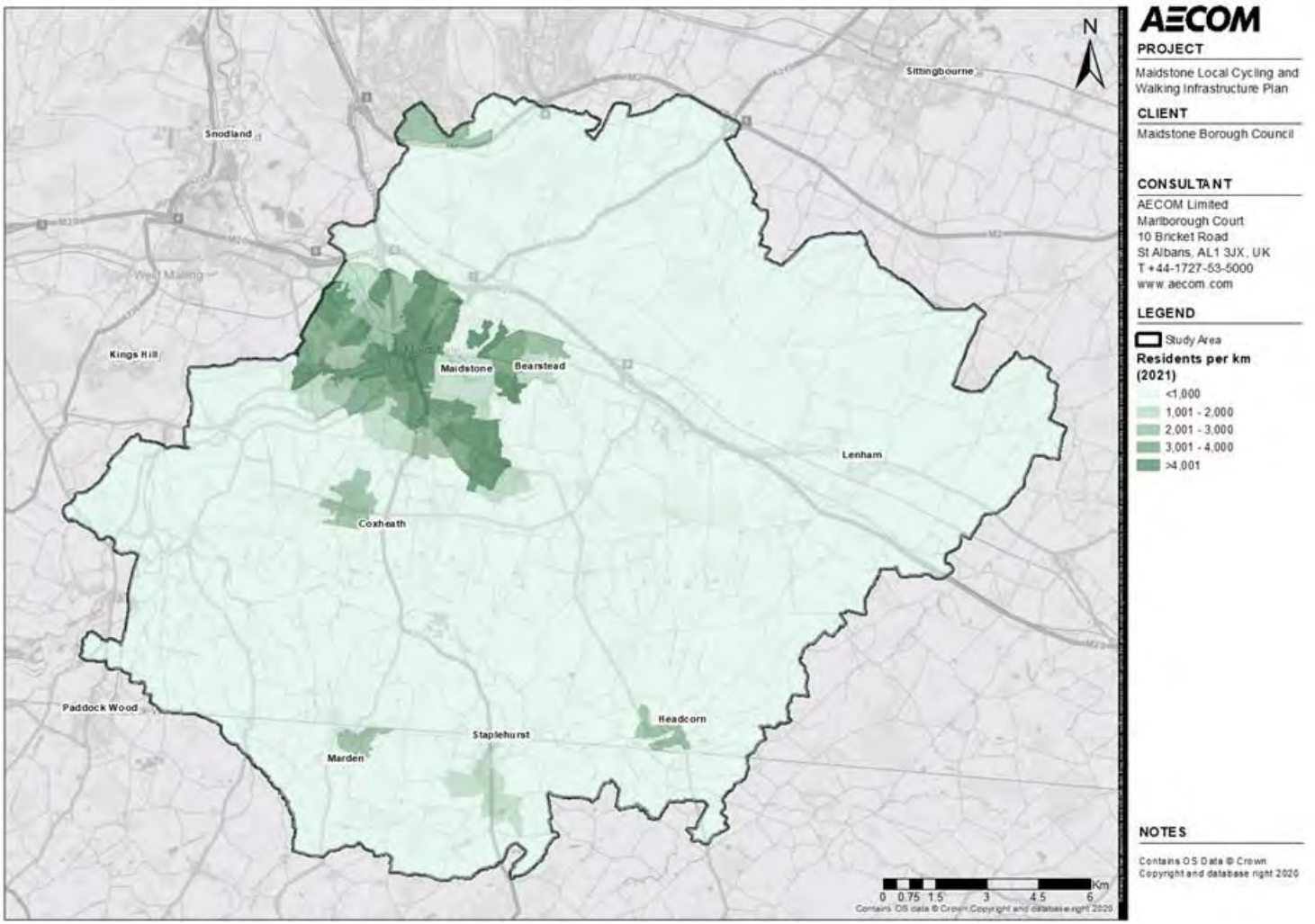

Figure 2-2: Population Density Across Maidstone (2021)

Employment Density

Employment density in Maidstone is based on the Business Register and Employment Survey (2021), which publishes employee and employment estimates at detailed geographical level. The employment density across Maidstone is illustrated in Figure 2-3.

The highest employment density is in Maidstone town centre with 273 employees per hectare. Higher densities are also found at employment centres in the suburbs around Maidstone, such as at Maidstone Hospital (97 per hectare) and the Invicta Park Barracks (44 per hectare).

A higher employment density of 28 employees per hectare can be observed to the southeast of Maidstone town, due to the Orchard Industrial Estate.

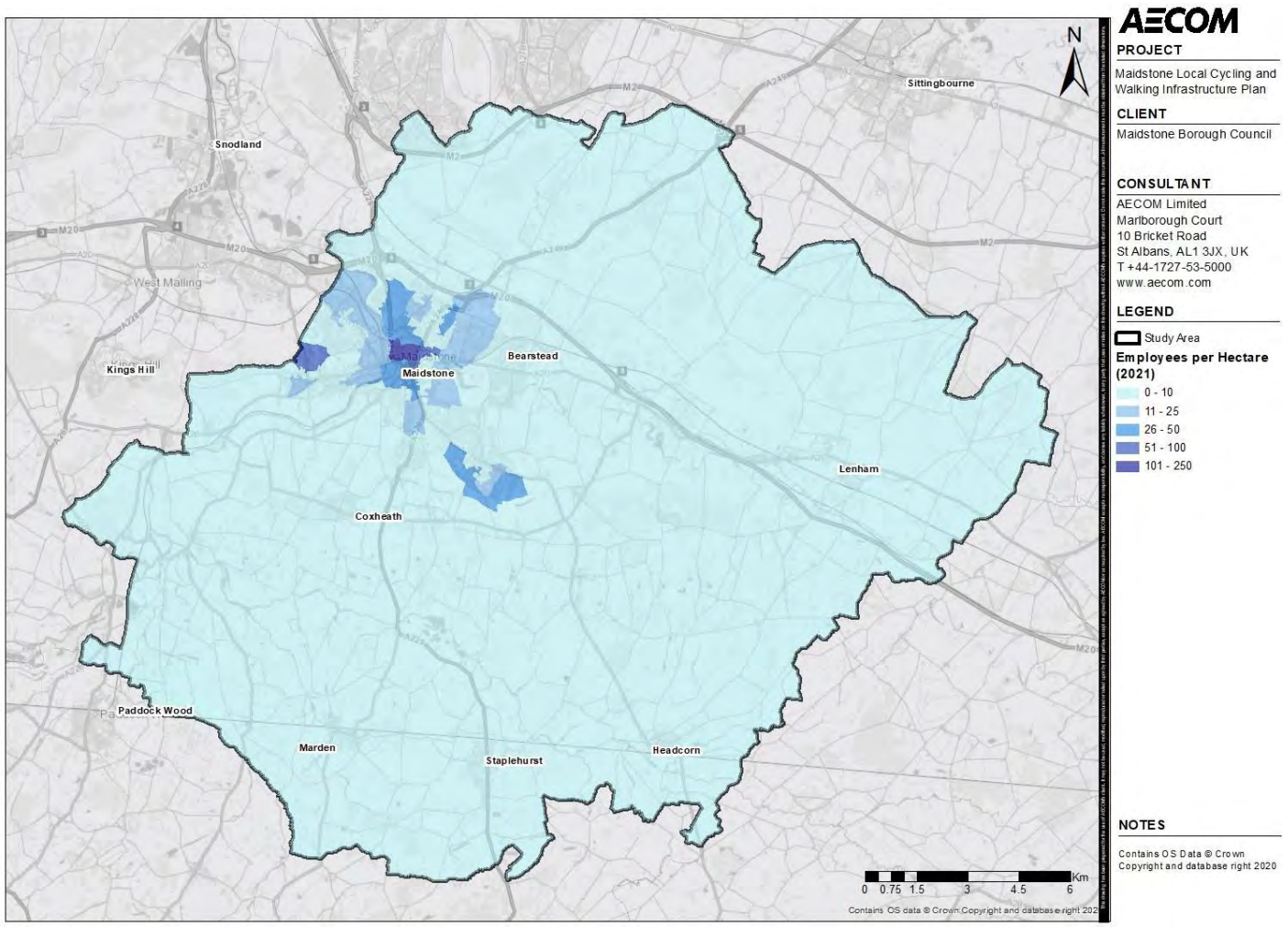

Figure 2-3: Employment Density Across Maidstone (2021) replace this with new one with labels...

Car Availability

Figure 2-4 illustrates the car or van availability across Maidstone. Across rural Maidstone, the average number of cars or vans per household is 2, whereas in the urban areas of Maidstone town, Coxheath, Marden, Headcorn and Lenham, there is 1 car or van per household.

When comparing the car or van availability of Maidstone town to rural Maidstone district , it is clear that the spatial redistribution of people towards urban areas results in pockets of low car dependency in towns and higher car dependency in rural areas.

In more urban areas, there is typically more mode choice in terms of active travel infrastructure and public transport, whereas rural areas typically present a greater challenge in encouraging mode shift away from private vehicles.

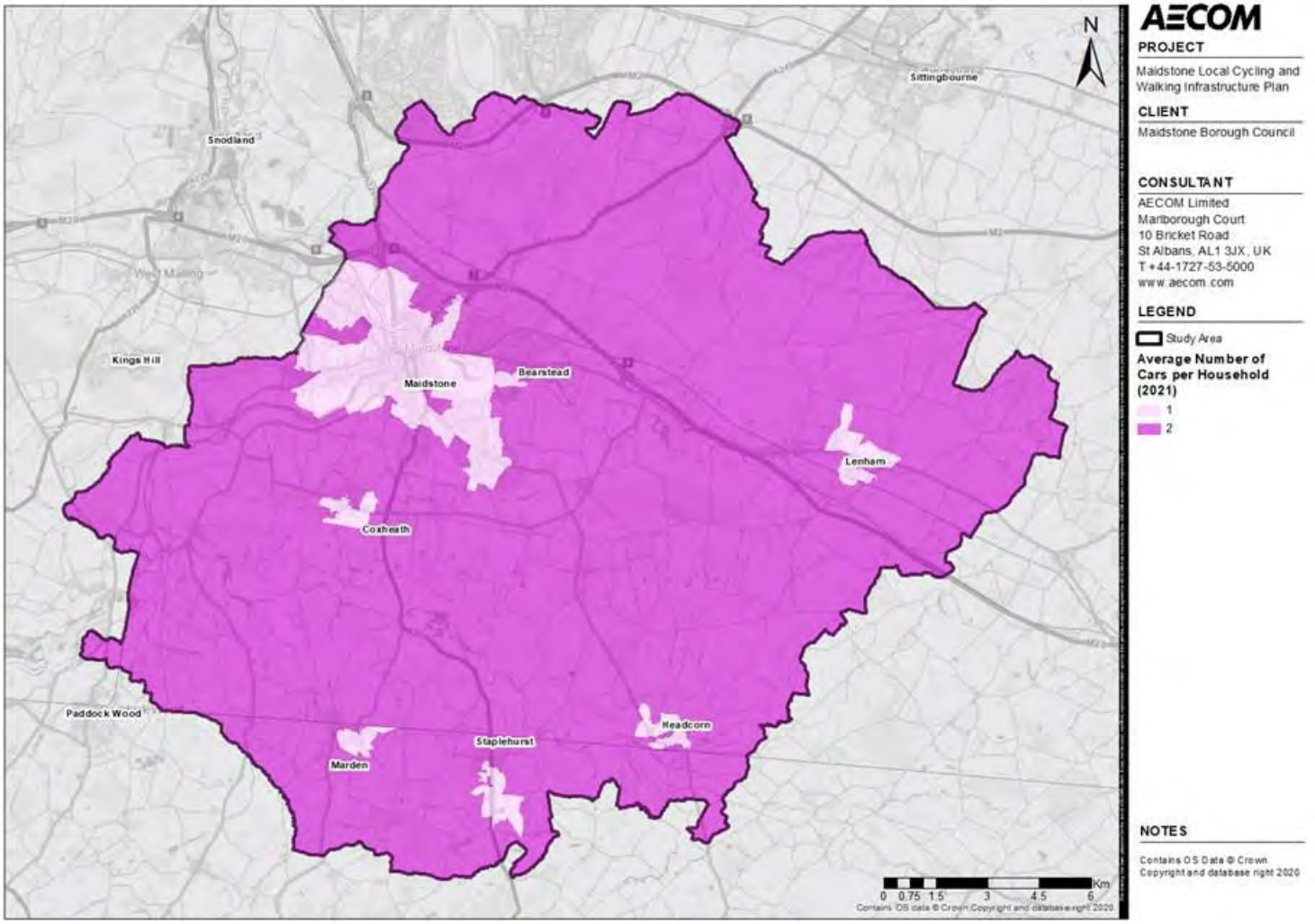

Figure 2-4 Car or Van Availability Across Maidstone (2021)

Deprivation

Figure 2-5 illustrates the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in 2019 across Maidstone. The IMD considers factors such as income, employment, education, skills and training, health and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services, and the living environment. There is significant variation in IMD deciles within Maidstone town, with areas to the southeast of the county experiencing lower IMD deciles.

Large disparities exist in the IMD deciles of deprivation within the urban area of Maidstone. Pockets of high deprivation are found near the town centre and southeast, with two Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in the 10% most deprived in England. These areas are adjacent to some of the least deprived suburbs.

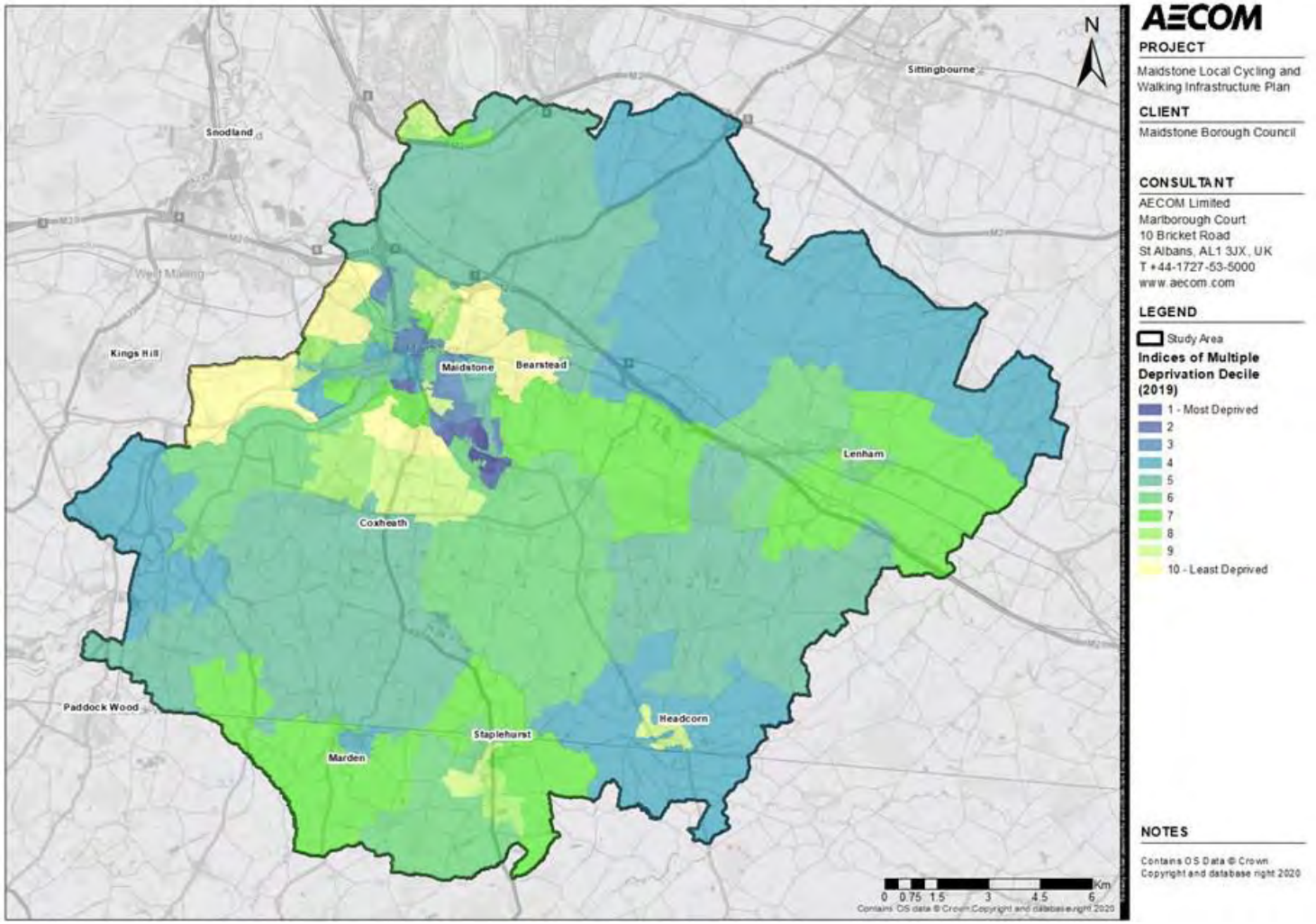

Figure 2-5 IMD Across Maidstone

In the rural parts of the district, disparities in deprivation are smaller, with IMD deciles ranging from 3 to 8. However, as shown in Figure 2-6, there are pockets of intense social and economic inequality in isolated communities, referred to as Left Behind Neighbourhoods (LBNs). LBNs, a metric developed by the Local Trust and Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI), identify areas that rank highly in terms of IMD but also lack social infrastructure. One LBN is located in Maidstone, in the Shepway area.

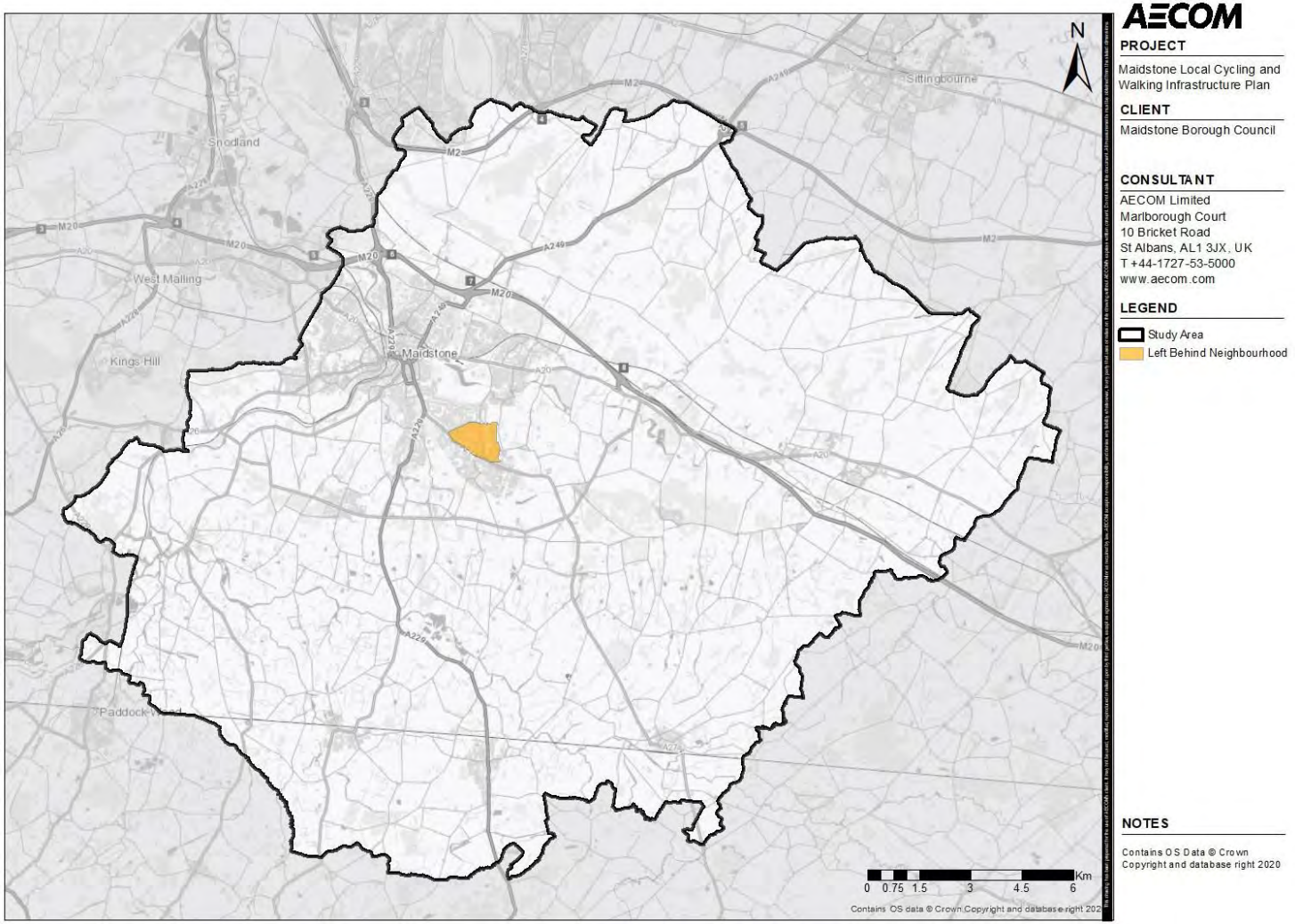

Figure 2-6 Left Behind Neighbourhoods

Trip Generators and Attractors

Trip generators and attractors have been identified to establish key trip origin and destination points across Maidstone, which are used in subsequent stages of the LCWIP to carry out network planning for cycling and walking. Identifying trip generators and attractors is crucial for determining desire lines across Maidstone, helping to identify where active travel infrastructure could be a valuable tool in encouraging a shift in travel modes and uncovering suppressed demand.

Figure 2-7 illustrates the trip attractors and generators across Maidstone. There is a large concentration of trip attractors in Maidstone itself, with smaller clusters in Marden, Staplehurst, Headcorn, and Lenham. Rural areas in Maidstone generally have fewer trip attractors, though there are green spaces to the south-east of Maidstone, along with places of worship and educational sites to the east and south of the town.

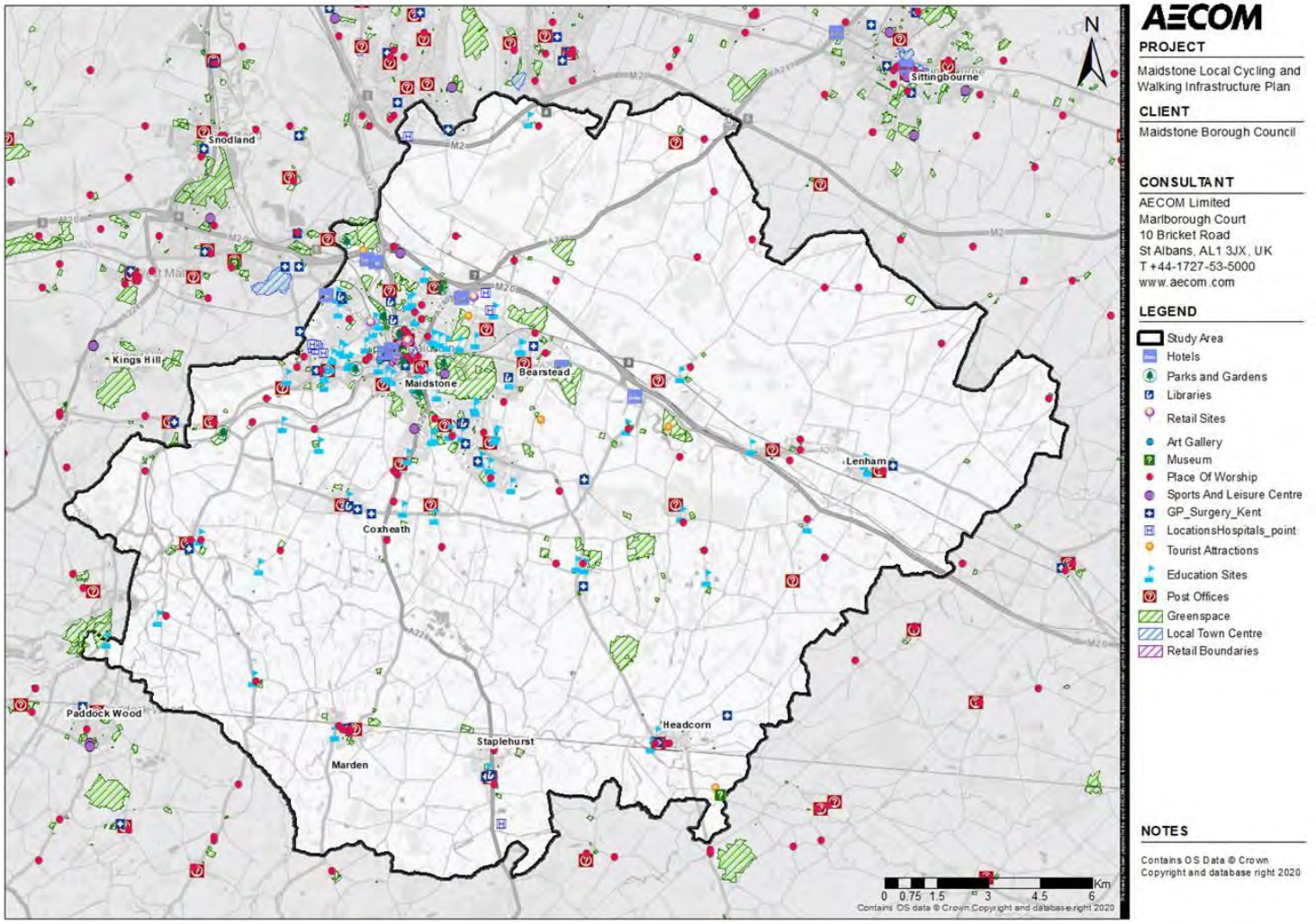

Figure 2-7 Trip Generators and Attractors Across Maidstone

Future Trip Generators and Attractors: Committed Developments

There are a number of committed housing, employment and mixed-use developments across Maidstone. It is important to consider both existing and future trip generators/ attractors in order to ensure any proposed active travel infrastructure serves existing demand but also meets and encourages future demand.

As Figure 2-8 illustrates, there are a number of committed developments across the district, largely located on the urban peripheries of Maidstone town, with large developments also planned near Lenham and Coxheath. Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn all have smaller housing developments.

The Local Plan Review 2021-2038 plans for 19,669 new homes, 119,250m^2 employment floorspace and 14,360m^2 retail, food and beverage floorspace.

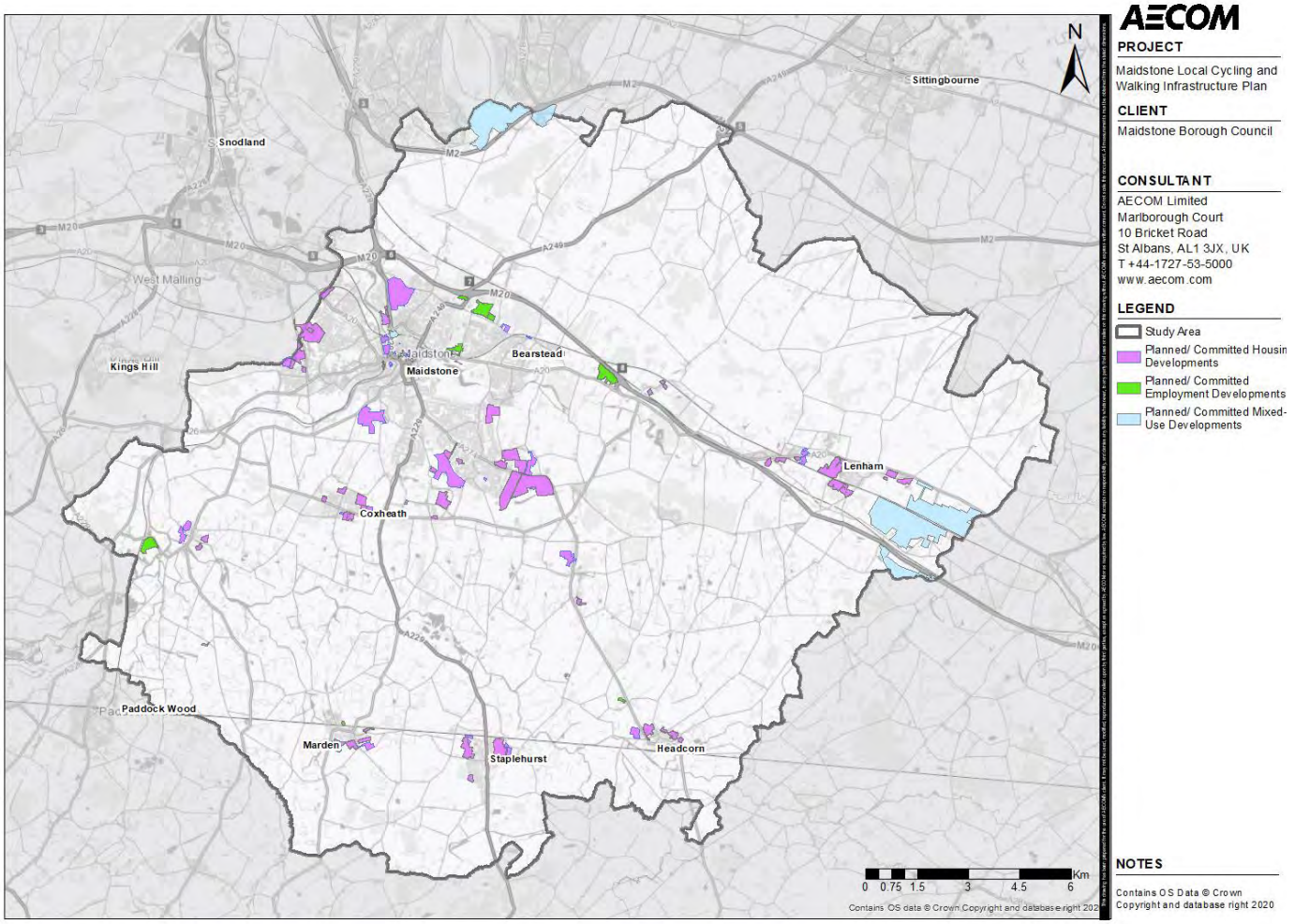

Figure 2-8 Committed Developments Across Maidstone

Transport Network

The following section outlines the transport network across Maidstone, including the existing active travel network and any future planned cycling and walking schemes. It also covers public transport and highways in Maidstone. Understanding the transport network is crucial in identifying gaps, and more broadly, building a picture of the network as a whole.

Active Travel Network

The active travel network across Maidstone is comprised of routes which can be used for non-motorised modes, such as walking, wheeling and cycling. This LCWIP considers both the existing active travel network and future active travel network in its analysis.

Existing Active Travel Network

Figure 2-9 illustrates the National Cycle Network (NCN), existing cycle routes and lanes and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across Maidstone.

The NCN is largely comprised of off-road and on-road routes, typically making use of quieter roads and shared-use paths. NCN Route 17 runs south-east from Rochester to Ashford, passing through Blue Bell Hill and along the northern edge of Maidstone town with an extension that reaches into Maidstone town centre, before leaving Maidstone Borough near Lenham.

This is the only NCN route in the district, and while it provides connectivity from the north to the east of Maidstone district, it functions more as a through route that passes near and connects to Maidstone, rather than a route that links locations within the Borough itself. Further, north-south movements are limited to non-existent.

There is an additional network of cycle routes and lanes across Maidstone, and these are comprised of on-road and off-road cycle provision. The existing network of cycle routes and lanes is sparse and does not form a connected network, it is mainly limited to radial routes towards Maidstone town centre and towards NCN 17. There are notable gaps in rural Maidstone, with only sporadic routes in Staplehurst and near Lenham, and no routes Marden and Headcorn. The standard of cycling provision varies significantly across the network, with lengths of the routes being substandard, such as the lack of extension to Coxheath, and some routes in need of upgrading.

With regards to the PRoW network, Kent County Council manages the longest public rights of way network of any county in England and Wales. Although footpaths make up 83% of the PRoW network in Kent, the percentage of other rights of way paths including byways, restricted byways and bridleways is below the national average [14]. Network coverage is generally good and extensive across the whole district, covering both urban and rural areas well.

The network priority status of the PRoW network is as follows:

- Category A
  - North Downs Way National Trail
  - Routes to local facilities such as bus stops, churches, schools, parks, tourist attractions
  - Paths used for daily leisure walking
  - Multi-use paths with a clear public benefit, such as allowing horse riding or cycling in addition to walking
  - Paths with potential for improvement
  - Paths promoted by Explore Kent.
- Category B
  - any paths not under category A
  - paths on access land
  - coastal access paths
  - permissive paths managed by KCC.

There are also well-established and signposted leisure walking routes in Maidstone district, such as the longer distance North Downs Way.

[14] Kent County Council, The Current Network: Use & Provision

The active travel network across Maidstone varies significantly between walking and cycling provisions. The walking network is extensive and well-supported across both rural and urban areas, whereas the cycle network is predominantly focused on Maidstone town, with limited links to NCN Route 17.

On the NCN routes within the district, 51% are traffic-free, while 49% are on-road. Asphalt surfaces account for 68% of these routes, while 25% are unsealed. Across the entire Maidstone Borough, only 35% of routes are off public highways, indicating that the network is largely road-based with shared traffic routes.

The suitability of the active travel network for walking, wheeling, and cycling varies, with opportunities to upgrade the quality of routes, as some suffer from significant gradients. Sustrans has highlighted the major severance caused by roads like the A229, A249, and B2012 around Maidstone town centre, noting a lack of high-quality crossing facilities. Additionally, pedestrian and cycling facilities across the district have been described by Sustrans as “often substandard” and, in some areas, unsafe. [15]

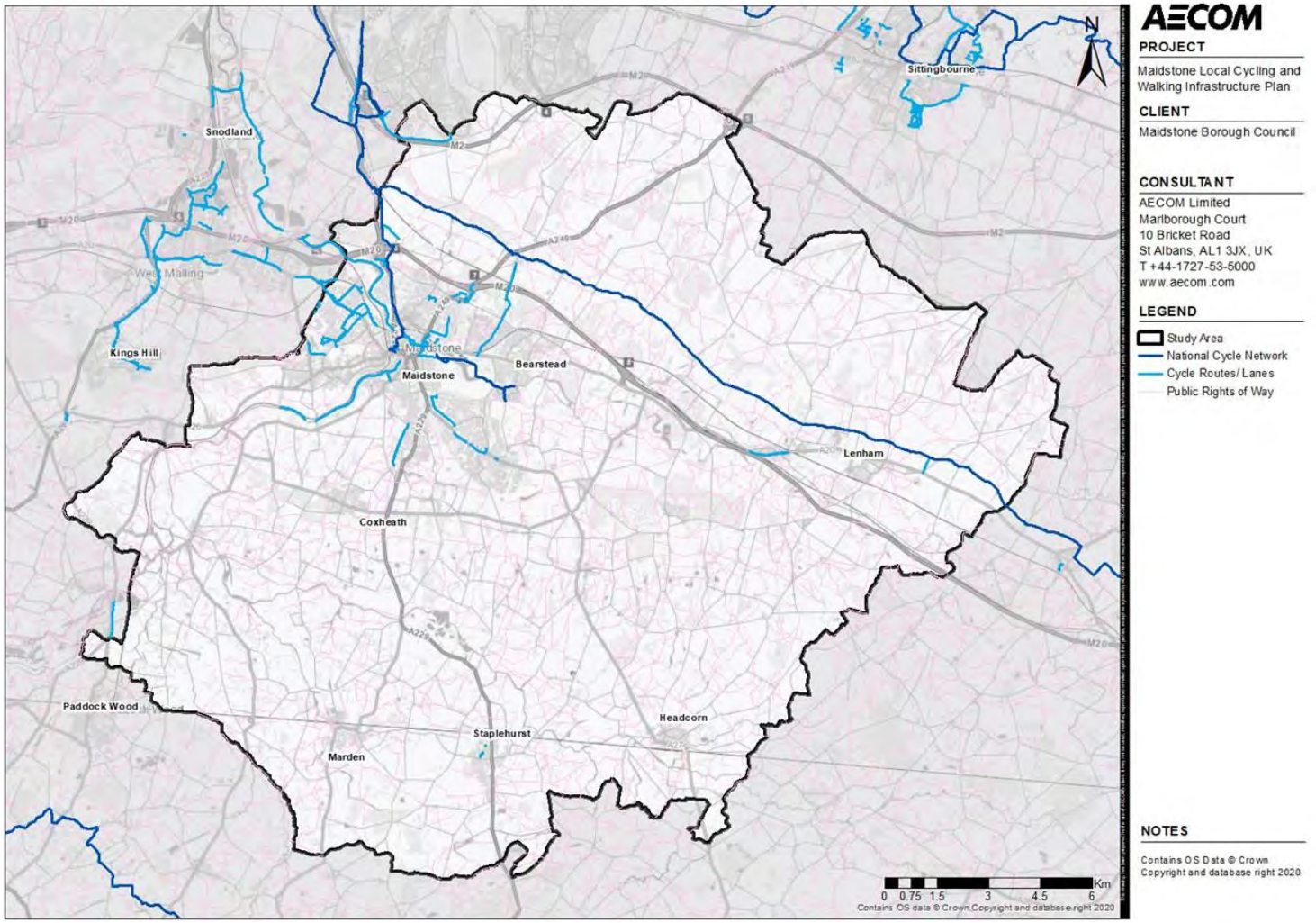

Figure 2-9 Existing Active Travel Network Across Maidstone

[15] Walking and Cycling Assessment

Future Active Travel Network

Across Maidstone there are a number of active travel schemes which are proposed or committed. These schemes are considered within the LCWIP analysis as they will contribute to the wider active travel network.

The proposed active travel schemes, studies or audits which have been undertaken across Maidstone are as follows (also illustrated in Figure 2-10):

- Sustrans undertook a Walking and Cycling Assessment of Maidstone Borough in 2018, which gave recommendations on active travel improvements.
- Following on from this, Maidstone Town Centre has some proposed improvements that include connecting up active travel routes, a new pedestrian and cycle bridge, improved wayfinding, more cycle parking and public realm improvements.
- Across the Maidstone town wider suburban area, more gyratory active travel connections are proposed that are linked by improved crossing facilities on major roads.
- On a borough-wide scale, as can be seen in Figure 2-9, new cycle routes are planned to link Maidstone town to its peripheral villages, such as Marden, Staplehurst, Headcorn and Lenham.

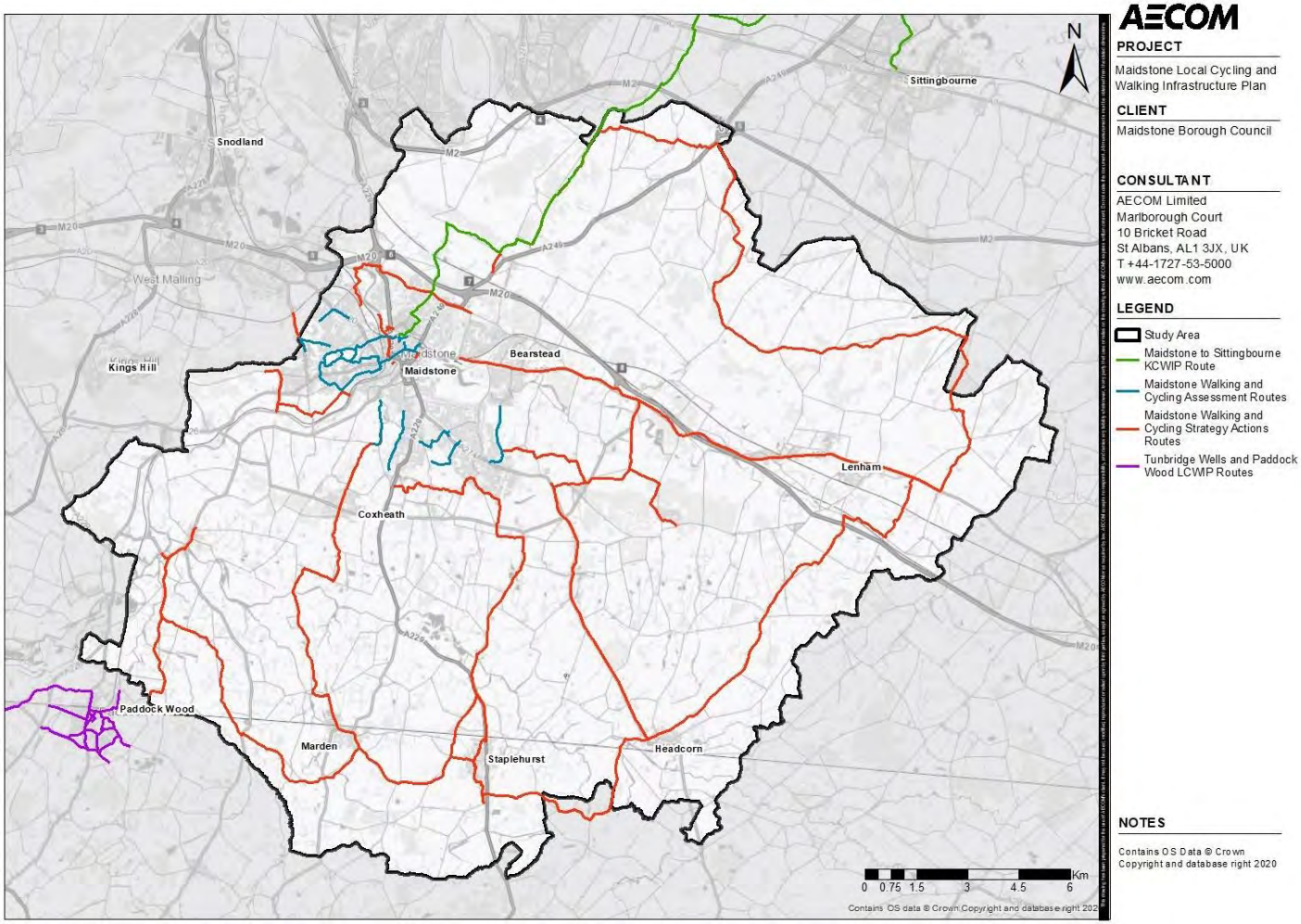

Figure 2-10 Proposed Active Travel Schemes Across Maidstone

- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council undertook an LCWIP, identifying walking and cycling routes in Tunbridge Wells and Paddock Wood, as well as inter-urban routes which connect the Borough's main settlements
- As part of the KCWIP, an inter-urban cycling route between Maidstone and Sittingbourne was identified, forming a key strategic cycling corridor between these two settlements.

Public Transport Network

The bus network, which forms key public transport infrastructure across rural areas is operated by a number of providers. Typically, bus stops are concentrated around urban areas, which generate more demand, and in rural areas the bus network is often more unreliable and infrequent. Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) found that the frequency of bus services in rural areas was essentially non-existent after the evening peak commuting period.

Additional on-demand services exist in Maidstone which are directed at improving accessibility of the bus network. The Kent Karrier service operates across Kent, serving users who have a medical condition which makes travelling on public transport difficult, are aged over 85 or live in a rural area more than 500m from a bus route or railway station. In Maidstone, the Karrier operates 10am-1pm.

In 2024, Stagecoach and Arriva announced significant cuts to bus services in the Maidstone area [16,17].

The rail network across Maidstone is illustrated in Figure 2-11.

Southeastern Railway operate the majority of passenger services across Maidstone. There are 3 direct links per hour on the Maidstone East line (Lenham, Hollingbourne and Bearsted) to London Victoria and Charing Cross, and a direct service to London St Pancras that serves Maidstone West in the peak. Regular trains are also available to Ashford International. In the south of Maidstone district, on the Staplehurst, Headcorn and Marden line, there are 4 direct links to London Charing Cross and Cannon Street per hour in the peak. There are 13 operational passenger rail stations in Maidstone, ranked in terms of their passenger numbers between April 2021 and March 2022 in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2 Passenger Numbers for Stations across Maidstone

Maidstone Rank (Kent Rank)	Station	Total Station Entries and Exits (20212022)	Cycle Storage Facilities
1 (14)	Maidstone East	884,070	40 unsheltered cycle storage spaces
2 (23)	Maidstone West	548,832	44 sheltered cycle storage spaces
3 (26)	Staplehurst	474,110	66 sheltered cycle storage spaces
4 (29)	Headcorn	361,320	28 sheltered cycle storage spaces
5 (30)	Marden (Kent)	333,728	10 sheltered cycle storage spaces
6 (41)	Bearsted	202,754	22 sheltered cycle storage spaces
7 (43)	Maidstone Barracks	176,148	No cycle storage
8 (63)	Lenham	87,584	8 sheltered cycle storage spaces
9 (67)	Harrietsham	65,058	24 unsheltered cycle storage spaces
10 (78)	Hollingbourne	44,650	8 sheltered cycle storage spaces
11 (86)	Yalding	29,968	10 sheltered cycle storage spaces
12 (91)	East Farleigh	23,248	10 sheltered cycle storage spaces
13 (95)	Beltring	10,560	No cycle storage

At 11 of the 13 stations in Maidstone, there are cycle storage facilities (see Figure 2-12). The station with the highest number of cycle storage spaces is Staplehurst, which has 66 spaces, while Hollingbourne and Lenham have the fewest cycle parking spaces (8).Maidstone Barracks station and Beltring station do not have cycle storage facilities.

[16] Bus services in Kent facing widespread cuts - BBC News

[17] Bus company Arriva to cut more routes in Maidstone to cut costs (kentonline.co.uk)

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Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

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LEGEND

Study Area
Rail Stations
Rail Network

NOTES

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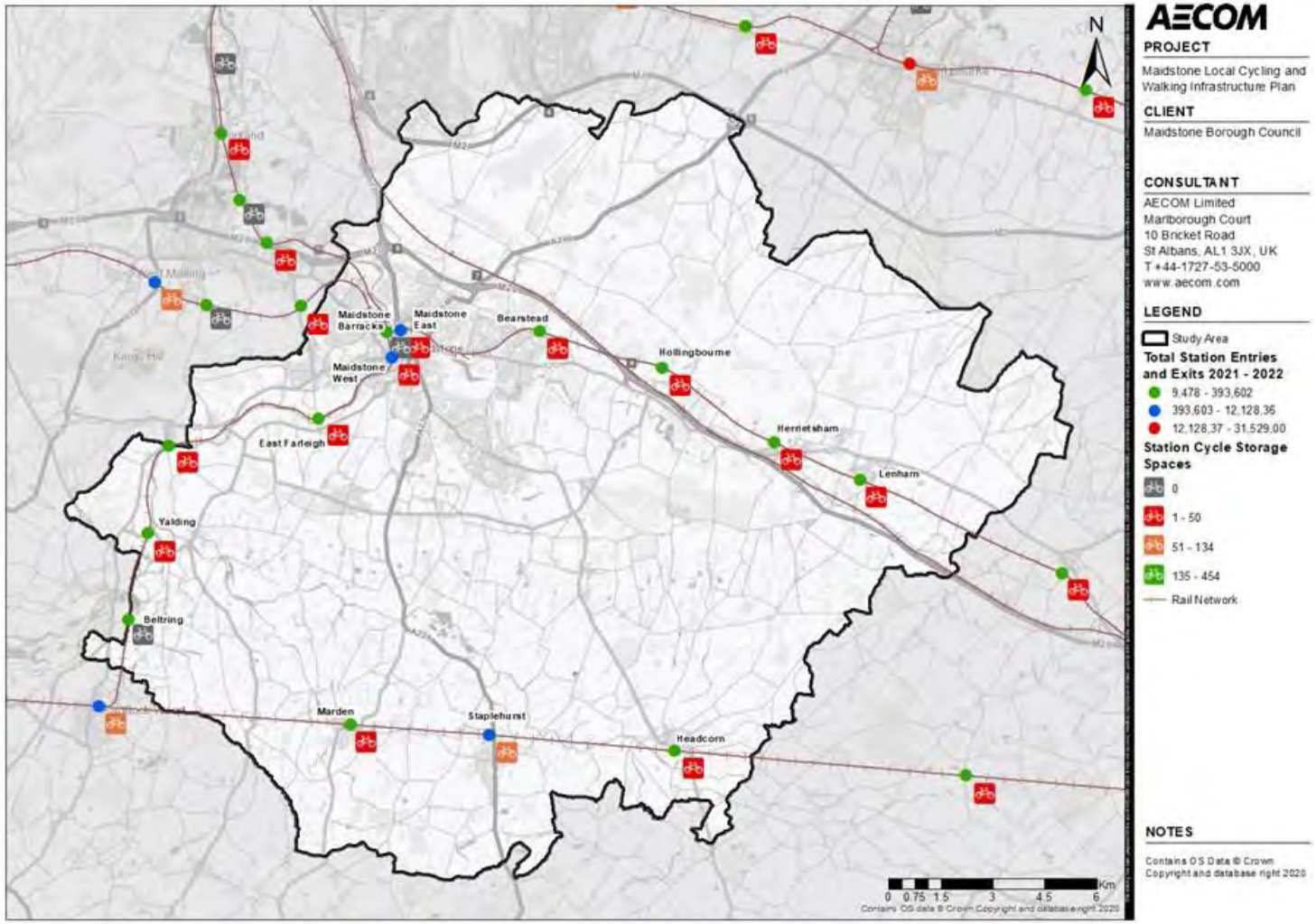
Figure 2-11 Rail Network Across Maidstone



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LEGEND
Study Area
Total Station Entries and Exits 2021 - 2022
9,478 - 393,602
393,603 - 12,128,36
12,128,37 - 31,529,00
Station Cycle Storage Spaces
0
1 - 50
51 - 134
135 - 454
Rail Network

NOTES
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Figure 2-12 Cycle Storage Facilities and Station Entries and Exits Across Maidstone

Figure 2-13 illustrates the density of public transport stops within a walkable distance across Maidstone. This map overlays walking isochrones to generate a density map of walkable public transport stops. Figure 2-13 shows that there is a higher density of walkable public transport stops within Maidstone town centre, extending down into Shepway. There are also pockets of higher densities of walkable public transport stops in Bearsted, Coxheath, Marden and Lenham.

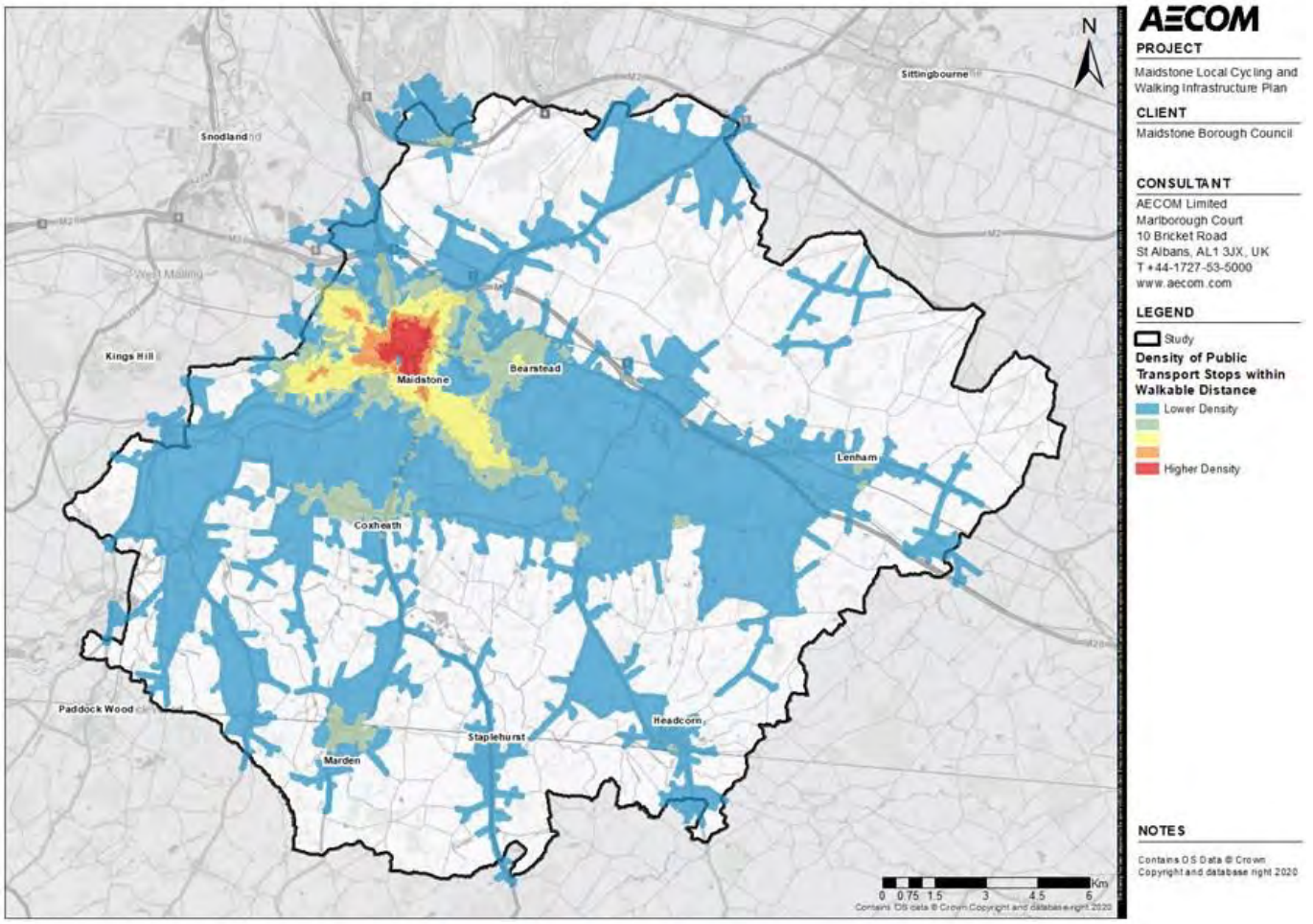

Figure 2-13: Public Transport Accessibility (Walking Distance from Rail Stations and Bus Stops)

Highway Network

Kent is a major confluence of road traffic, with connections into London and to continental Europe. Maidstone's geographic location means it is situated in between several strategic routes. As Figure 2-14 illustrates, the M2 and the M20 are both situated just north of Maidstone, which connect Kent into London and London to Dover and Folkestone. Notably, Maidstone also contains the A229, a key link between the M2 and the M20.

A study carried out by The AA Charitable Trust [18] found that 71% of fatal crashes involving young drivers occurred on rural roads. Of the top 10 most dangerous rural roads for young drivers, three of these were located in Kent, with two of these being in the study area; the A229 (ranked first) and the A249 (ranked ninth). The A229 acts as the key north
-south spine through the district and is the most dangerous rural road in the country, a key indicator of community severance.

The collision data, collected from November 2019 to October 2022, is shown in Figure 2-15 and highlights incidents involving vulnerable road users (VRUs), which include pedestrians and cyclists. As expected, there are significant collision hotspots along the A229, with the A274 also experiencing a notable number of incidents. Maidstone town centre has a high density of accidents, likely due to its higher

Figure 2-14 Maidstone Highway Network

population density, and this trend aligns with the number of incidents in other urban areas in the district. While most incidents occur along major roads, a number also take place on rural roads, which are not classified in the figure.

During the period assessed, there were 177 incidents involving VRUs, of these, two were fatal, 39 were serious and 136 were slight.

[18] Ground-breaking research highlights the most dangerous rural roads for young drivers

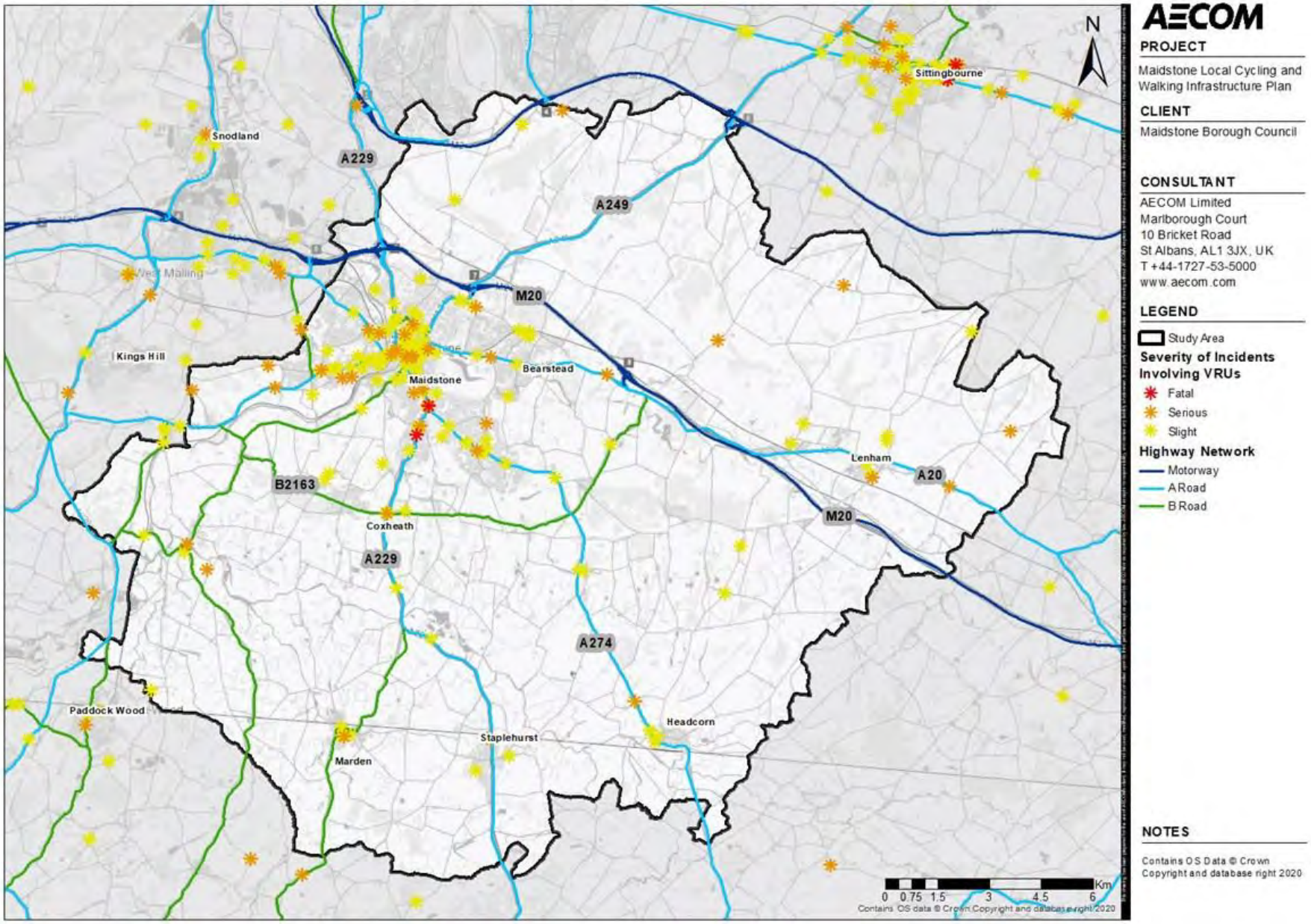

Figure 2-15 Highway Network and Collisions Involving Vulnerable Road Users Across Maidstone

Travel Patterns

Travel to Work

Data on the mode of travel to work, between the place of residence (origin) and the place of work (destination) of people across the UK, was collected as part of the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. This provides the most detailed journey pattern data currently available in the study area. These datasets were used to assess both mode split for travel to work and commuting travel patterns between an origin and destination across Kent.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has led to major changes in commuter travel patterns across the UK and the latest (2021) Census was undertaken during the pandemic. The commuter travel pattern changes that occurred during COVID-19 restrictions have had long lasting effects and therefore 2021 Census has been included in this analysis with a caveat that commuting trips were heavily affected by travel restrictions during the time of survey.

Mode Split (Travel to Work)

Across Kent in 2011, 62.6% of employees travel to work in a car or a van. A full breakdown of the journey to work mode split data can be seen in Table 2-3. When comparing the method of travel to work in Maidstone to Kent overall, the percentage share of cycling is lower, and those walking to work is approximately the same percentage share.

Figure 2-16 illustrates the commuting flows between districts in Kent. There are a lot of cross-district flows in both directions between Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. There are a high numbers of commuters going into Maidstone from Medway. Maidstone has medium inflows from most other neighbouring districts. It is worth noting that this figure does not include internal commuting flows, which on average across Kent make up 64.4% of all commuting flows.

Table 2-3 Method of Travel to Work in Maidstone

Mode	Maidstone - 2011	Kent 2011	Maidstone 2021	Kent 2021
Work mainly at or from home	11.7%	11.2%	31.1%	31.1%
Rail	6.6%	9.2%	2.7%	3.7%
Bus	3.7%	3.7%	1.8%	2.1%
Private vehicle	66.1%	62.6%	54.7%	53.2%
Cycle	1.2%	1.7%	0.9%	1.2%
Walk	10.4%	10.0%	7.7%	7.8%
Other	0.3%	0.2%	1.0%	1.0%

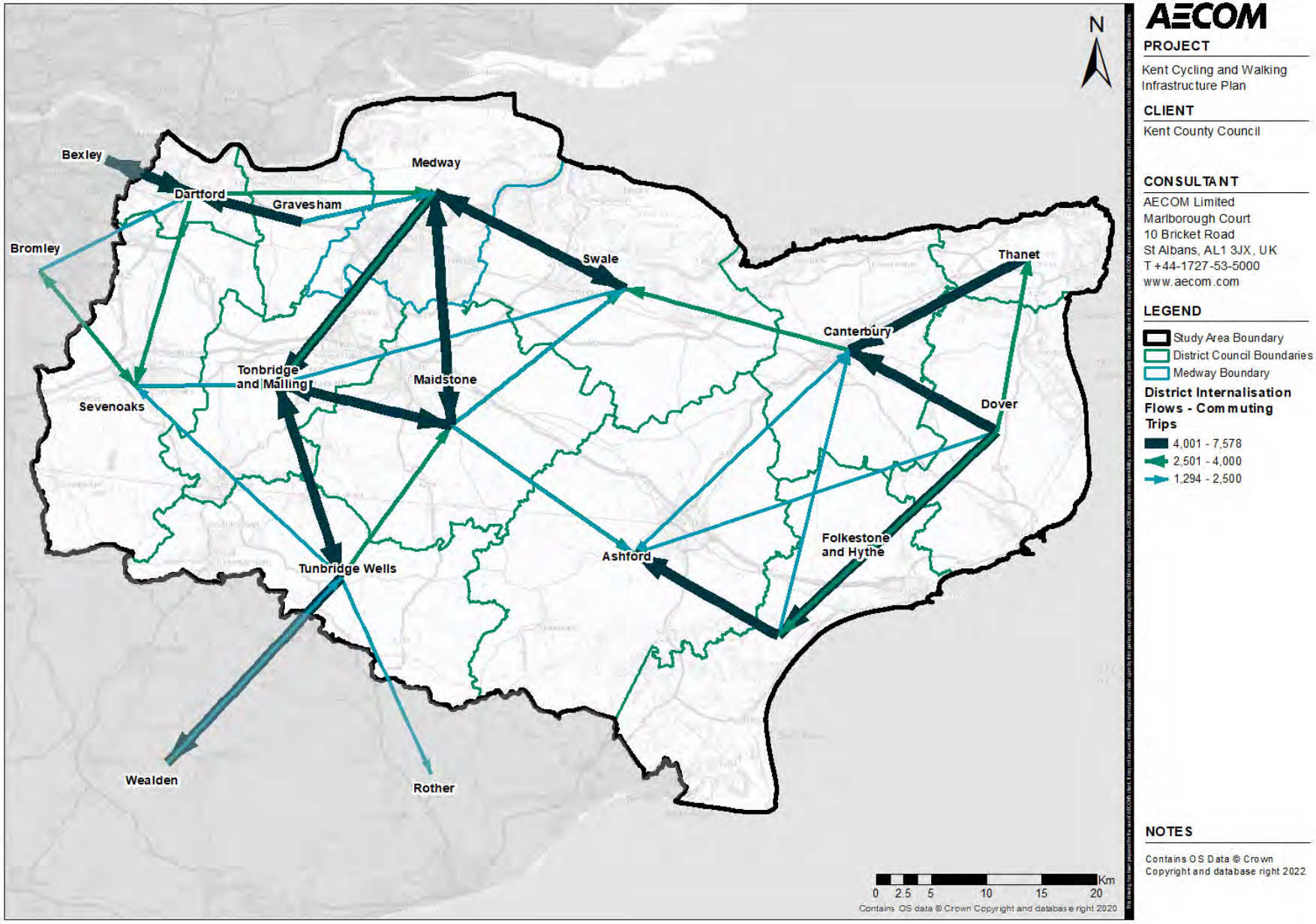

Figure 2-16 Origin and Destination Travel Patterns

Travel to School

It is crucial that well-connected, safe and accessible active travel routes to schools are considered where possible in order to encourage mode shift to and from schools. The location of schools and the pupils' numbers of each school can be seen in Figure 2-17.

Figure 2-18 also illustrates walking distances from schools and the existing cycle network to indicate the limited cycling provision in and around the schools in Maidstone.

Schools in the centre of Maidstone have the highest number of pupils, along with the Cornwallis Academy near Coxheath. These areas do have better cycle lane provision than the rest of the district, owing to their larger population density.

Notably, the cycle route between Coxheath and Maidstone does not extend to all of the way to Coxheath, nor the Cornwallis Academy.

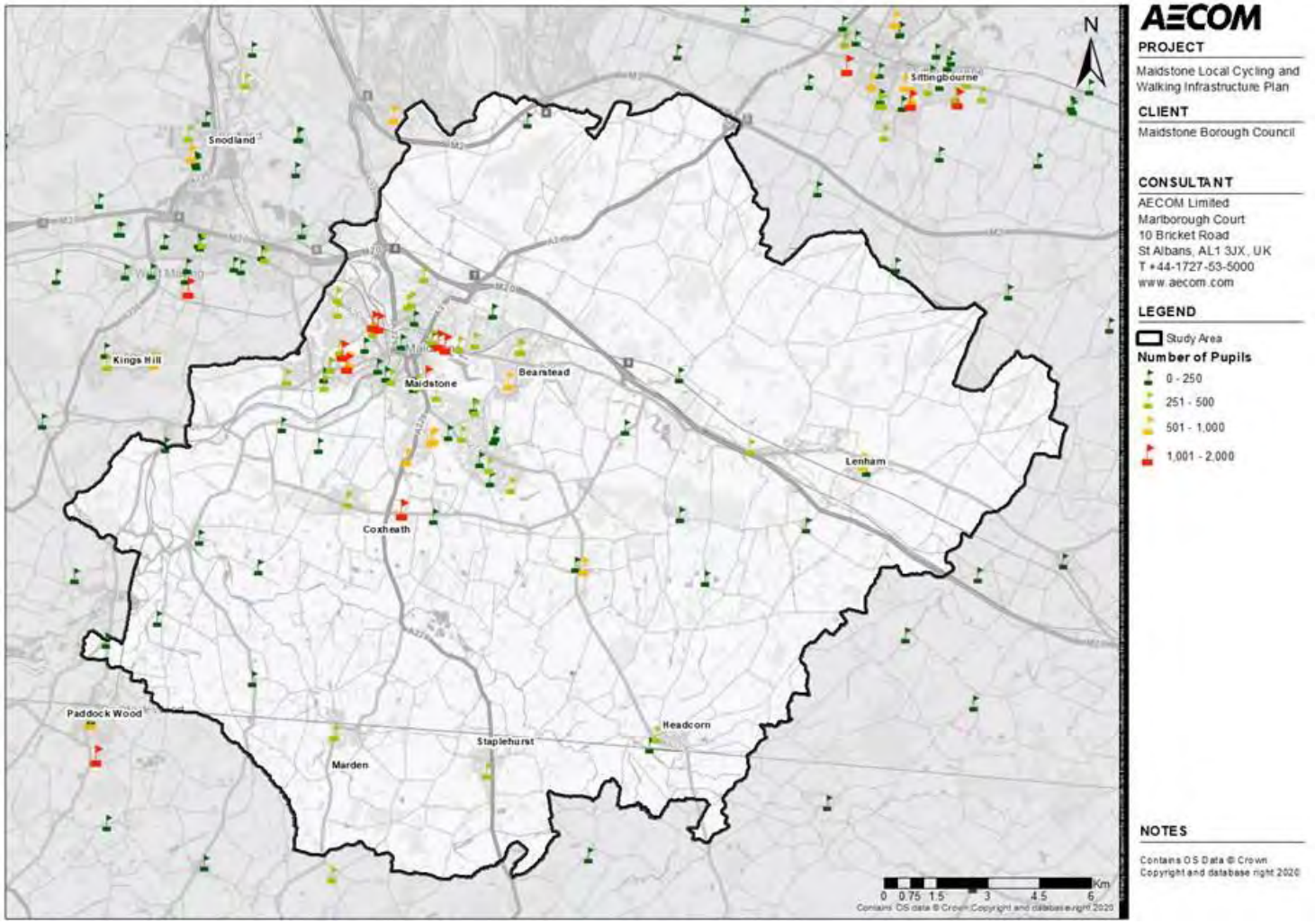

Figure 2-17 Education Sites with Existing Cycle Network

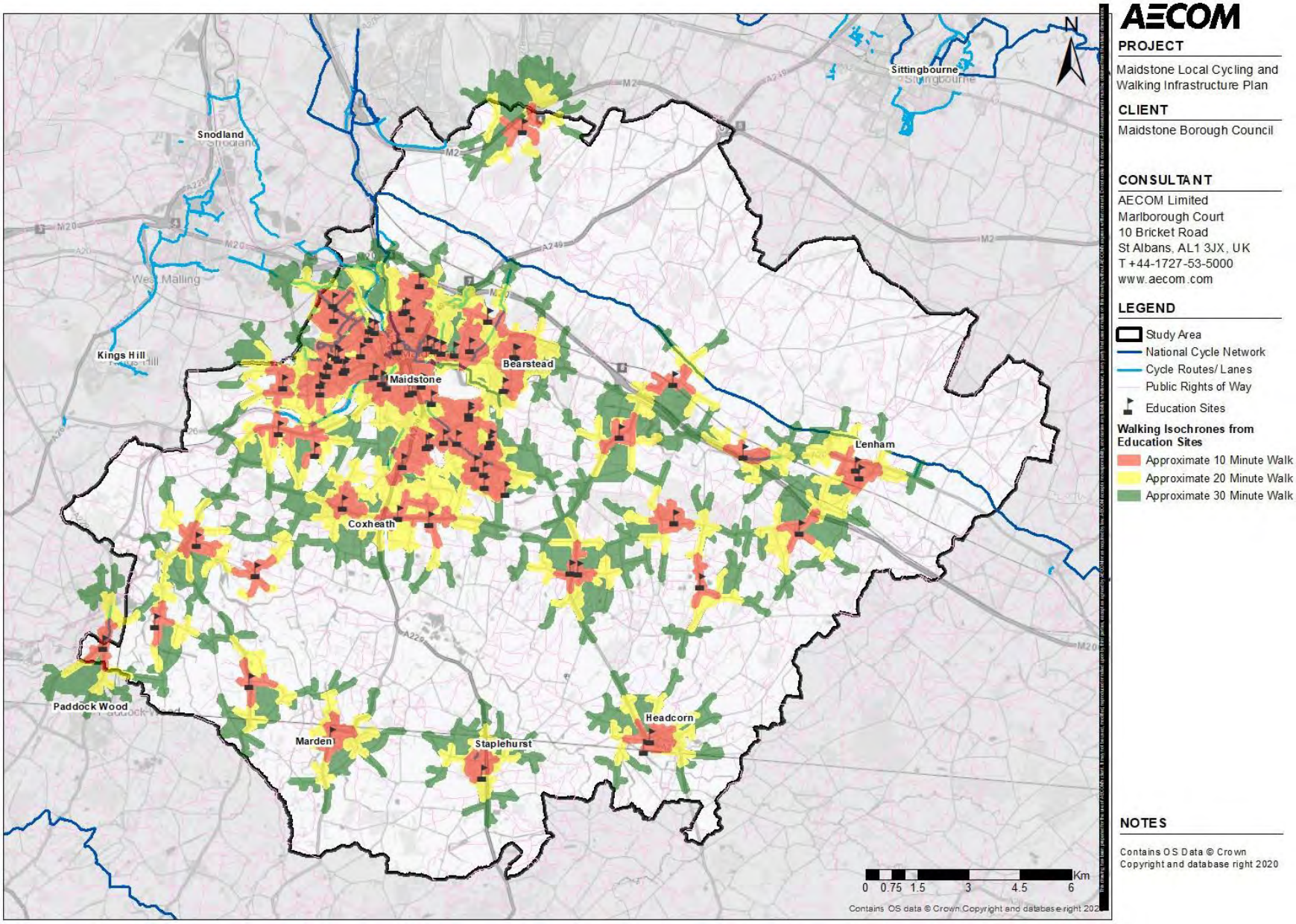

Figure 2-18: Walking Distances from Maidstone Education Sites

Perceptions of Existing Facilities

'Widen my Path' information was used to understand the perception of walking and cycling facilities across Maidstone. 'Widen my Path' is an online open data portal through which one can leave feedback on the walking and cycling infrastructure.

As Figure 2-19 illustrates, almost all of the 'Widen my Path' comments were inputted in and around Maidstone town. Of the 20 comments left in Maidstone town, 13 of these were on or at a junction with an A road.

Comments are classified into three categories: pavement, traffic filter and cycleways. 17 comments were received in relation to cycleways, tracks (creating space on roads and junctions, segregated from vehicles), and 3 in relation to pavements.

Comments can also be 'liked' or agreed with by other people. The most popular comment advocates for a gyratory safe cycle route around the town centre that links some of the radial cycle routes in Maidstone. The other popular comments are to widen and improved shared cycleways along the A249 and the A229 into Maidstone town centre.

These comments have been considered at the stage of developing the improvements for the proposed routes.

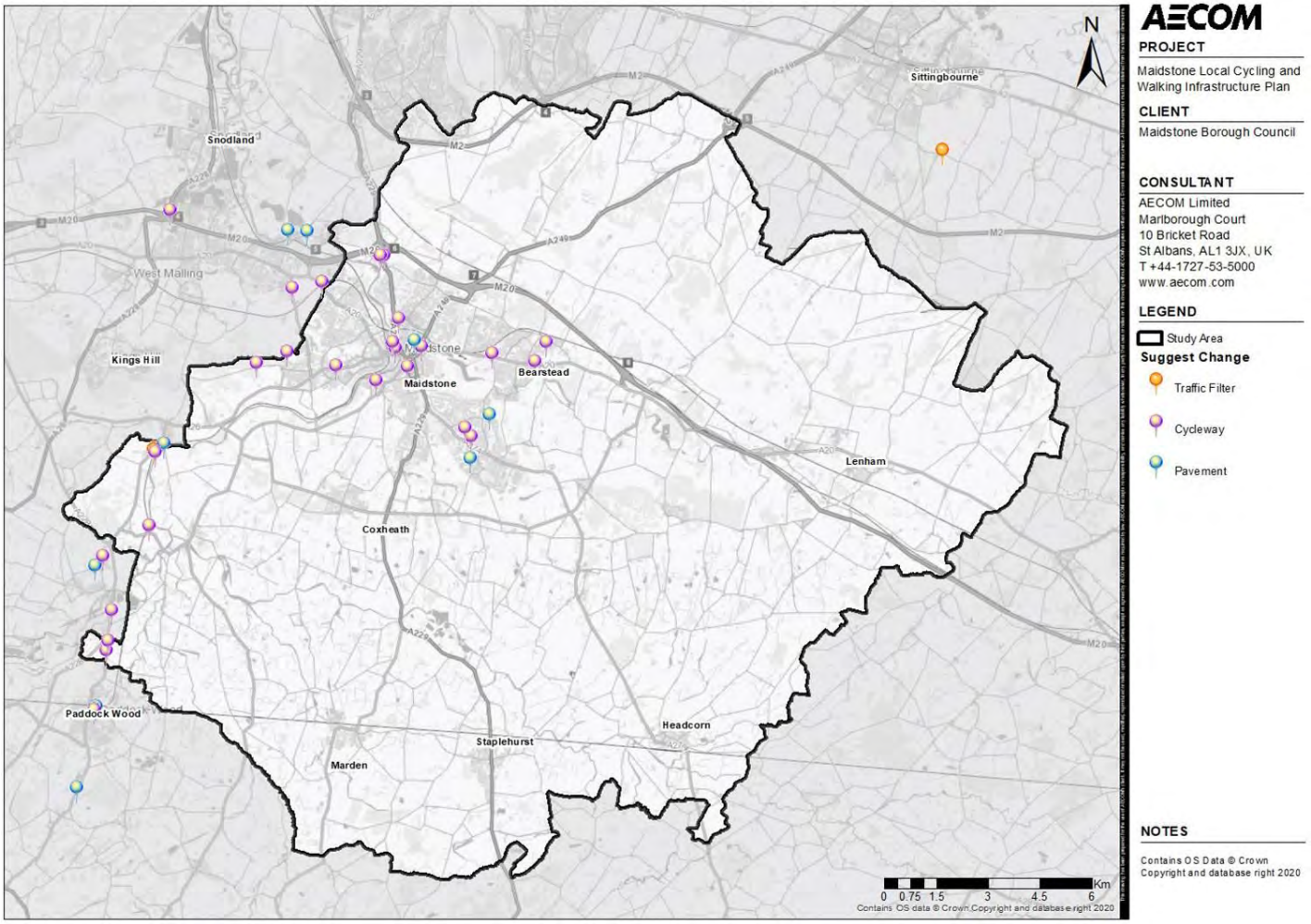

Figure 2-19 Location of 'Widen my Path' Comments Across Maidstone

Active Travel Flows and Demand

Strava Metro Data

Strava Metro data has been obtained to identify key origin and destination patterns for active travel across Maidstone. The data is from GPS information that is available when users track their physical activity on Strava application. It is then aggregated and displayed as origins and destinations.

It is worth noting that this sample size is potentially relatively small. Exercise trips or longer distance commuting journeys are more likely to be recorded on Strava than general utility and day-today journeys, therefore this analysis should be used in conjunction with other active travel demand data to indicate flows across Maidstone.

Figure 2-20 highlights the most frequent routings of cyclists across Maidstone. STRAVA Heatmap does not provide actual user counts and should therefore only be used as an indicative visual tool. It shows 'heat', built by the number of active travel journeys which have been recorded on different routes.

The flows demonstrate that while there is significant cycle activity within urban areas, there are also significant flows along inter-urban routings. There are high flows of cycle trips recorded between Maidstone and Ashford, the general route of NCN 17, as well as high flows between the villages in the south of the Borough, like Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn.

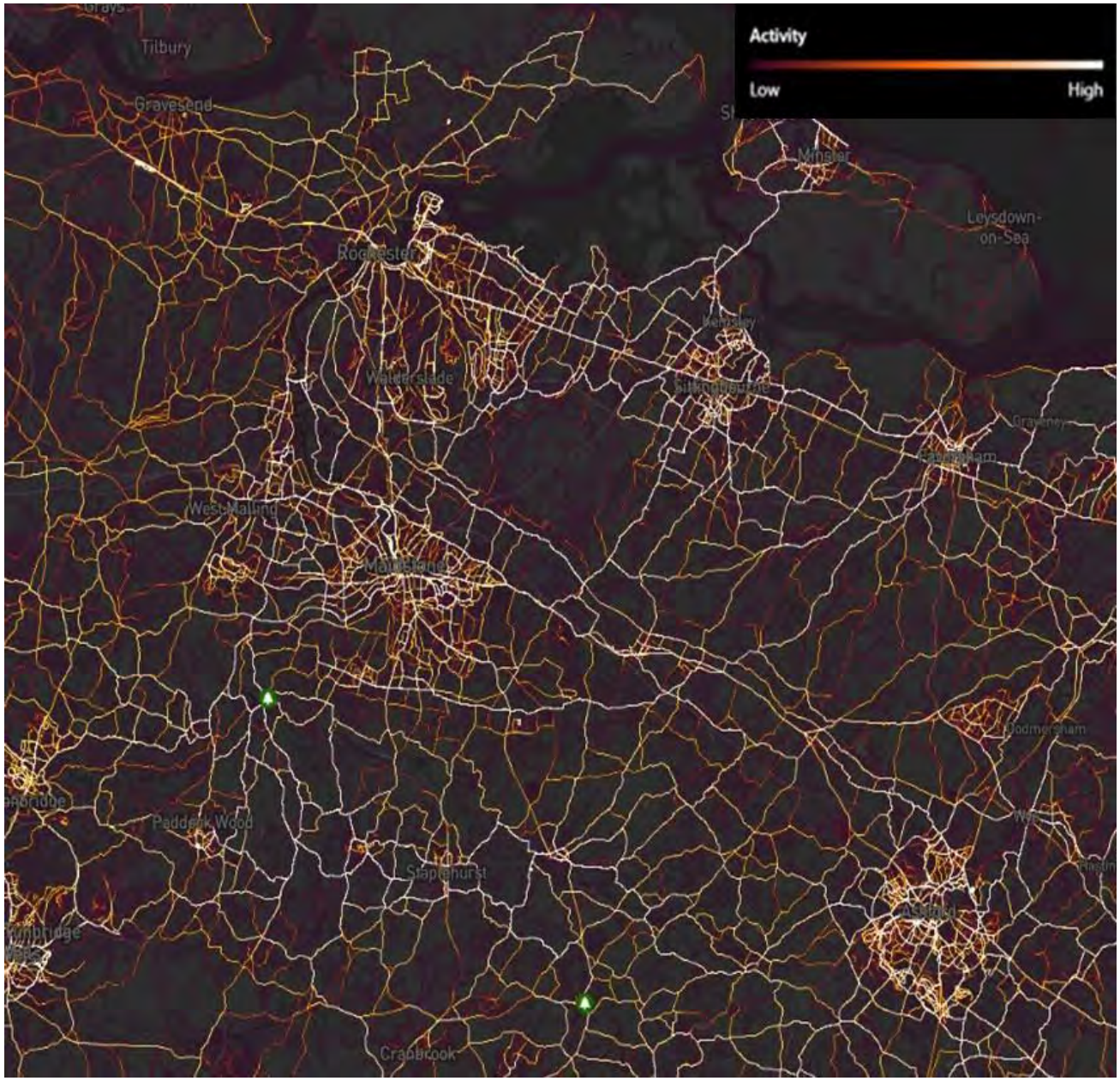

Figure 2-20 Strava Global Heatmap Rides (Cycle Flows) in Maidstone

Propensity to Cycle Tool

The Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) [19] is a Department for Transport funded tool which uses origin-destination data to explore and map cycling levels of both existing and potential future commuters based on a number of scenarios. The two scenarios used within this analysis are the following:

- The Census 2011 scenario: demonstrates the baseline cycle flows based on the 2011 Census
- The 'Go-Dutch' scenario: demonstrates what could happen if areas had investment to build the same infrastructure and cycling culture equivalent to the Netherlands.

The PCT results are person-based, rather than trip-based and therefore represent the numbers of people commuting, based on their typical main mode of travel.

Figure 2-21 and Figure 2-22 illustrate the cycle flows based on the three above-mentioned scenarios.

The Census 2011 scenario shows relatively low levels of cycling throughout Maidstone district, even in the areas with higher population densities. There are several routes within Maidstone that have 2-6 users, and as well as a north-south route into Marden.

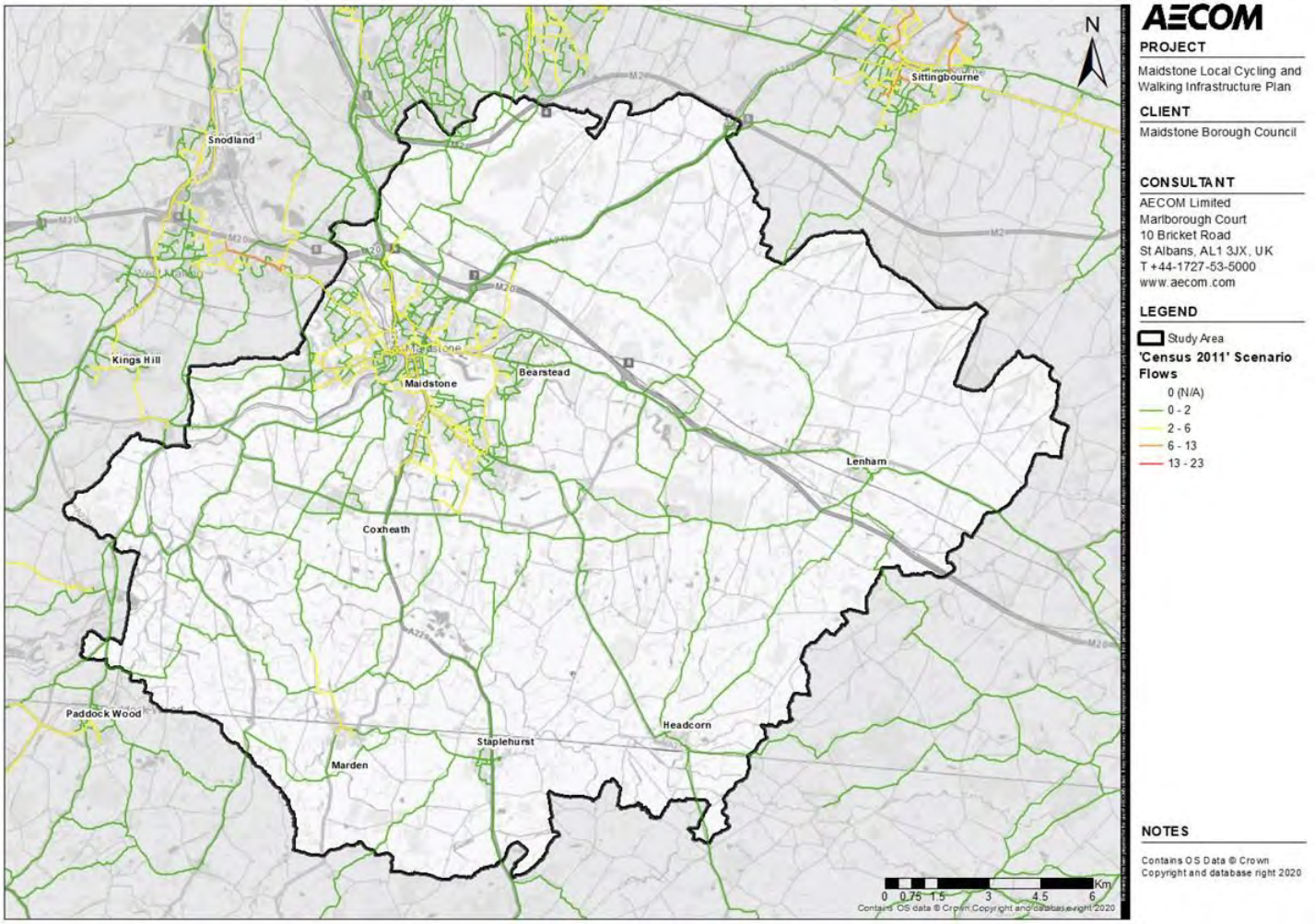

Figure 2-21 PCT Tool: Census 2011 Scenario

[19] Propensity to Cycle Tool

In the Go Dutch scenario, there are rural and urban areas which would be expected to experience significant uplift in cycle flows. These are highest on the Maidstone north-south spine route along the A274 and the A229, and the north-south Marden route, where flows could reach highs of 80 cyclists.

The suburbs of Maidstone, both on radial and gyratory routes, could experience flows of between 16 and 31 cyclists. Similar flows would also be seen in Staplehurst and on the link between Harrietsham and Lenham.

A limitation of the PCT is its focus on commuting and school trips, therefore the existing and future routes are concentrated around key employment and education sites. The PCT results were used alongside an analysis of non-commuting and leisure trips to enable the development of a cycle network that also includes leisure and recreation trips.

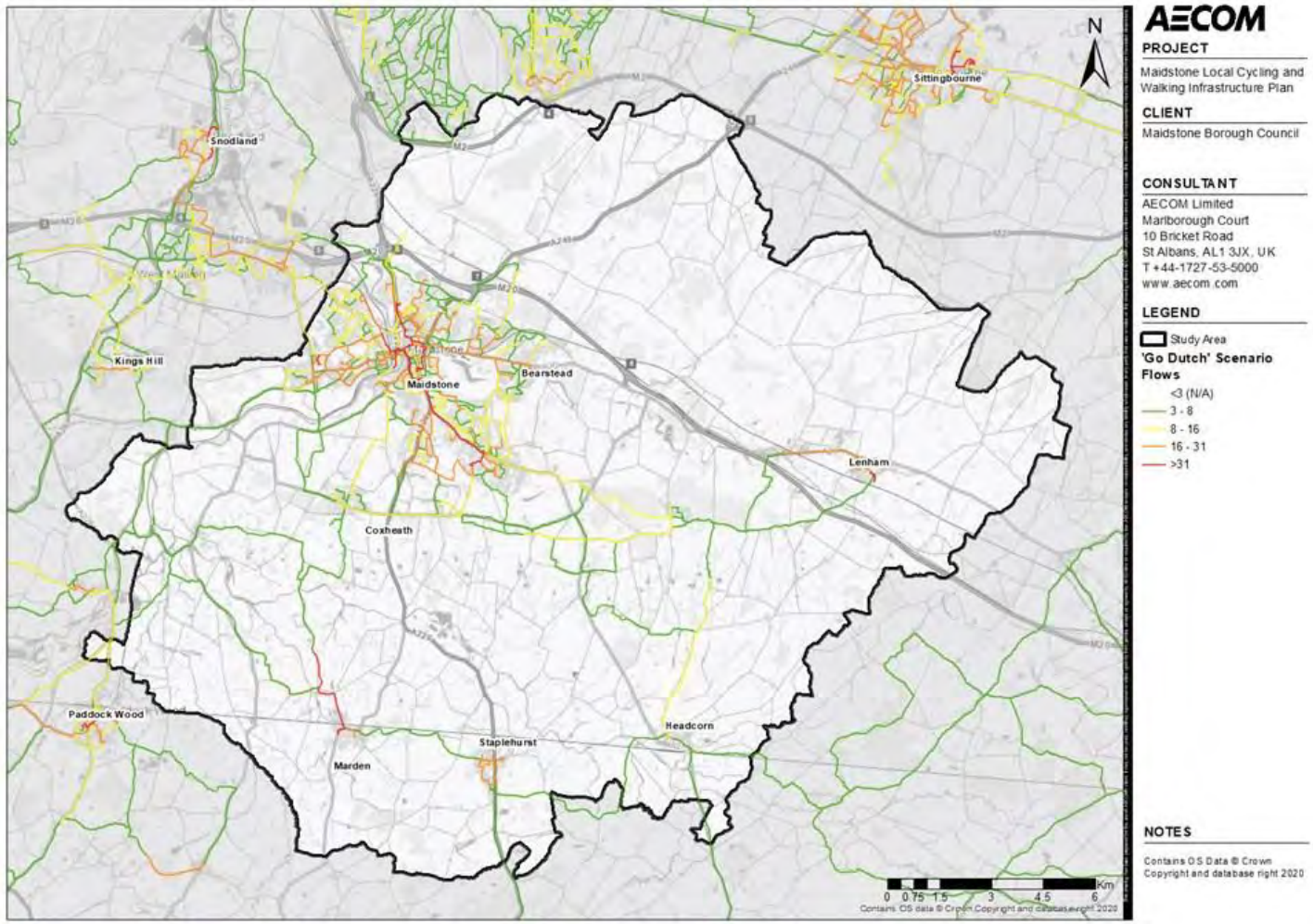

Figure 2-22 PCT Tool: Go Dutch Scenario

Physical Constraints and Severance Features

Topography

The topography (illustrated as elevation) in Maidstone can be seen in Figure 2-23. Flood zones are also depicted on the map. Flood Zone 2 represents areas with a medium probability of flooding, while Flood Zone 3 represents areas with a high probability of flooding.

The topography across Maidstone is extremely varied, with high north-east elevation to the north of Maidstone which forms part of the North Downs. Maidstone town traces the River Medway and is enclosed by smaller hills upon which the settlement of Coxheath is perched. The south of Maidstone district is lower and flatter, with Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn all lying on the edge of various Flood Zone 2 areas.

Topography, or the physical landscape of an area, can significantly affect people's propensity to cycle and walk. Additionally physical constraints and severance can impact the feasibility of constructing new infrastructure.

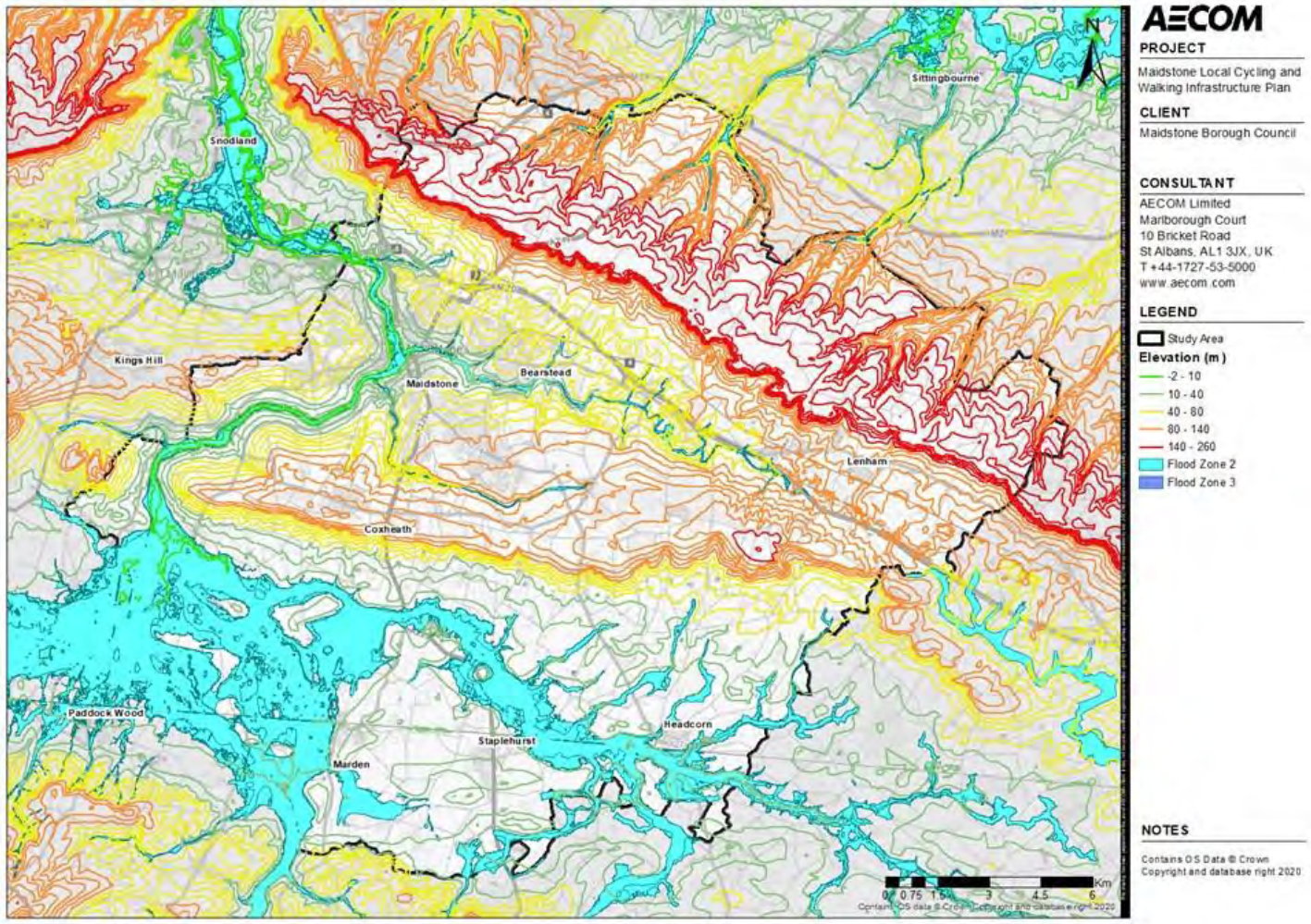

Figure 2-23 Topography Across Maidstone

Air Quality

The below data discusses the location and status of AQMAs across the LCWIP study area, as well as Borough-wide initiatives and plans to improve air quality. The average annual concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) in the air is measured in micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$). Concentrations above 40 $\mu g/m^3$ are considered an exceedance of the annual mean NO_2 as set out in the objectives of the National Air Quality Strategy [20]. In response to this, local authorities have identified Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

These are areas for which the local authority is developing an Air Quality Action Plan to improve air quality and reduce pollution levels within a designated area. The AQMAs across Maidstone can be seen in Figure 2-24.

Maidstone Borough Council has declared three AQMAs at the following locations [21]:

- AQMA 1: Maidstone Town An area encompassing the entire Maidstone conurbation including the location previously designated as the separate M20 AQMA;
- AQMA 2: Maidstone Borough Air Quality Management Area The area follows the carriageways of the main roads passing through the Borough, including the M20, A229, A20, A26, A249, and A274. ; and
- AQMA 3: Upper Stone Street between Wrens Cross and Old Tovil

Table 2-4 NO2 concentrations at AQMAs across Maidstone (December 2023)

AQMA	Date Declared	Date Revoked	Pollutants
AQMA 1 - Maidstone Town	01/08/2008	29/05/2018	Particulate Matter PM_{10}, Nitrogen dioxide NO_2
AQMA 2 – Maidstone Borough	29/05/2018	08/12/2022	Nitrogen dioxide NO_2
AQMA 3 – Upper Stone Street	08/12/2022	-	Nitrogen dioxide NO_2

More information on the AQMAs across Maidstone Borough Council can be seen in Table 2-4.

In accordance with DEFRA guidance, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO_2 concentrations being lower than 36 $\mu g/m^3$ – within 10% of the annual mean NO_2 objective.

As per DEFRA guidance, AQMAs 1 and 2 were revoked in 2018 and 2022, whereas ongoing monitoring for AQMA 3 is required as it has been in place for two years so have not seen three consecutive years of annual mean NO_2 concentrations being lower than 36 $\mu g/m^3$.

Maidstone Borough Council has implemented the Clean Air for Schools initiative to raise awareness of air quality and pollution with primary schools across the Borough [22]. The Council also publishes Annual AQ status reports as well as the overarching Low Emission Strategy (2017) which details the actions taken to improve air quality and reduce emissions [23]. Since transport is the main cause of the pollution across Maidstone Borough, the key focus is on encouraging modal shift to active modes in order to reduce NO_2 emissions and reduce vehicle traffic. The Low Emission Strategy is designed to compliment the actions of the standalone cycling and walking strategy to ensure cohesion between the two initiatives.

[20] The air quality strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland: Volume 1

[21] Maidstone Borough Council Local Authority Details

[22] Clean Air for Schools

[23] Low Emission Strategy, 2017

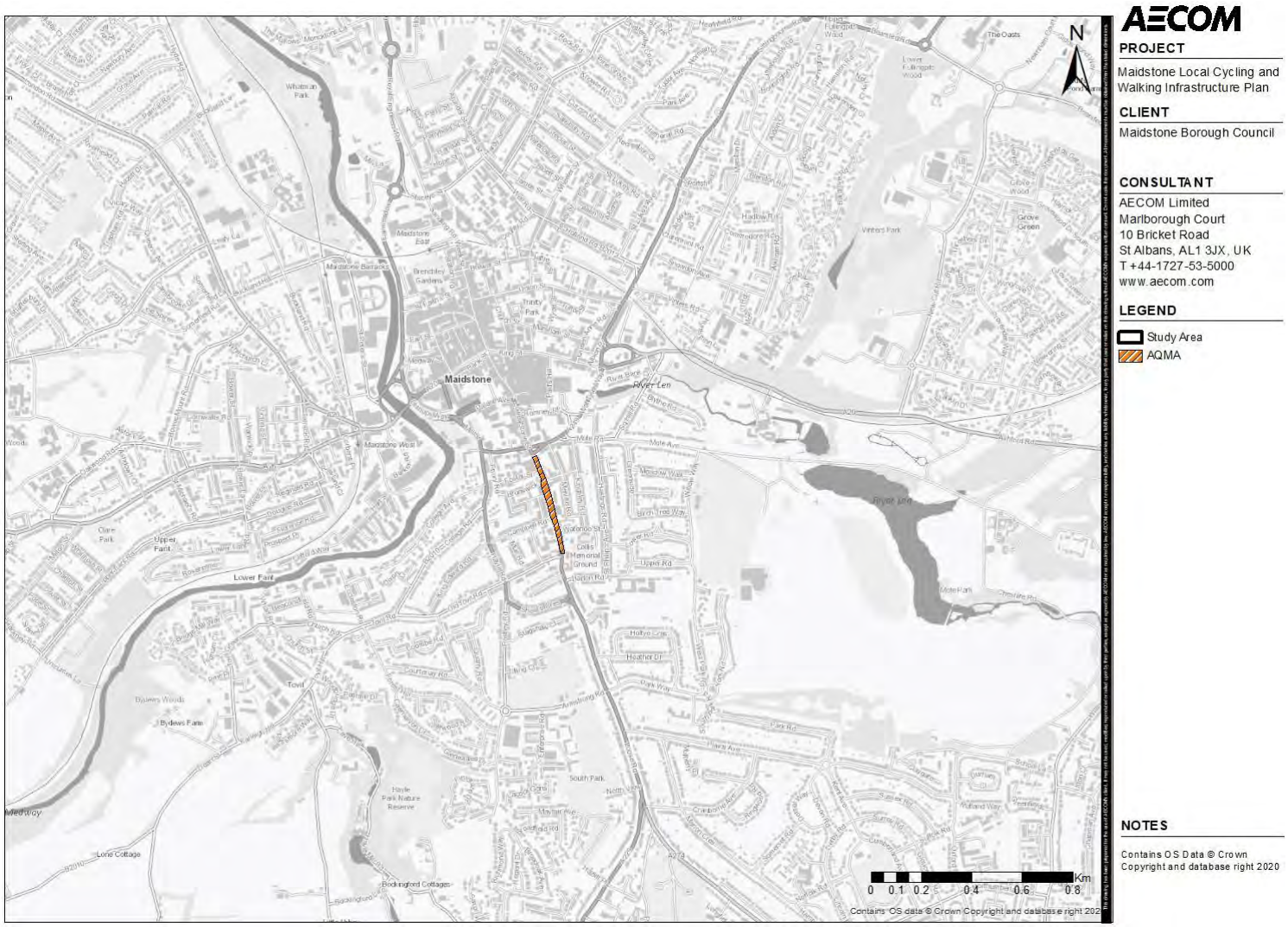

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Figure 2-24 AQMAs Across Maidstone

Summary

In **Stage 2** of this report the area context was outlined in terms of its demographics, existing and future transport network, collisions, trip generators and trip patterns.

Maidstone comprises a mix of urban and rural areas, with significant concentrations of population and employment in Maidstone Town Centre. Car ownership is generally high in the more rural areas of the district, while urban areas exhibit relatively low levels.

Certain parts of Maidstone experience some of the highest deprivation levels in the country, scoring in the lowest decile on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). One area is classified as a "Left-Behind Neighbourhood."

Education facilities, leisure options, and smaller medical care sites are distributed across the district, but shopping, leisure, and health facilities are primarily concentrated in urban areas.

Future housing, employment, and mixed-use developments are planned throughout the borough, with significant growth areas outside Maidstone Town Centre, notably the Lidsing Garden Development and Heathlands Garden Community.

The current active travel and public transport network is limited and fragmented, particularly beyond NCN Route 17, which runs east-west across the borough. The Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network largely aligns with areas of high population and employment density, but it is extremely fragmented, and its condition varies.

The cycle network includes long-distance National Cycle Network routes and local cycle routes and lanes. Although the local network is more developed in urban areas, it remains limited and fragmented, with significant variations in quality.

There is a dense network of planned and proposed routes that constitute the Walking and Cycling Assessment routes and the Walking and Cycling Strategy Actions.

Regarding the rail network, numerous rail stations across the borough connect Maidstone with London and the rural service areas to the south. Maidstone is relatively wellconnected via the highway network, with the M20 linking the district to the rest of the county and London.

Collision data indicates that incidents involving cyclists and pedestrians are more frequent on strategic roads, particularly the A229, and also occur in urban centers and on rural roads.

Active travel patterns in Maidstone have been analyzed using the PCT tool and STRAVA data. There are significant flows of walking and cycling within urban areas, but PCT data suggests limited inter-urban cycle trips for commuting. STRAVA data indicates greater levels of cycling on inter-urban routes for leisure purposes. Future PCT scenario flows suggest potential for a modal shift in commuting trips of all lengths.

The following Network Planning for Cycling **(Stage 3)** and Walking **(Stage 4)** sections describe how active travel networks were developed, through an iterative process that considered current and future trip generators, future development and planned active travel schemes, as well as the local knowledge of key stakeholders.

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03

Stage 3: Network Planning for Cycling

Stage 3: Network Planning for Cycling

Introduction

The evidence presented in the previous Stages informed the identification of potential cycling infrastructure improvements and key cycle routes.

Technical guidance on the identification of cycling routes is published by the DfT. Figure 31 shows an overview of the process, as shown in the LCWIP Guidance. Route selection was an iterative process, which built on

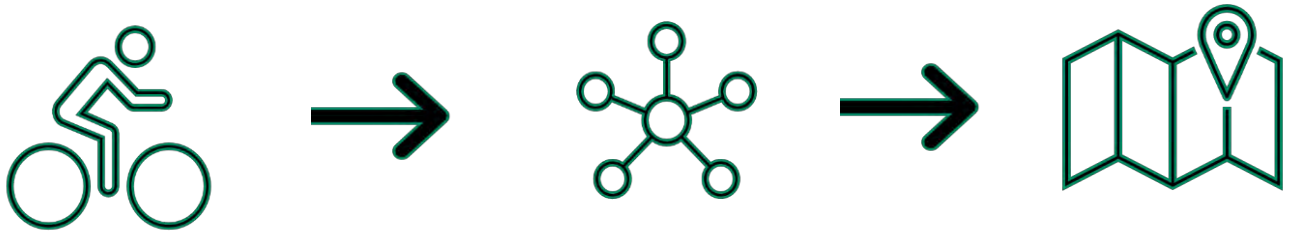


Figure 3-1: Summary of Cycling Network Generation Stages

an evidence base of current and future trip generators, cycling travel patterns and the existing and planned active travel network.

This section presents the identification of the initial routes and the outcome of the stakeholder engagement that contributed to considering and accommodating local daily travel needs, as well as defining the final network.

Key Origins and Destinations

To identify the potential demand across the proposed cycling network, key origin and destination points across Maidstone were mapped. This was based on the data that was collected during the Information Gathering stage (Stage 2), specifically utilising the location of key trip generators and population and employment densities. Some examples of significant trip generators can be found in Table 3-1.

Concentrations of origin and destination points in locations of high population and employment density were grouped as clusters. Key settlements outside the Maidstone border were also considered in the analysis to recognise the significance of cross-border trips.

Table 3-1: Key Examples of Significant Trip Generators

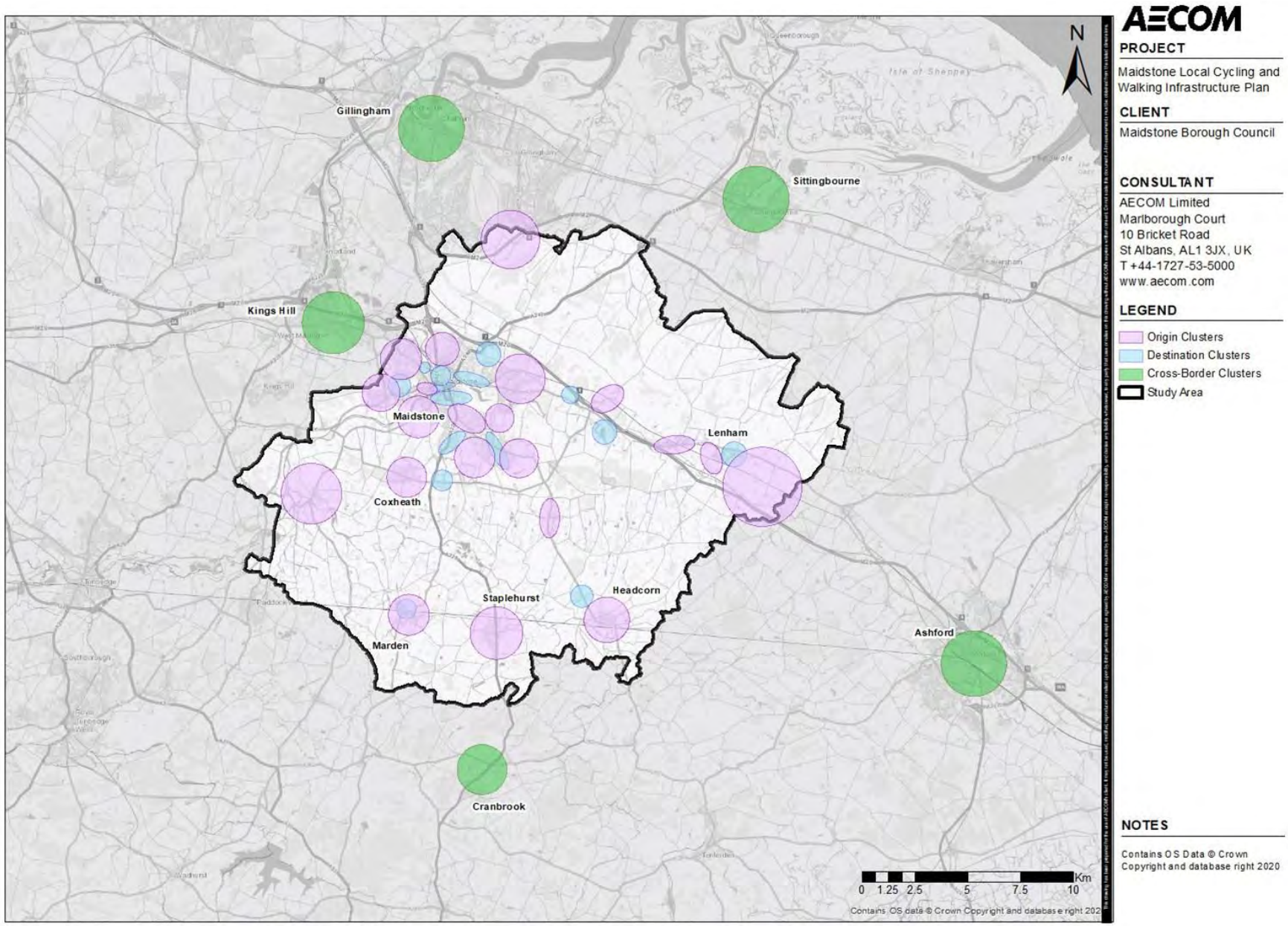
Trip Generators	
Rail Stations	Education Facilities (Nursery, Primary, Secondary, College, University)
Bus Stops	Healthcare Sites (Hospital, Medical Care Accommodation)
Population Centre	Cultural Facility (Museum, Library)
Residential Development Site	Sports or Exercise Facility
Employment Development Site	Religious Building
Mixed-Use Development Site	Retail Site
Tourist Attractions	

It is important to highlight that trip origins and destinations that were not considered large enough to generate or attract significant cycling flows were not included in the origin and destination clusters. Trip origins and destinations which were excluded were those which were isolated and comparatively small in terms of their population and employment density.

For the purpose of this report origin clusters are defined as areas where the majority of trips would originate, while destination clusters are those areas where the majority of trips would terminate. Where there was a combination of origin and destination purpose, the cluster was categorised according to the highest proportion of either origin or destination points within the cluster.

It was taken into consideration that points such as train stations could be considered as both an origin and a destination, however, for the purposes of this analysis they were categorised as destinations.

Figure 3-2 below illustrates the identified origin and destination clusters within Maidstone and the cross-border clusters outside Maidstone which were identified as part of the KCWIP. A list of the identified origin and destination clusters can be seen in Appendix B.



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- Origin Clusters
- Destination Clusters
- Cross-Border Clusters
- Study Area

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Figure 3-2: Trip Origin and Destination Clusters

Desire Lines

Desire lines in this context are indicative links between origin and destination clusters that reflect the level of demand to travel between two locations. The indicated desire lines do not link to existing infrastructure, nor do they reflect the proposed routes. The process of identifying and classifying desire lines, following the clustering of key origin and destination points, is described in this section.

Identification

The identification of desire lines was an iterative process using the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT), analysis of origin and destination points, existing LCWIP routes and information collected in Stage 2 of the LCWIP.

Additional cross-border desire lines which were identified as significant to the countywide network as part of the KCWIP analysis were also included in the desire line identification. This is because there is a number of significant settlements which either represent significant current demand or potential future demand.

It was considered important to include these cross-border desire lines in this analysis to firstly uncover suppressed demand as a consequence of poor-cross border connectivity and secondly to ensure there is a balance of longer and shorter routes. The longer routes would be able to connect smaller, rural towns which alone are not significant trip attractors to the settlements which the desire lines connect. The identified desire lines can be seen in Figure 3-3.

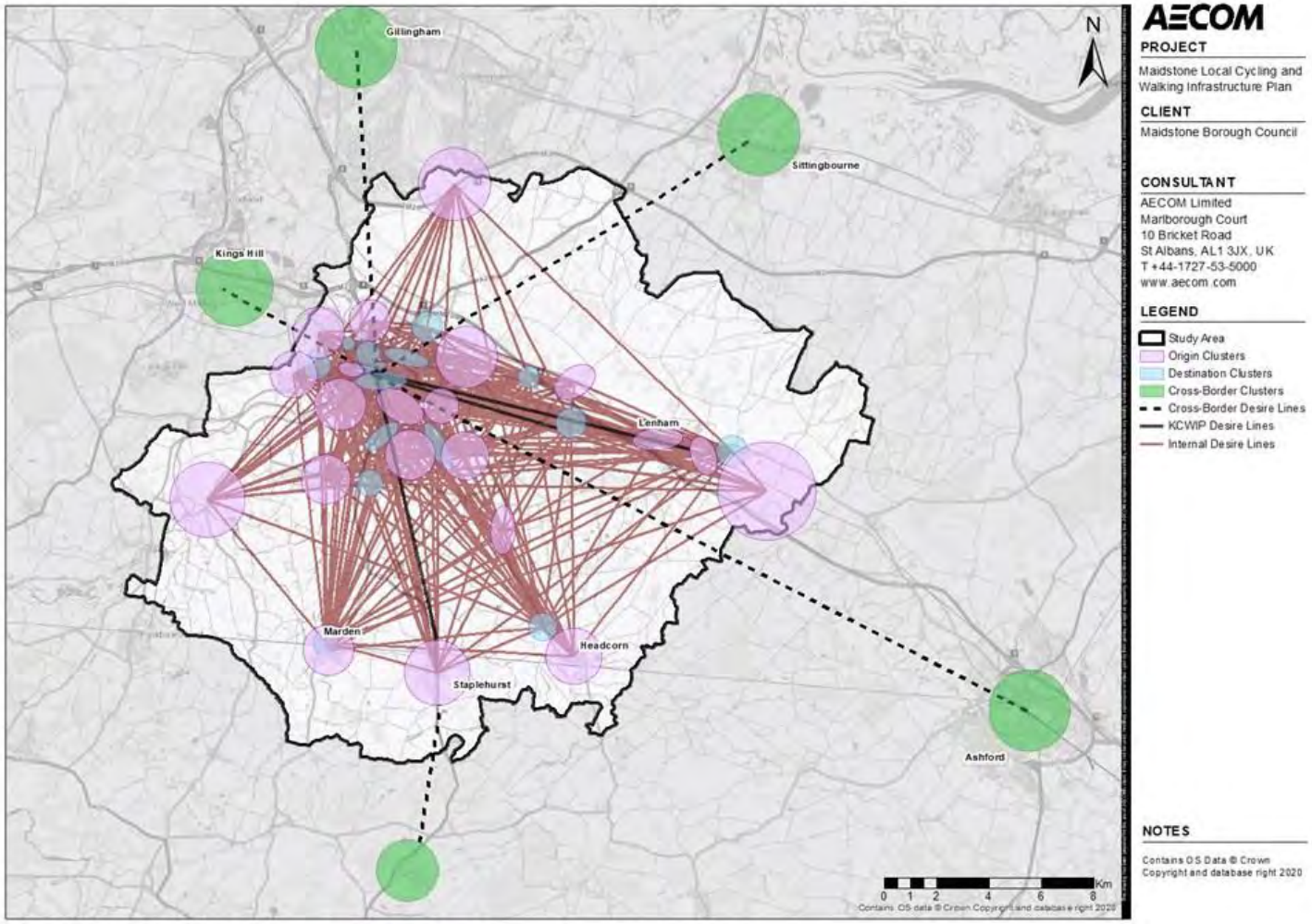


Figure 3-3: Identified Desire Lines

Classification

Methodology

The relative importance of each desire line to the wider network needs to be understood in order to assess the number of cyclists they will serve in the future if taken forward. As per the DfT guidance, desire lines were classified as 'primary', 'secondary' and 'local', based on the following characteristics:

- **Primary:** High flows of cyclists are forecast along desire lines that link large residential areas to trip attractors such as a town or city centre.
- **Secondary:** Medium flows of cyclists are forecast along desire lines that link to trip attractors such as schools, colleges, and employment sites
- **Local:** Lower flows of cyclists are forecast along desire lines that cater for local cycle trips, often providing links to primary or secondary desire lines.

As can be seen from the above desire line classifications from the DfT LCWIP guidance, the process of classifying desire lines is deeply rooted in demand. Whilst demand is an important facet of desire lines, the geographic scope and objectives of this LCWIP required the consideration of other factors to ensure an even balance between urban and rural areas as well as focusing on connecting smaller towns into larger settlements. Table 3-2 shows the number of desire lines which were taken forward for classification.

Classified Desire Lines

Primary	Secondary	Local	**Total**
49	166	100	**315**

Table 3-2: Desire Lines for Consideration

Table 3-2 also shows the criteria used to classify desire lines to meet the DfT guidance mentioned previously.

Classification example

Each desire line was evaluated against specific criteria—network gap, PCT flow, origin score, and attractor score—receiving a score between 0 and 3 for each criterion. These criteria are detailed in Table 3-3. Table 3-4 provides examples of two desire lines classified as primary and local: the Shepway to Maidstone Town Centre (North) desire line and the Marden to Lenham Town Centre desire line.

For the anticipated flows criterion, the highest PCT value along this desire line was greater than 19, resulting in a score of 'Medium' (2). The network gap criterion assessed whether this desire line fills a network gap, which is crucial for ensuring an urban/rural balance and a cohesive proposed cycling network. It scored 2 for filling a network gap since 12.5% to 50% of the route is covered by the existing or proposed cycling network. The PCT and network gap scores were combined to yield an overall flow score of 5.

Next, the origin cluster was assessed based on its population density and the presence of planned or committed housing developments. The origin cluster of this desire line had a population density of less than 2,747, scoring 'Low' (1). Additionally, it had only a small area of planned development (436 sqm), resulting in another 'Low' score (1) for this criterion. Thus, an overall origin score of 1 was assigned to this desire line's origin cluster.

The destination cluster was assessed based on its employment density and the presence of planned or committed employment sites. This desire line had an employment density of less than 24, scoring 'Low' (1), and it had no employment site, also scoring 'Low' (1).

Consequently, an overall destination score of 1 was assigned to the destination cluster. The origin and destination scores were summed to generate an overall origin/ destination score of 2. Based on the scores for demand, origin, and destination clusters, an overall classification score of 10 was assigned to this desire line. This classification categorised it as a 'Local' desire line, as it fell within the lowest third of overall scores for all assessed desire lines.

Table 3-3: Desire Line Classification Criteria

#	Criteria	Description
1	Anticipated Flows	**Existing and future cycling demand:** existing and future PCT flows were assessed along each desire line. A score of 0 (lowest demand) to 3 (highest demand) was assigned using Current Cycle Demand and Go Dutch scenarios and the higher of the two scores was taken forward
2		**Filling network gaps**: The desire line is evaluated based on its proximity to the existing or planned/proposed network: High (3): More than 50% of the route is within 150m of the existing or proposed network. Medium: (2) Between 12.5% and 25% of the route is within 150m of the National Cycle Network (NCN). Low: (1) Less than 12.5% of the route is within 150m of the existing or proposed network.
3	Origin Size	**Population density:** population density was assessed separately for origin and destination cluster of each desire line. A score of 0 (lowest relative density) to 3 (highest relative density) was then assigned to each desire line.
4		**Supporting strategic growth:** the desire line was scored according to whether it passes within 200m of a small, medium or large housing growth site. A score of 0 (small) to 3 (large) was then assigned to each desire line.
5	Destination Size	**Employment density:** employment density was assessed separately for the origin and destination cluster of each desire line. A score of 0 (lowest relative density) to 3 (highest relative density) was then assigned to each desire line.
6		**Supporting strategic growth:** the desire line was scored according to whether it passes within 200m of a small, medium or large housing growth site. A score of 0 (small) to 3 (large) was then assigned to each desire line.

Table 3-4: Desire Line Classification Examples

Desire Lines			Anticipated Flows			OD Size										Classification	
						Origin					Destination						
Origin	Destination	Distance (km)	PCT Value (Go-Dutch scenario - Highest Value)	Network Gap	Overall Flow Score	People Per KM (PPKM)	Size (PPKM)	Site allocation (sqm)	Score of allocation	Origin score	Employees per Ha (EPH)	Size (EPH)	Site allocation (sqm)	Score of allocation	Attractor score	Overall OD size score	Overall Score	Classification
Marden	Lenham Town Centre	17.20	3	2	5	<2,747	Low	436	Small	1	<24	Low	0	Small	1	2	10	Local
Shepway	Maidstone Town Centre (North)	2.38	3	2	5	2,747 - 6,388	Medium	0	Small	1.5	>98	High	14000	Small	2	3.5	17.5	Primary

Classification Results

As shown in Figure 3-4, the outputs of the desire line classification process include clear primary desire lines between Marden and Maidstone, as well as between Maidstone and its suburbs.

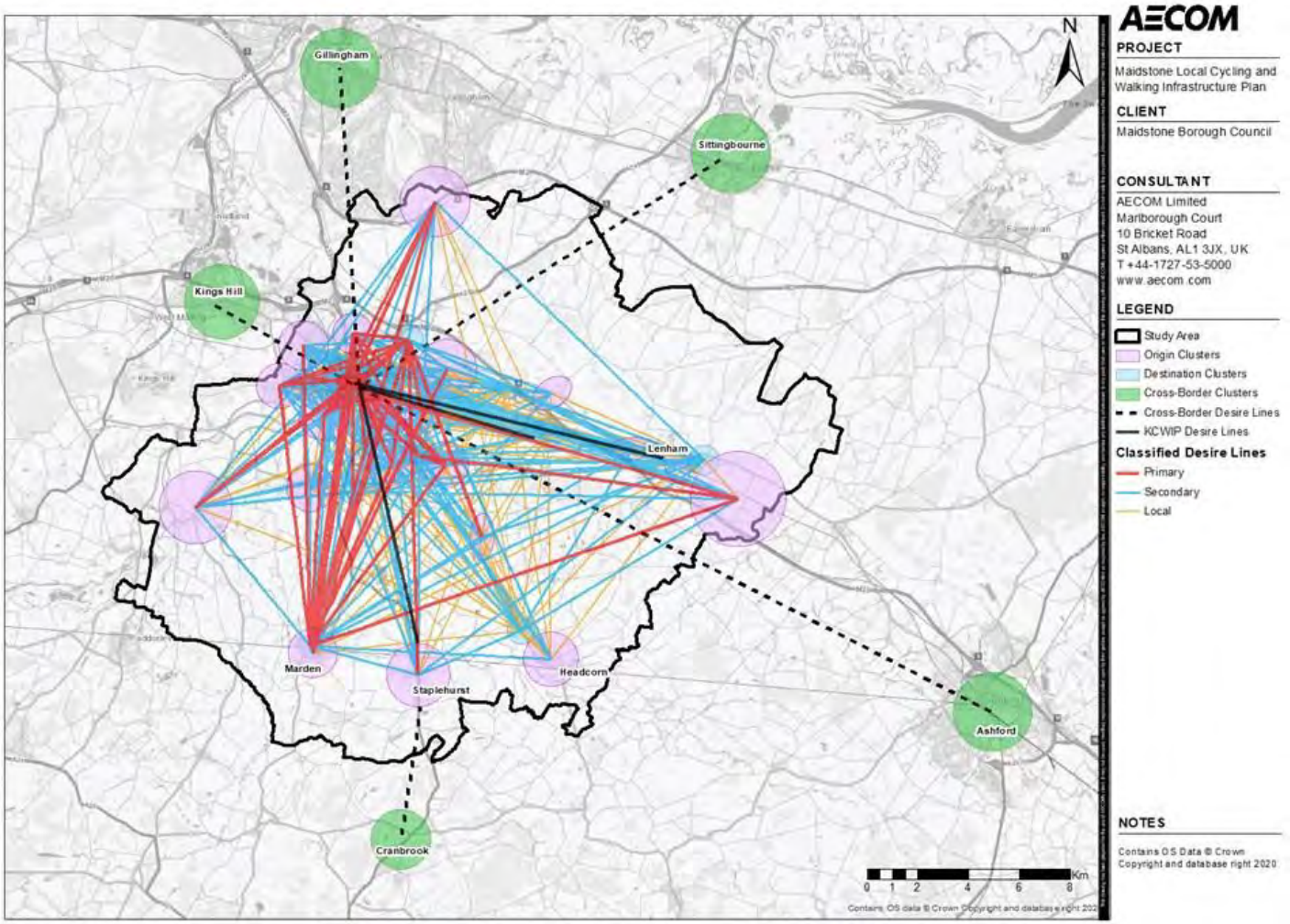


Figure 3-4: Classified Desire Lines

Desire Lines for Route Selection

The highest scoring desire lines were selected for further investigation: 49 primary desire lines were identified. These can be seen in Figure 3-5.

Due to budget and programme constraints, an additional sorting task was undertaken to reduce the number of primary desire lines to take forward for route selection. This task was carried out by merging desire lines which overlapped or those with very similar origins/ destinations. The shortlisted primary desire lines represent key movement corridors across the Borough, ensuring comprehensive coverage across the study area.

Desire lines categorised as secondary, or tertiary remain possible routes for investigation in the future, they simply received lower scores in comparison to the priority routes. The Maidstone LCWIP is an iterative, 10-year document and will undergo regular updates to align with progress towards its goals and objectives. Should MBC's priorities shift in line with local or national policies, or as progress is made towards identified priority desire lines, further consideration may be given to these desire lines.

This process identified 23 primary desire lines to be taken forward for route selection. This is comprised of 17 Borough-wide routes and 5 cross-border routes. The cross-border routes

Figure 3-5: Desire Lines for Route Selection

were those identified as part of the KCWIP, but were sifted out at either the desire line classification stage or route selection stage of the KCWIP. Only the Maidstone to Sittingbourne route was consulted on as part of the KCWIP public consultation and therefore was not taken to public consultation for the Maidstone LCWIP.

Identified Network Consulted on with Stakeholders

The identified network is shown in Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7 and the alignment of each route is described below. The solid lines in Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7 represent the priority alignment, whereas the dotted lines represent a potential alternative alignment.

The routes were developed from data analysis conducted up to this point, informed by various data sources, such as the existing active travel network and Google Maps data. They also aligned with the existing/ planned network.

C01– Marden to Kent Medical Campus: This route provides a north-south connection between Marden and Maidstone and its suburbs via Coxheath. It is almost exclusively on quieter roads, avoiding the A229.

C02– Yalding to Kent Medical Campus: This route connects Yalding to Maidstone and its suburbs, loosely following the river Medway and travelling through West and East Farleigh.

C03 – Staplehurst to Kent Medical Campus: This route provides a north-south connection between Staplehurst and Maidstone, with 2 routes into Maidstone centre; one via Shepway and one via Downswood and Bearsted. The route predominantly follows quieter roads, apart from a section near Staplehurst that is on the A229.

C04 – Sutton Valence to Kent Medical Campus: This route connects Sutton Valence to Bearsted (Kent Medical Campus), via Langley and Otham.

C05 – Barming to Kent Medical Campus: This route connects Barming Heath central Maidstone and Bearsted (Maidstone Medical Centre), with 2 route choices from Barming to Maidstone: a quieter route past Maidstone and Tunbridge NHS Trust Hospital, and one along the A26 near Oakwood Park Grammar School.

C06 – Barming to Marden: This route starts in Barming and joins up with C01 just south of Coxheath, heading down the quieter roads towards Marden.

C07 – Allington to Marden: This route starts in the north-east Maidstone suburb of Allington and traverses the A229 down to Marden, crossing the A229 once at Loose and then again near Rankin's Farm Airfield.

C08 – Tovil to Kent Medical Campus: This route skirts to the south of Maidstone town centre from Tovil to the Medical Campus mainly via quiet roads.

C09 – Tovil to North Shepway: This short link follows Old Tovil Road, with an alternative routing option via Courtenay Road and Forest Hill offered at the stakeholder engagement event.

C10 – Downswood to Kent Medical Campus: This route forms a gyratory connection between the Downswood suburb and Maidstone Medical Campus, with a signifi-cant section along the A20.

C11 – Penenden Heath to Cornwallis Academy: A school connector route from the northeast suburbs of Maidstone, passing through the east and south of Maidstone towards one of the largest schools in the area.

C12 – Penenden Heath to Newnham Court: A gyratory link between Penenden Heath and the large Shopping village at Newnham Court.

C13 – Shepway to Heathlands Garden Settlement: A route from southern suburbs of Maidstone to the new developments near Lenham, that runs somewhat parallel to NCN 17 but mainly to the south of the M20.

C14 – Bearsted to Loose: A gyratory connection between 2 outer suburbs of Maidstone town, linking Bearsted Station with Cornwallis Academy.

C15 – Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway: A link for the large new developments around Boughton Mount Farm to the south of Maidstone, where it can join up with the A274 and other proposed routes (C16).

C16 – Langley to Maidstone Town Centre: A link along the A274 for the large developments in Park Wood and Langley to Maidstone.

C17 – Marden to Langley: A long, crosscounty link from the southern settlements Marden and Staplehurst to the south-eastern outer suburb of Maidstone where it can link up with other routes, such as C16.

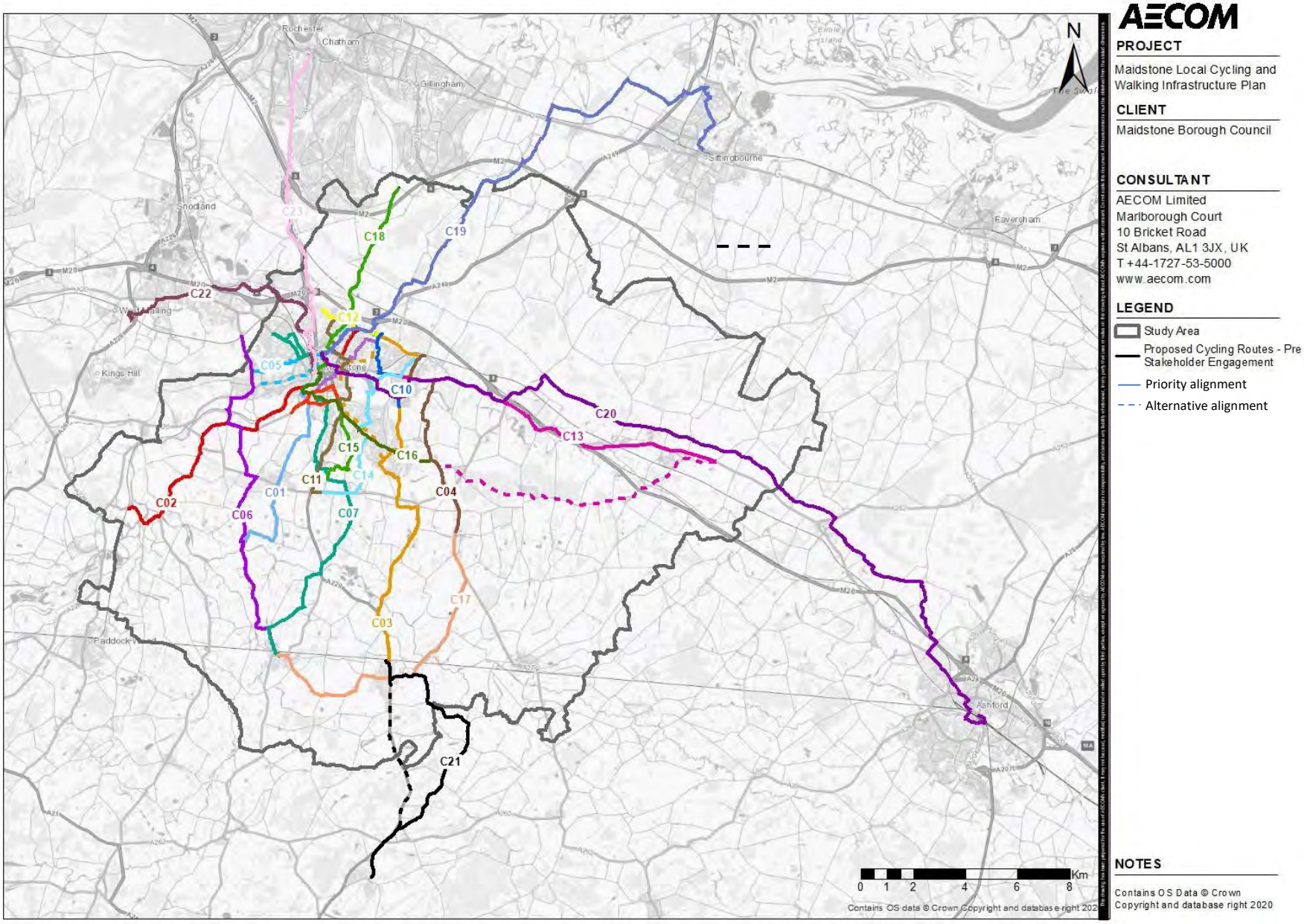
C18 – Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre: A route across the border into the Borough of Medway, connecting large committed developments in Lidsing across the M2 and the M20 to Maidstone town centre.

C19 – Maidstone to Sittingbourne: Another cross-border route from Sittingbourne to Maidstone town centre, which also provides connectivity over the M2 and M20.

C20 – Ashford to Maidstone: A route that follows the NCN 17 but with more direct links into Ashford and Maidstone town centres.

C21 – Staplehurst to Cranbrook: A crossborder route to the south of Maidstone district that provides an alternative, quieter route to the A229.

C22 – Maidstone to Chatham: An interurban connector between the large settlements of Maidstone and Chatham, that loosely follows the route of the busy and dangerous A229 but uses quieter roads.



AECOM

PROJECT

Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

CLIENT

Maidstone Borough Council

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- Proposed Cycling Routes - Pre Stakeholder Engagement
- Priority alignment
- Alternative alignment

NOTES

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Figure 3-6 Identified Cycling Network District-Wide

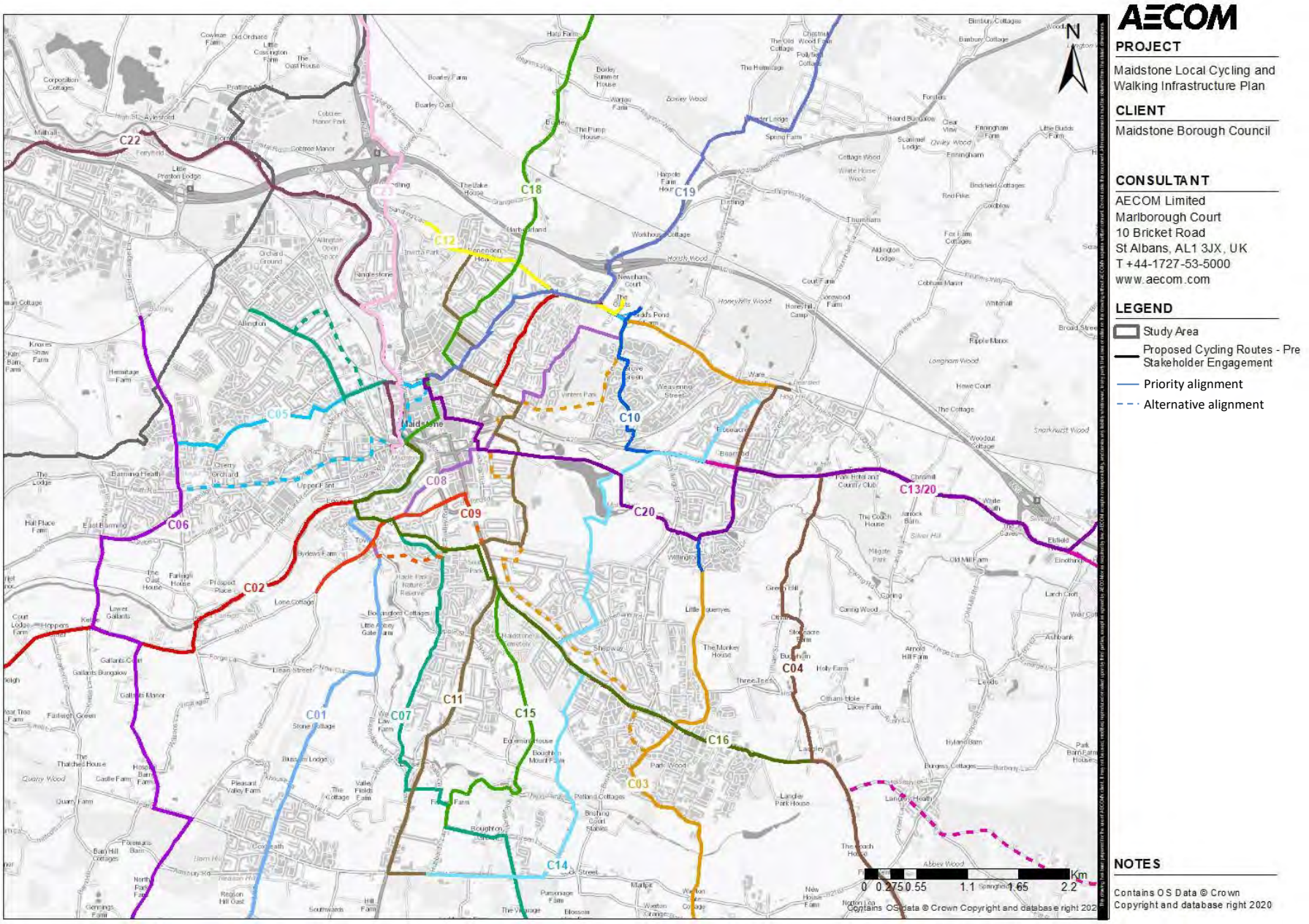

Figure 3-7 Identified Cycling Network Maidstone Town Centre

Stakeholder Engagement

The identified cycling network (as shown in Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7), alongside an introduction to the LCWIP and progress/ methodology to date was presented to local technical stakeholders. The meeting, held in May 2024, provided a platform to gather their opinions on the proposed network. Stakeholders were engaged again in a follow up meeting in June 2024 to illustrate the changes made to the cycling routes after the first round of stakeholder engagement.

Overall, the stakeholders welcomed the identified cycling routes and used their local knowledge to make suggestions, such as altering the alignment of proposed routes to align them better with proposed developments in the area and make them more attractive to local residents. The key outcome of this meeting was to ensure the routes are direct, where possible avoiding car-dominated or fast roads and to sift the routes down to just the priority alignments. The comments received from stakeholders are summarised in Table 3-5.

Figure 3-8 and Figure 3-9 illustrates the updated proposed cycling network, incorporating feedback from the stakeholder engagement workshop.

Table 3-5: Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Cycling Route	Stakeholder Comment
C01	General agreement the route should go along the river, despite poor air quality being raised (it avoids other busy roads) Westerhill Road/Bonfleur Road is a very steep, twisting rural route
C02	Yalding Hill is very steep, narrow and has high verges
C03	Both routes were encouraged, the alternative route was slightly preferred as it could connect with Leisure Centre and green spaces Extend the route southwards through Staplehurst village
C04	The route could make use of the internal routes in the new development masterplans in Langley Extend to Maidstone Medical Campus, but keep the Bearsted Station spur.
C05	All agreed to keep the route option that passes through Oak Wood Estate, due to quieter roads and more cycle storage facilities already present
C06	Re-align route to go past East Farleigh Station
C07	Alternative route option preferred
C08	Unlikely possible to go through Vinters Park as it is a crematorium.
C09	Connect with the planned developments better More consideration needed to improving the crossing facilities on the A229, with the alternative route option preferred as it would require less crossing of the A229 Concern was raised about shared pedestrian and cycle paths through the park
C10	Proposals need to link up with development plans by the Kent Medical Campusand the pre-existing link to the Maidstone School of Science and technology C11
	Avoiding the A229 as much as possible was raised, with segregated sections used for wider sections where re routing would cause a long diversion
C12	Align the route more closely to planned employment sites and join up to the existing network (near M&S) More comprehensive coverage of Eclipse Park
C13	Sustrans would welcome the opportunity to take the NCN 17 from off road to on road The first proposed option was commended for connecting Maidstone, Lenham and Ashford, but generally both were acceptable routes
C14	Route should be extended to end at Mote Park and include the leisure centre and cafe
C15	Route should not terminate at A274/A229 junction, rather carry on to Mote Park and past Park Way Primary School
C16	No specific comments
C17	Concern about the long stretch of the route along the A274
C18	Suggested are route that goes through the new Invicta Development
C19	No specific comments

Table 3-5: Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Cycling Route	Stakeholder Comment
C20	Request to re align this route so that it serves Heathlands Garden Settlement.
C21	No specific concerns, other than the more direct alternative route would be on a busy road
C22	It was raised that a planning application for a new development in Tonbridge and Walling Borough with a road between Hermitage Lane and East Malling has been submitted
C23	Align with route C20
General	Key developments / areas that need to be considered: · Sissinghurst Gardens · Hermitage Lane development—aspiration for a cycle route here · Need to align with Bearsted Road Improvement Scheme near Kent Medical CampusNo cycle route to Headcorn has been included No cycle route between Barming and Kings Hill Check alignment with current bus routes to provide alternative travel options in bad weather

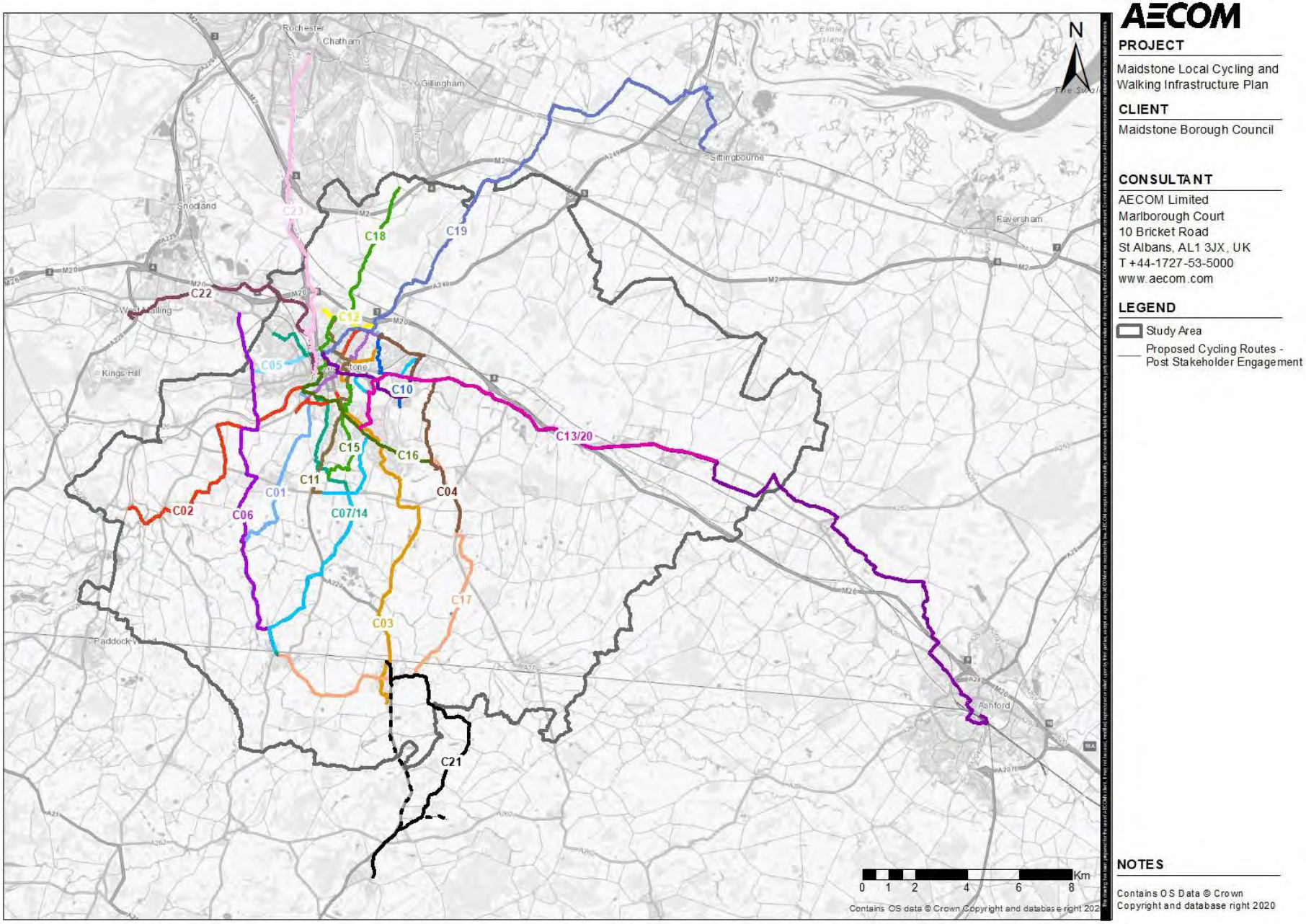

Figure 3-8 Proposed Cycling Network Following Stakeholder Engagement—Borough-Wide

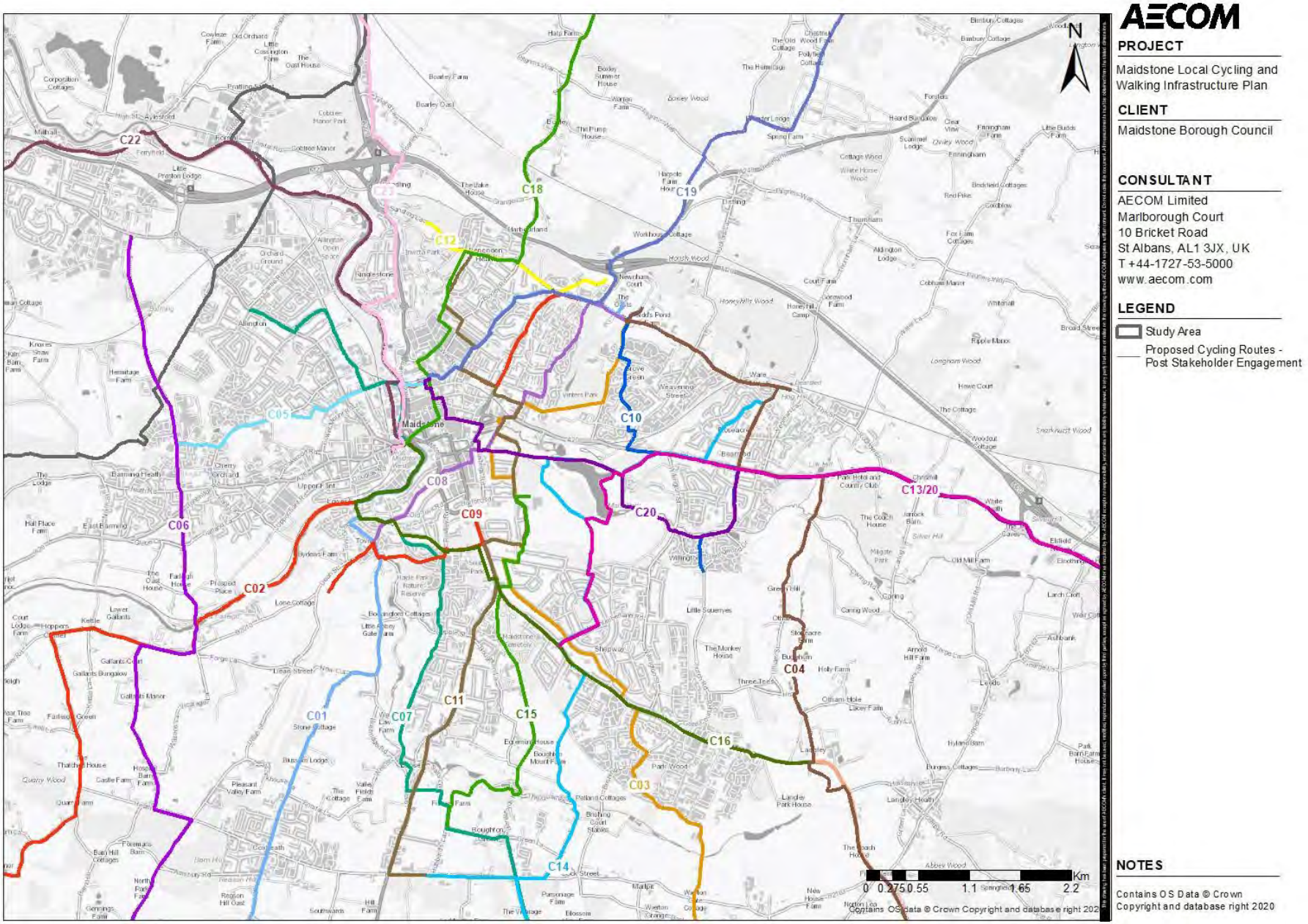

Figure 3-9 Proposed Cycling Network Following Stakeholder Engagement– Maidstone Town Centre

Route Audits & Establishing Infrastructure Improvements

Nine highest scoring routes (8 borough-wide and 1 cross-border) were taken forward for a detailed audit of required infrastructure needs. Proposed improvements were then identified for the top three routes. The highest scoring routes were identified by applying the desire line classification to the routes which were converted from desire lines.

To verify the feasibility of the identified routes, street audits were carried out to examine the current conditions along these routes. The evaluation was conducted by assessing the compliance of roads with the DfT Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) design standards. Following the DfT's guidelines, the Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) was evaluated against 24 indicators that were grouped in five categories: coherence, directness, safety, comfort and attractiveness. The outcomes of the route audits and the initial high-level improvements were presented to stakeholders in June 2024 to gather feedback. The outcomes of the route audits can be seen in Appendix C.

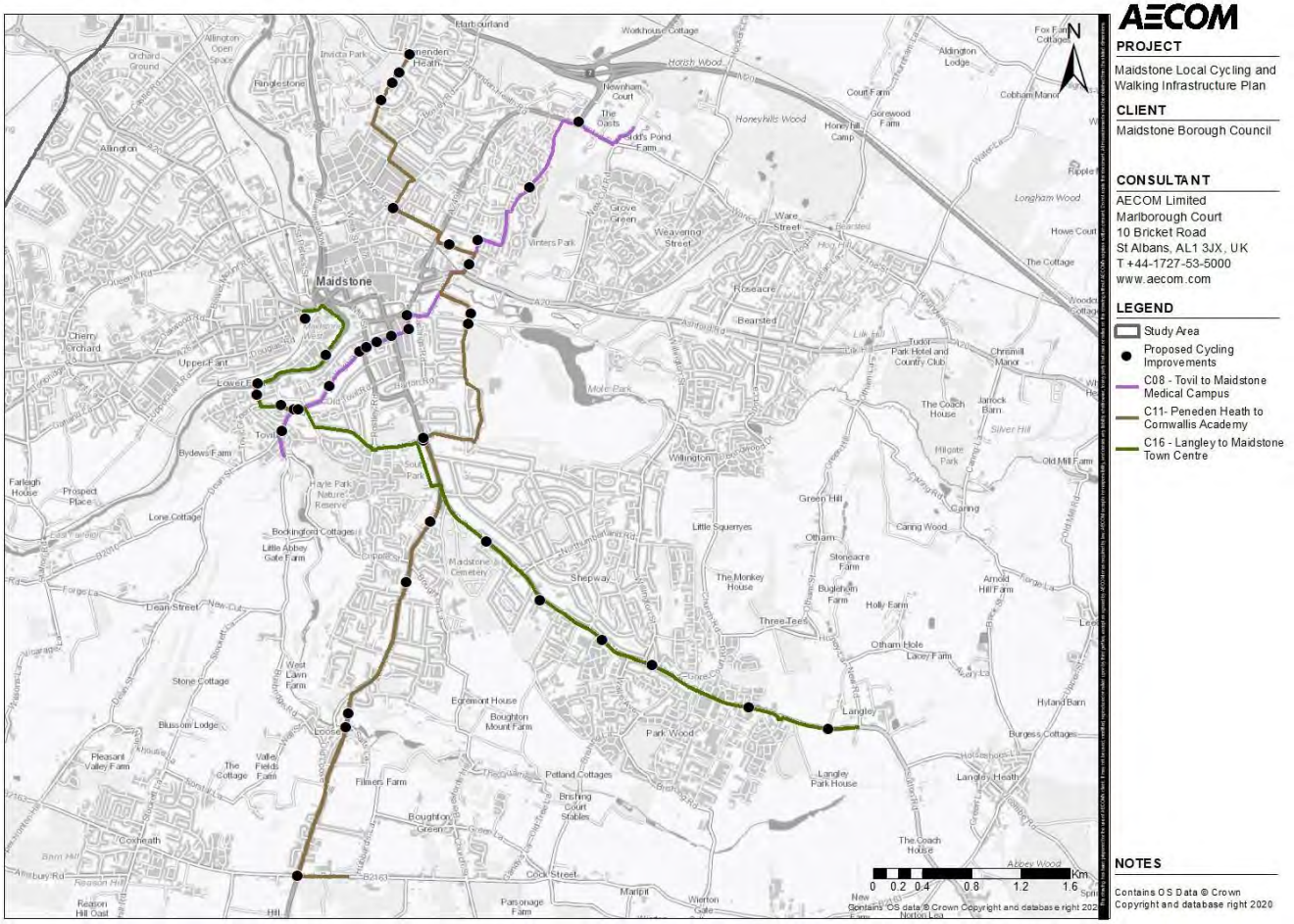

Figure 3-10 Identified Cycling Infrastructure Improvements

At this stage, a total of 42 cycling improvements were identified, which included:

- Improving route continuity, overcoming barriers and severance;
- Introduction of speed limit reductions, traffic calming and other measures to reduce motor traffic speed/ dominance;
- Provision of segregated cycle lanes (or introduction of segregation to existing facilities); and
- The installation of improved wayfinding
- signage and enhanced street lighting.

Figure 3-10 shows the location of all the identified improvements while Appendix D provides more detail on the improvements. It is important to note that these are high-level improvements and further study and a greater level of investigation and assessment is required prior to design and implementation.

Public Engagement

The nine selected cycling routes and identified cycling improvements for three cycling routes were consulted on alongside walking routes/ improvements from the 22nd July 2024 to the 19th August 2024.

The public had the opportunity to take part in the consultation through an online consultation webpage [24] with an interactive mapping tool (see Figure 3-11) and questionnaire. Written feedback was also received throughout the consultation period from a number of stakeholders.

Appendix E contains the LCWIP consultation report which outlines the public consultation process and consultation responses in detail.

There were 142 complete responses to the questionnaire. There were a significant number of incomplete questionnaires, however, this analysis only looked at submitted responses.

There were 128 pins left on the cycling map by people; 38 of these were not aligned to specific routes, whilst many referenced multiple routes.

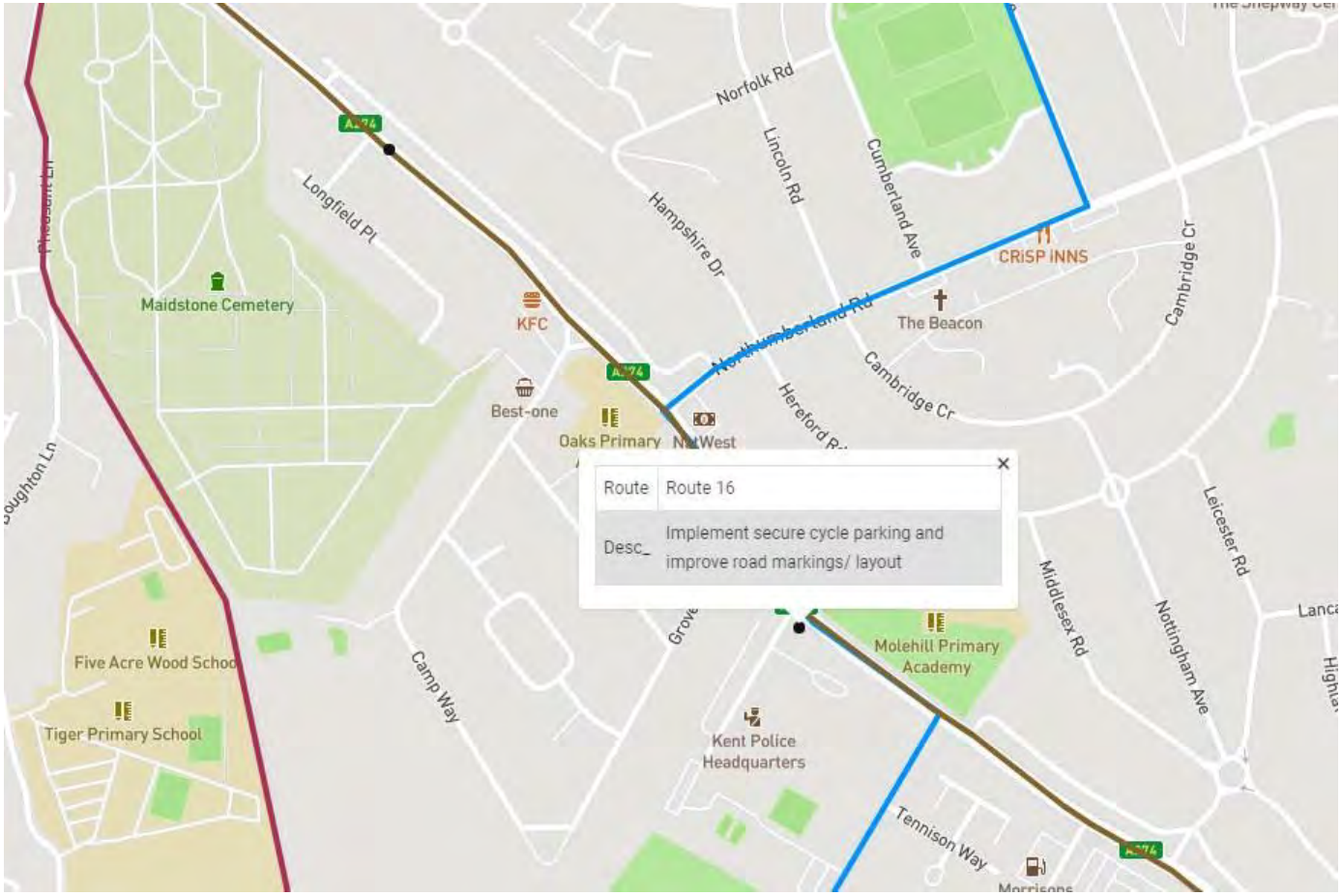

Figure 3-11 A screenshot of the interactive mapping tool, with improvements labelled on Route 16

There was an average of 87 responses to each route in the questionnaire. The public engagement feedback on each of the proposed routes can be seen in Table 3 8.

[24] Maidstone LCWIP Public Engagement Webpage

Table 3-8 Public Engagement Responses

Consultation Activity	Number of Responses per route								
	C08	C09	C10	C11	C14	C15	C16	C18	C19
Questionnaire	89	87	87	88	87	88	85	86	87
Comments	14	5	14	8	26	5	9	10	22
Stakeholder Feedback	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-

Figure 3-12 shows the level of agreement of questionnaire responses to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree that this route is a priority?”.

The proportion of people who agreed (answering either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’) was an average of 48%. The highest levels of agreement were for Route 8 (57%), Route 11, Route 16 (both 53%) and Route 20 (52%).

Disagreement with routes was much lower, with an average of those who answered ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ of 16%. It must be noted that there were a significant number of neutral responses (‘neither agree nor disagree’ or ‘don’t know’), with the average of neutral responses being 36%. The highest routes for neutral responses were Route 15 (45%) and Route 9 (44%).

It is worth noting that a number of comments were not aligned to a route and therefore are not shown in the visualisations split by route.

Thematic analysis of the comments left on the interactive map was undertaken, as shown in Figure 3-13. By far the most popular themes in the comments were **safety** (44 comments) and **route suggestion** (comments recommending a change of the route, with 43 comments). Traffic speeds and congestion were also mentioned in 17 responses each.

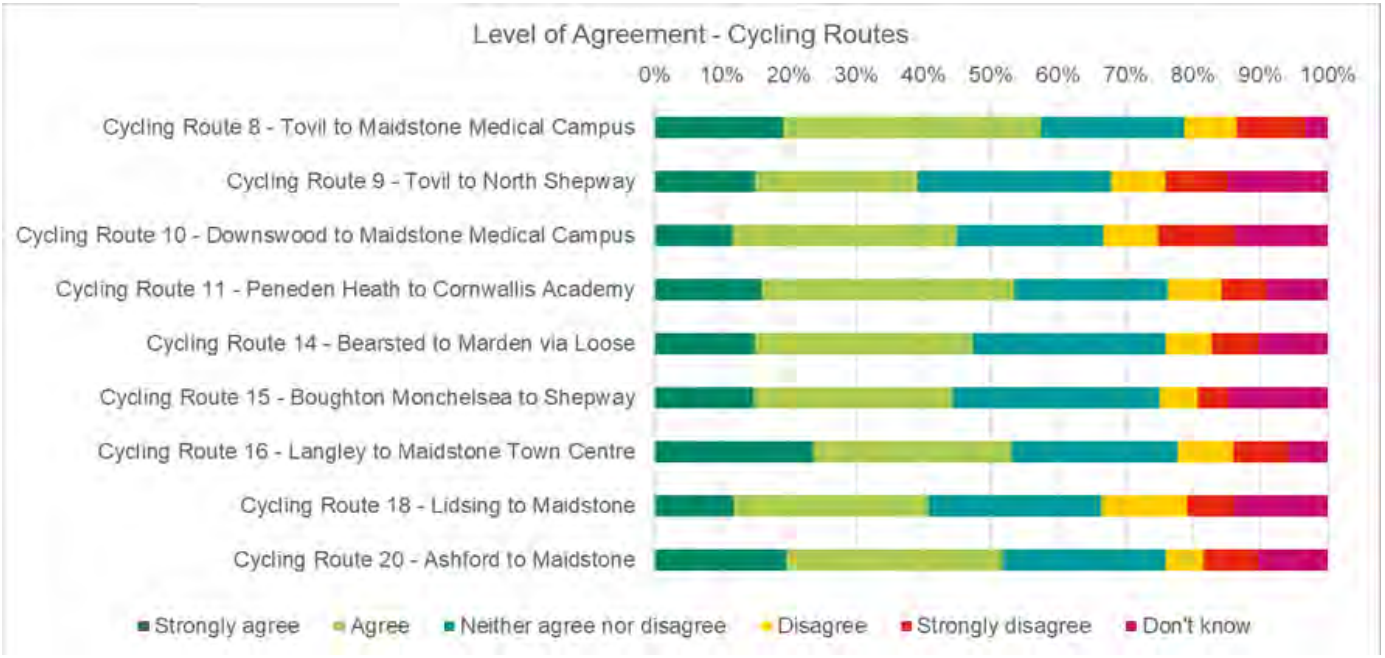

Figure 3-12 Level of agreement: “Do you agree or disagree that this route is a priority?”

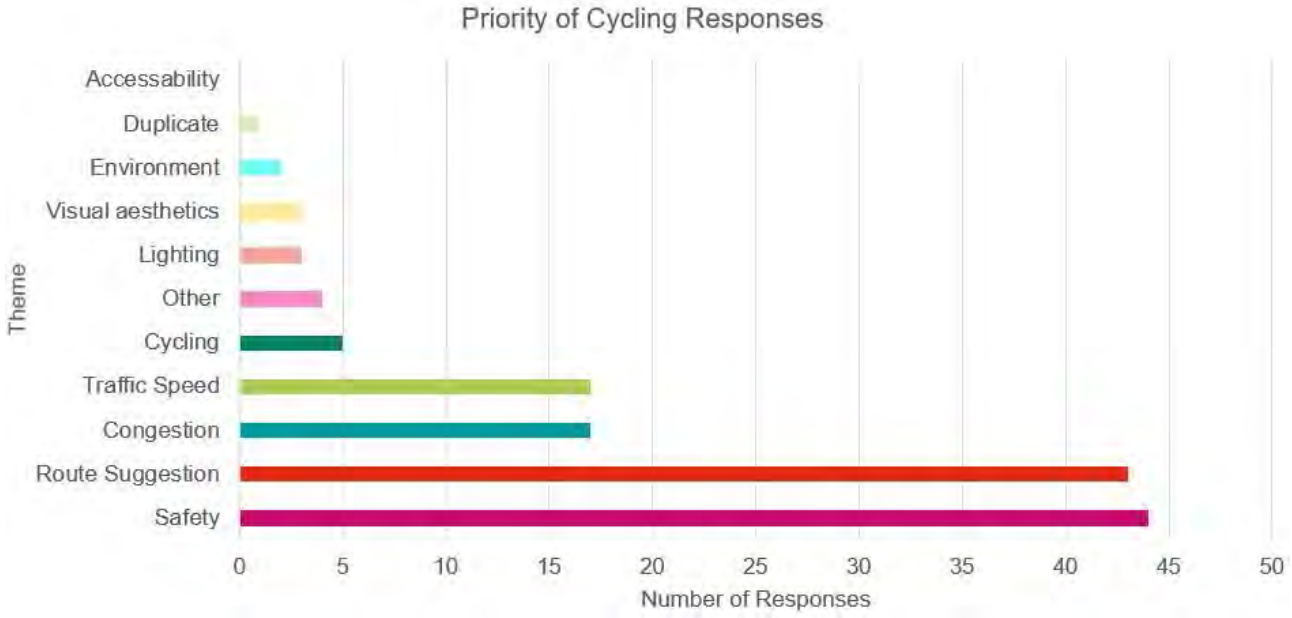

Figure 3-13 Number of comments left on the interactive map by theme

Final Cycling Network

The public consultation responses were analysed, and will be used to ensure the proposed networks address the needs and concerns of local residents, the future users.

The suggestions received at different stages of the consultation process were considered and the cycling routes and improvements were amended where appropriate.

The comments made by the public were sorted and, based on these, additional improvements were suggested. These potential routes and improvements were sent to MBC for feedback which fed into the final proposed cycling network. Comments which were received from the public on routes which weren't consulted on, or suggestions for improvements on routes where improvements were not proposed were noted for future reference, but considered out of scope for this LCWIP.

The final routes and proposed improvements can be seen in Figure 3-14. For individual route maps, see Appendix F.

The final nine proposed cycling routes are summarised below:

C08 – Tovil to Maidstone Medical Campus: An important route which connects Tovil to the Medical Campus mainly via quieter roads. This route connects to six other proposed routes, making it a key strategic route in the context of the wider proposed network. Improvements were proposed along this route to ensure it addresses key concerns with crossing key junctions by bike.

C09 – Tovil to North Shepway: This short route connects the large planned housing development in Tovil with Maidstone Town Centre. It follows Old Tovil Road, utilising offroad connections to link back up to the A229.

C10 – Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus: This route forms a connection between the Downswood suburb and Maidstone Medical Campus. This route avoids the A20, utilising Yeoman Lane and Ware Street.

C11 – Penenden Heath to Cornwallis Academy: This route forms a key northsouth connection from the north of the town centre, specifically from the large planned development in Invicta Park to Cornwallis Academyone of the largest schools in the area. This route provides an opportunity for school children to pick up the route from the town centre south, or alternatively, provides a key cycling corridor from the large planned development into the town centre. Improvements were identified for this route to ensure there are connections into/ out of the town centre and to make sure the route is safe.

C14 – Bearsted to Loose: A key longer distance route, connecting the rural settlement of Marden with Bearsted Station via with Cornwallis Academy, Coxheath and Shepway. Users are able to join/ leave the route at any stage in order to access key strategic towns, trip attractors along the route.

C15 – Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway: A link for large the large new developments around Boughton Mount Farm to the south of Maidstone, to Mote Park, specifically the leisure centre. This route is largely off-road, providing a key route alongside the A229, without being too indirect.

C16 – Langley to Maidstone Town Centre: This route forms a crucial direct link along the A274 for the settlement of Langley and the large developments in the surrounding area with Maidstone town centre. Improvements were suggested for this route to ensure that cycling along the A274 is safe and accessible.

C18 – Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre: A north-south route connecting the major planned development of Lidsing Garden Development into Maidstone town centre,

C19 – Ashford to Maidstone: A key cross-border route which follows the NCN 17, creating more direct links into Ashford and Maidstone town centres.

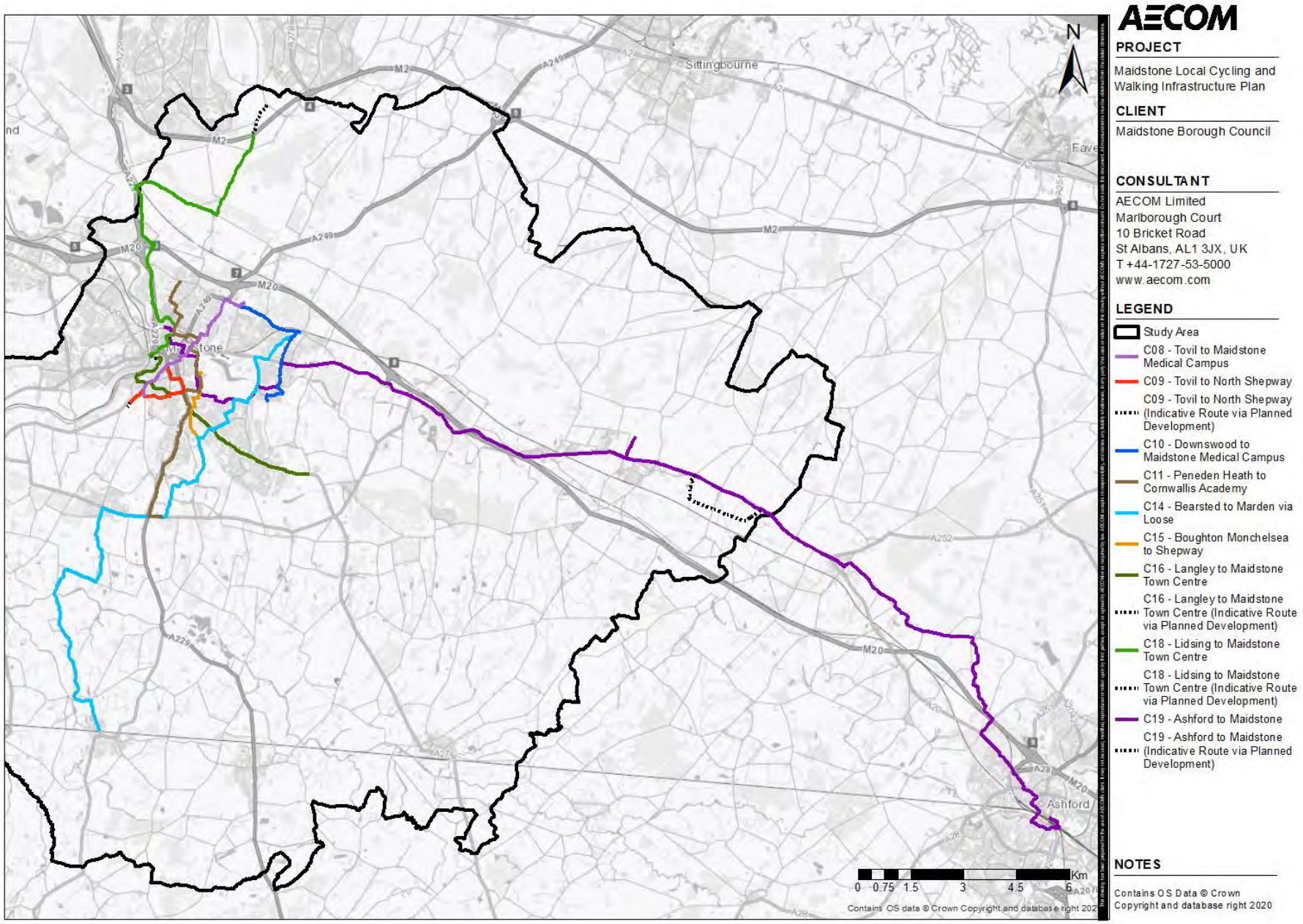

Figure 3-14 Final Identified LCWIP Cycling Routes (individual route maps provided in Appendix F)

Final Proposed Infrastructure Improvements

A total of 57 cycling improvements were identified, which included:

- Improved wayfinding;
- Junction improvements to enhance safety and cyclist priority; and
- Segregated cycle lanes on busier roads.

Figure 3-15 shows the location of all the identified improvements while Appendix D provides more information on the improvements and Appendix F provides the final route maps and improvements. It is important to note that these are high-level improvements and further study and a greater level of investigation and assessment is required prior to design and implementation.

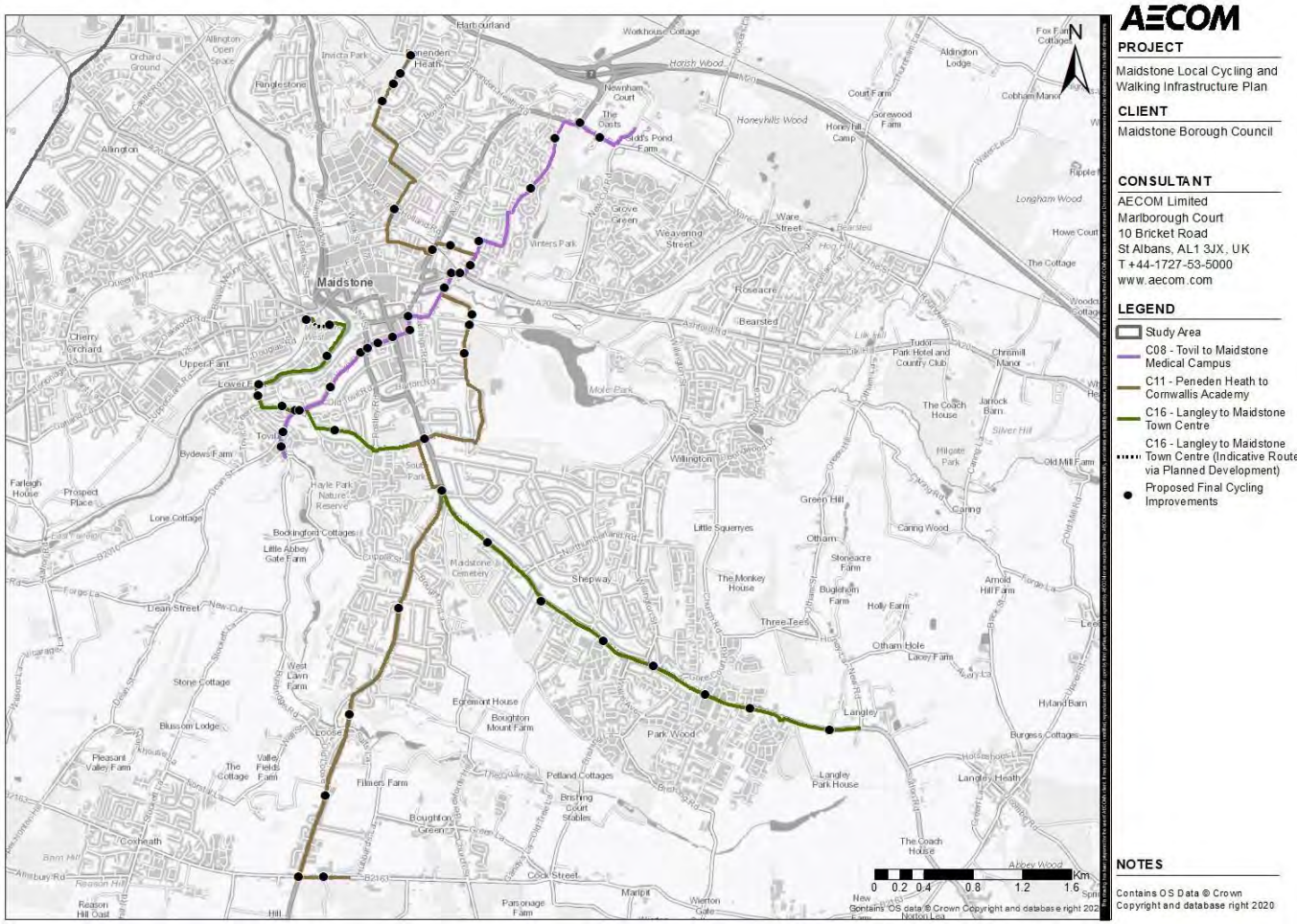

Figure 3-15 Identified Cycling Infrastructure Improvements

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04

Stage 4: Network Planning for Walking

Stage 4: Network Planning for Walking

Introduction

This Stage outlines the steps followed to map the future walking network, as defined by the DfT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans guidance, and shown in Figure 4-1. This iterative process incorporated current and future trip generators, walking patterns, the existing and planned active travel network, and feedback from key stakeholders and the local community.

This section details the identification of the initial routes and core walking zones for further development, aiming to encourage short trips to be made on foot rather than by car. Stakeholder and public engagement helped address local daily travel needs and define the final network. High-level improvements along the final walking routes are presented at the end of this section.

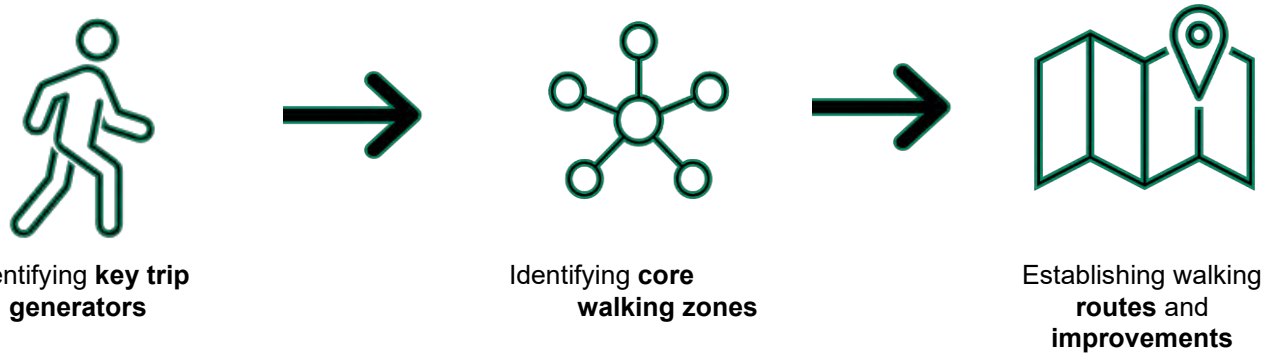

Figure 4-1: Summary of Walking Network Generation Stages

Key Trip Generators

Developing the walking network involved mapping the key walking trip generators to allow the identification of origin and destination points. This stage focuses on the key sites which generate significant pedestrian demand among the high number of destinations across Maidstone. The key trip generators and their density within a 400m radius can be seen in Figure 4-2. These included:

- Education sites with over 500 pupils
- Town centres
- Healthcare sites
- Retail sites
- Employment sites
- Community/ Leisure sites
- Key transport interchanges
- Planned/ Committed Develop

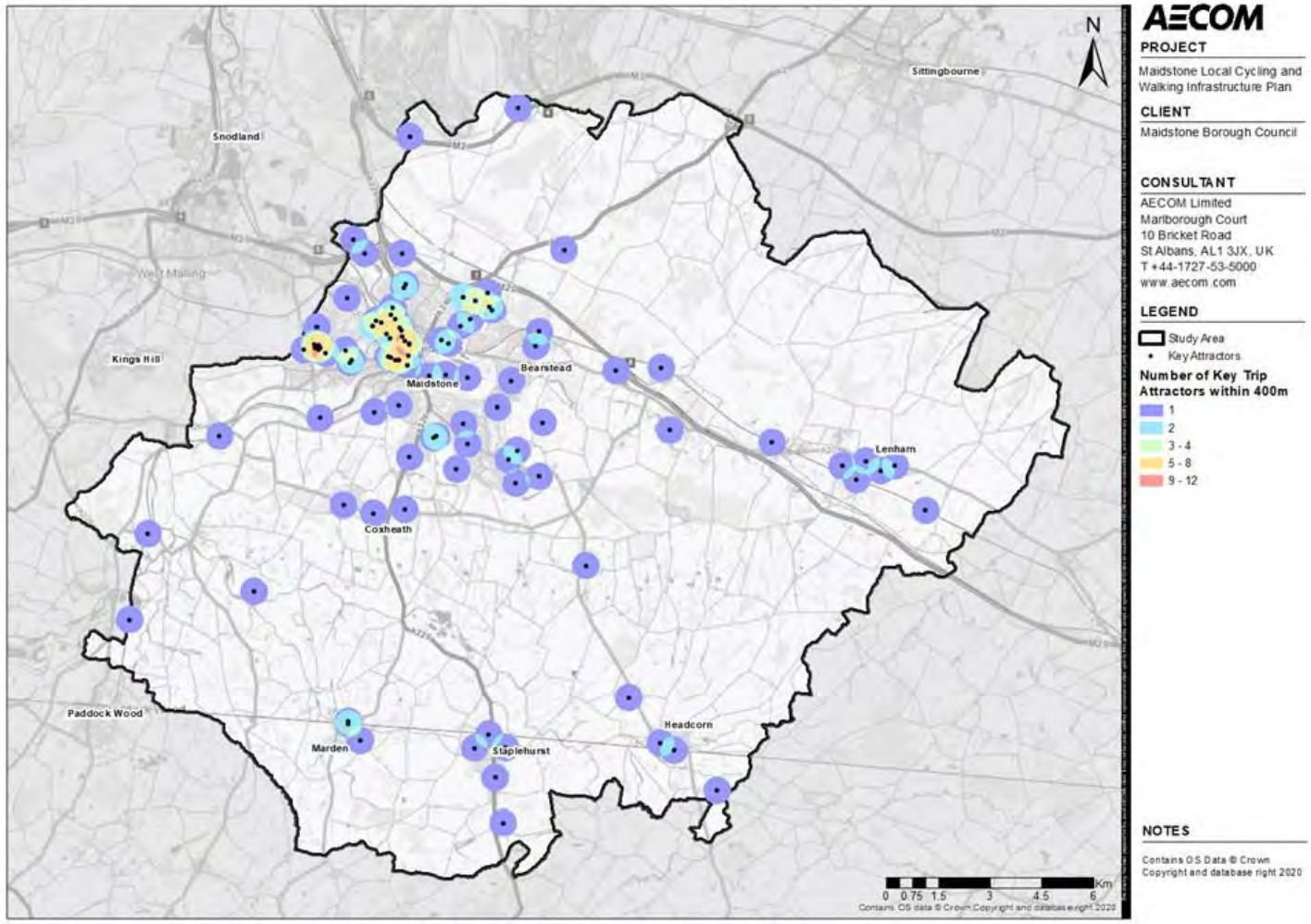

Figure 4-2 Significant Trip Attractors across Maidstone

Walking Distance to Trip Attractors

After identifying and mapping the key trip generators, walking isochrones representing approximate 5, 10 and 15-minute walks were drawn around each destination.

The number of overlapping isochrones was then analysed to determine the areas with the highest density of key destinations. The outcome of this analysis is shown in Figure 4-3.

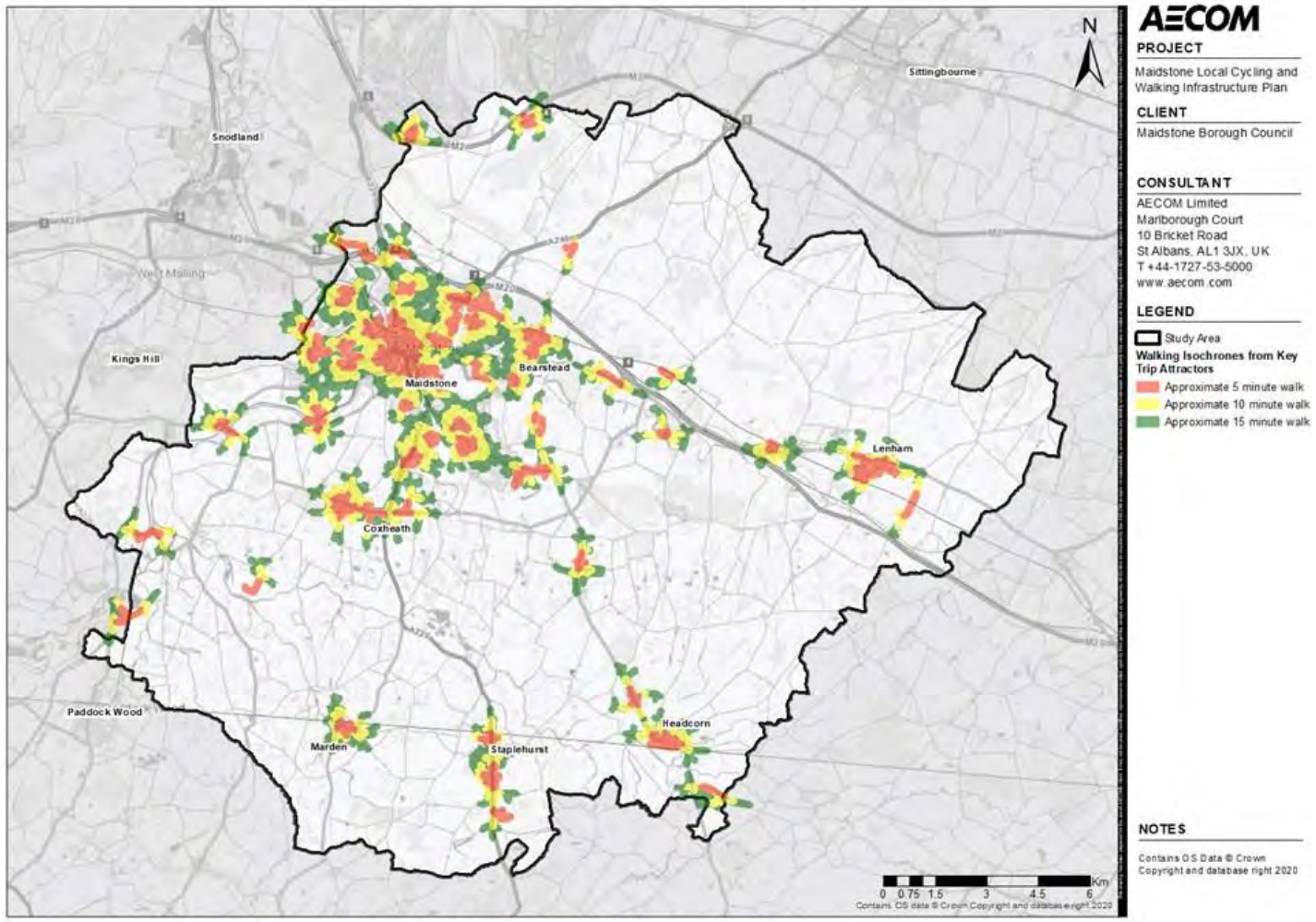

Figure 4-3 Density of Key Trip Attractors in Walking Distance (Isochrones) in Maidstone

Walking Zones

As per the DfT LCWIP guidance, core walking zones (CWZ) (400m buffers, an approximate 5-minute walk) and walking zones (2km buffers) were established around areas with multiple overlapping key destinations, which can be viewed in Figure 4-4.

This part of the analysis identified walking zones in and around Maidstone (including Bearsted and Coxheath), Lenham, Headcorn, Staplehurst and Marden.

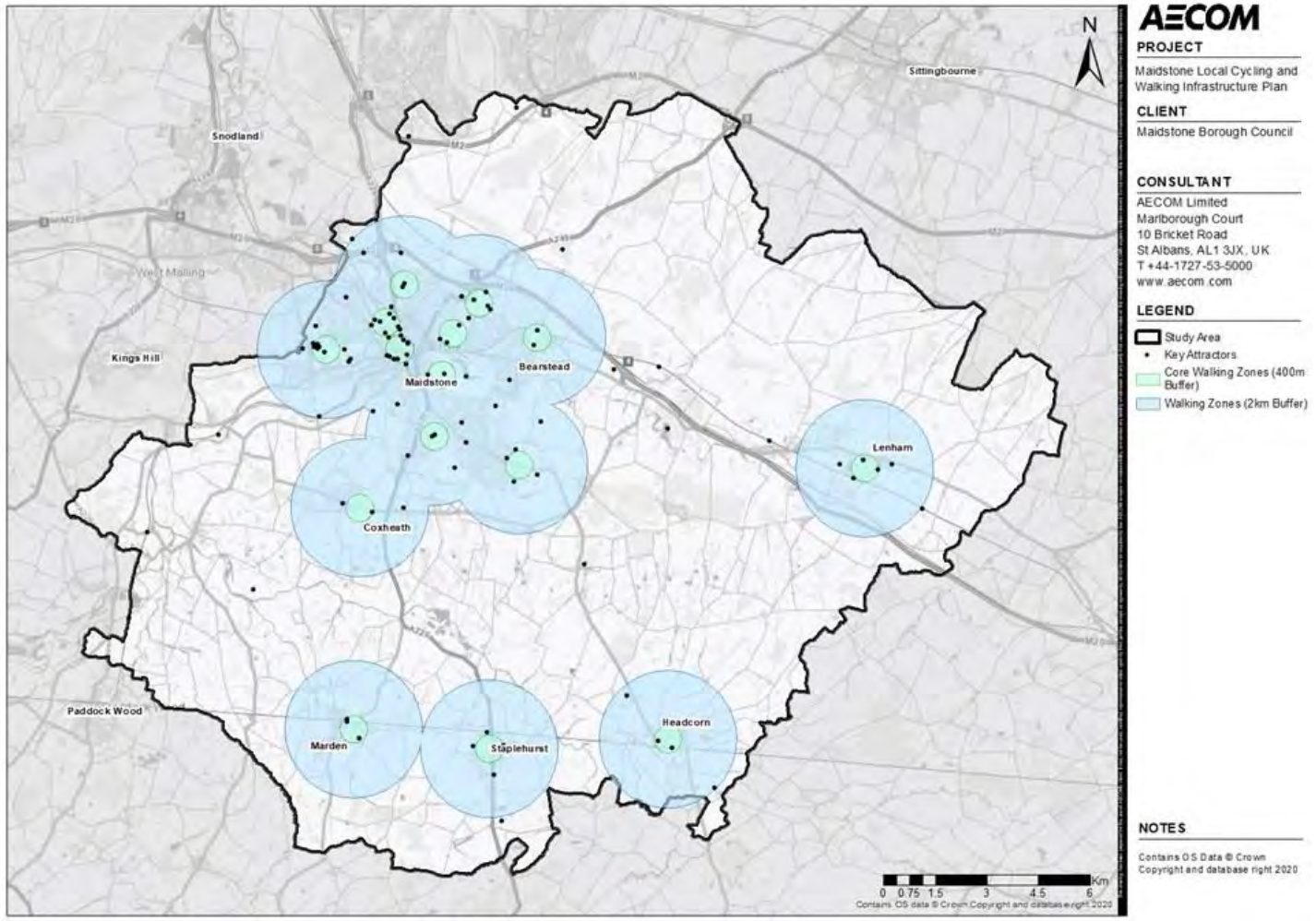

Figure 4-4 Walking Zones Across Maidstone

Walking Zone Classification

Similarly to the cycling analysis, Walking Zones (WZs) were classified into 3 different categories, which were related to the DfT Maintenance hierarchy [25]:

- **Primary**: Busy urban shopping and business areas, key settlements and main pedestrian routes
- **Secondary**: Medium usage routes through local areas feeding into primary routes or large attractors
- **Tertiary**: Linking local access footways through urban areas and busy rural footways, as well as low use footways or short estate routes.

Table 4-1 shows the Walking Zone Classification criteria and how this was scored.

Once the walking zones were mapped, the key pedestrian routes which serve them were identified.

The identified WZs, along with the existing walking infrastructure serving them within the 2km buffer zones, were taken into consideration to identify walking routes that would bridge gaps in the existing network and create a coherent, safe walking network.

Table 4-1: Walking Zone Classification Criteria

#	Criteria	Description
1	Population Density	Population density was assessed and a score of 0 (lowest relative density) to 3 (highest relative density) was then assigned to each WZ.
2	Employment Density	Employment density was assessed and a score of 0 (lowest relative density) to 3 (highest relative density) was then assigned to each WZ.
3	Encouraging Modal Shift	Number of vehicles owned per person assessed for each WZ. A score of 0 (lowest relative number of vehicles) to 3 (highest relative number of vehicles) was then assigned to each WZ.
4	Child Obesity Levels	Child obesity levels assessed for each WZ and assigned a score of 0 (not exceeded the national average) or 1 (exceeded the national average).
5	Supporting Strategic Growth	WZ scores based on planned developments within its boundaries: 3 (over 1,000 dwellings), 2 (over 500 dwellings), 1 (over 100 dwellings), 0 (none).
6	Improving Health and Wellbeing	If over 50% of the WZ has an IMD score of 5 or below, then it scored 2 (weighting applied). Otherwise, it scored 0.
7	LBNs	Score of 1 if the WZ contains a Left Behind Neighbourhood (LBN)
8	Improving Road Safety	Based on accidents in the WZs in the period between November 2019 and October 2022:
9	Air Pollution and AQMAs	High: pedestrian fatality or >16 accidents within the WZ
10	Train Stations	Medium: 6-15 accidents within the WZ
11	Other Transport	Low: less than 6 accidents within the WZ
12	Education Institutions	WZ has a score of 1 if there is an AQMA within its boundaries
13	Other Destinations	Number of train stations and passengers using the stations within the walking and wheeling zone's boundaries were assessed. WZ scored 0 (no train stations) to 3 (top third in relation to passenger numbers within WZs).

[25] DfT LCWIP Guidance

Classification example

Two examples of how the Walking Zones were classified are found in Table 4-2: the Marden Walking Zone, classified as local, and the Central Maidstone Walking Zone, classified as primary. Each walking zone was evaluated against specific criteria, receiving scores ranging from 1 to 3 (public transport stops, education sites, additional attractors, accidents, housing developments, air quality, and the socio-economic context of the zone).

For example, the following method was used to assign the overall score for the Central Maidstone Walking Zone (classified as primary), as detailed in Table 4-2. This zone had approximately 1.6 million station entries and exits across all train stations within it, earning a score of 3. The number of bus stops was in the top 50% of all zones, so it scored 1. The zone also ranked in the top third for pupil numbers across all zones, earning a score of 3 for this criterion. Since the walking zone contains a town centre and a public hospital, it received a score of 2 for the presence of 'Other' key destinations. Due to a high number of accidents, it scored 3 in that category, and for planned/committed housing developments, it scored 2, placing it in the middle third. Lastly, the presence of an AQMA in the zone resulted in a score of 1.

The walking zone was then assessed based on its socio-economic context. It ranked in the top third for both population and employment density, scoring 3 in each category.
Child obesity levels were below the national average, so the zone scored 0 in that category. Similarly, car dependence was lower in Central Maidstone, resulting in a score of 0. With an IMD score of 5 or below, the zone scored 1 for this criterion, and since there was no 'Left-Behind' neighbourhood, it scored 0.

All of these scores were summed, generating an overall score of 22 for the walking zone, classifying it as 'primary.' The classified walking zones are displayed in Figure 45.

Table 4-2: Walking Zone (WZ) Classification Examples

Walking Zone	Walking Zone Attributes							Walking Zone Socio-Economic Context						Desire Line Scoring	
	Train Stations	Bus Stops	Education Institutions	Other Destinations	Accidents	Housing Development	AQMA	Population Density	Employment Density	Child Obesity	Encouraging Mode Shift	Improving Health and Wellbeing	LBN	Overall Score	Classification
Marden	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	9	Tertiary
Central Maidstone	3	1	3	2	3	2	1	3	3	0	0	1	0	22	Primary

AECOM

PROJECT

Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

CLIENT

Maidstone Borough Council

CONSULTANT

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LEGEND

Classified Walking Zones

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Study Area

NOTES

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Figure 4-5 Classified Walking Zones Across Maidstone

Walking Zones for Route Selection

The LCWIP guidance on route selection tends to prioritise urban areas with existing demand, a higher density of public transport stops, and trip attractors such as schools or housing developments. As shown in Figure 4-5, the Walking Zone Classification process identified three primary zones (Maidstone Central, Invicta Park, and Barming) and three secondary zones (Grove Green, Park Wood & Langley, and Loose), all located within the Maidstone urban area.

Figure 4-6 shows that Maidstone Central, Barming, Park Wood & Langley, and Loose already have planned or proposed routes along strategic corridors. Since walking trips often share similar destinations, it was considered that the key walking routes within these zones were already covered. In consultation with MBC, to avoid overemphasis on urban areas and to ensure that the Maidstone LCWIP complements rather than duplicates existing work, these walking zones were excluded from further analysis.

Instead, the focus shifted to incorporating more rural areas, where infrastructure is often fragmented or poor. The goal for the higher scoring zones in urban areas is to connect them to already planned or proposed routes.

Figure 4-6 Final Walking Zones for Route Selection

Identified Network

Converting the WZs into routes for inclusion in LCWIPs is an iterative process and, along with the route selection for cycling routes, is one of the most important elements of the LCWIP process. The key aim was to identify walking routes that meet core design outcomes to create a coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, and attractive walking network. These routes should link to the existing walking network and connect the key destinations identified in the previous stage.

The routes were developed from data analysis conducted up to this point, informed by various data sources, such as the existing active travel network and Google Maps data. They also aligned with Kent County Council's Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Improvement Plan [26] and the existing/ planned network.

The identified network is shown in Figure 4-7 and the alignment of each route is described below.

W01 – Barming to Maidstone East: An important east-west route connecting Barming, and the hospital to Maidstone Barracks station via Queen's Road so as to avoid the busy A26 and to pass by a number of schools and planned/ committed developments.

W02 – Eclipse Park to Maidstone West: A route which connects the employment site at Bearsted and Maidstone West station. This route utilises PRoWs to create an off-road route which connects the town centra with schools, planned developments and Vinters Park.

W03 –Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School: A crucial north-south route which connects the major planned development of Invicta Park with Maidstone Grammar School. It intersects with Walking Route 1 and 2 to create a connected walking network.

W04 –Weavering to Bearsted: A route which connects Bearsted station with Invicta Grammar School via Vinters Park. The route is in part an extension of Walking Route 2, which provides an onward connection to central Maidstone.

W05 – Bearsted Employment Site to Bearsted Station: An east-west connection between the large planned employment site in Bearsted and Bearsted station. This route is an extension of Walking Route 4, which continues the east-west connection into central Maidstone.

W06 – Harrietsham to Lenham: This route connects the significant planned mixed-use site– Heathlands Garden Community with Lenham Town centre, via a number of additional planned/ committed developments.

W07 – Headcorn Town Centre: A route which connects Headcorn station with the planned employment site to the north of the village via the planned housing developments, creating a key north-south route through the village which pedestrians are able to pick up and drop off at any stage along the route.

W08 – Coxheath to Shepway: An important route which connects Coxheath with Shepway via planned housing developments and connecting into Maidstone Cemetery and a number of schools. The route avoids the busy A229, running alongside it to provide an offroad alternative.

W09 – Tovil to Maidstone Barracks: An important route which connects the large planned housing development in Tovil with Maidstone Barracks station, making use of the Medway Footpath, to provide a traffic-free connection from the south of central Maidstone into Maidstone. The route connects with Walking Routes 1 & 2, which therefore provides onward connections to the west of Maidstone and to Bearsted.

[26] Kent County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan

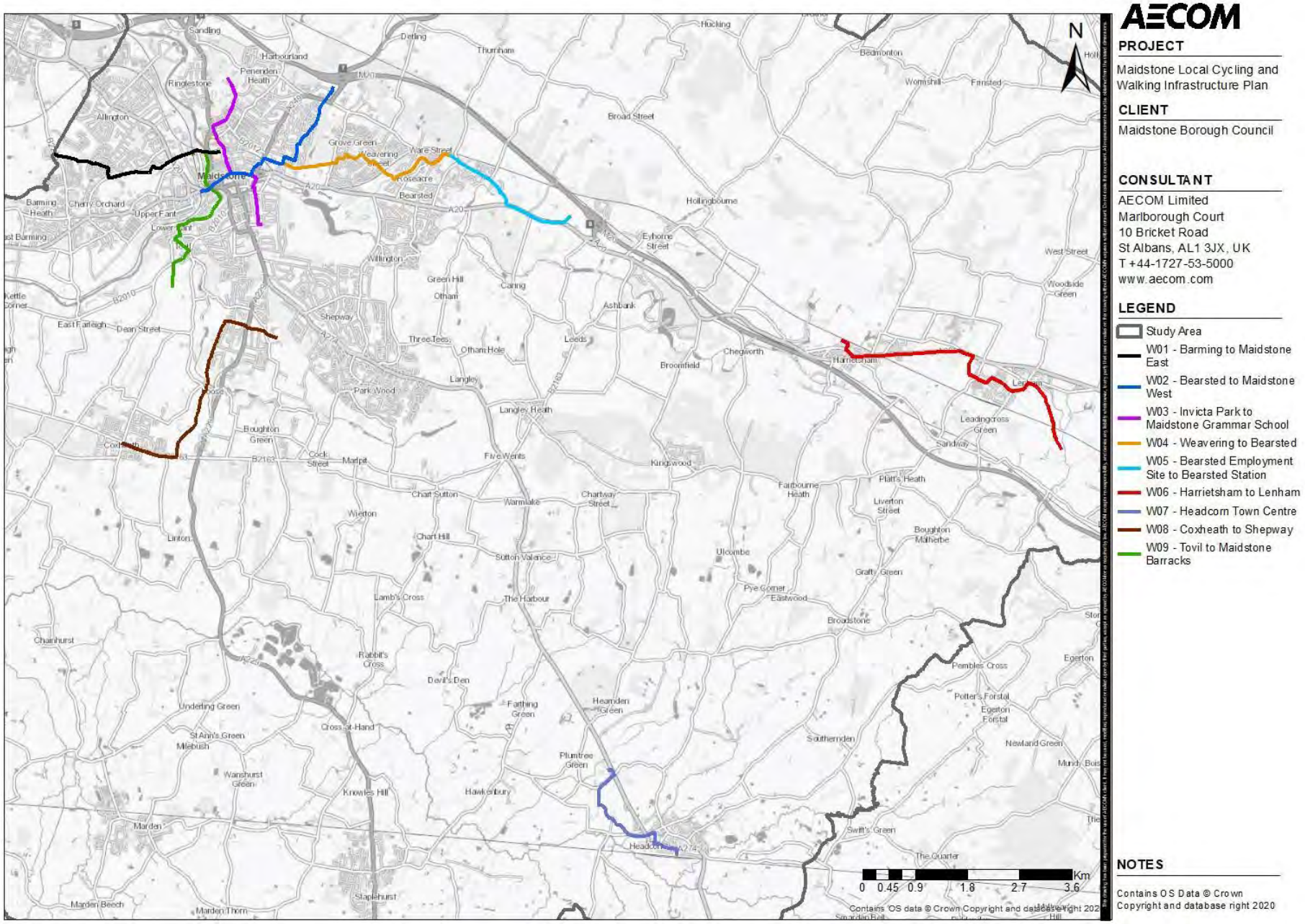

Figure 4-7 Identified Walking Network

Stakeholder Engagement

The identified walking zones and walking route network (as shown in Figure 4-6 and Figure 4-7), alongside an introduction to the LCWIP and progress/ methodology to date was presented to local stakeholders. The walking zones were presented to stakeholders to gather their initial thoughts on the identified zones. A second meeting, held in June 2024, provided a platform to gather their opinions on the proposed walking network.

Overall, the stakeholders welcomed the identified walking routes and used their local knowledge to make suggestions, such as altering the alignment of proposed routes or flagging improvements which might make these routes more attractive. The key outcome of this meeting was to ensure the routes are safe, avoiding busy, car-dominated roads which put people off walking. The comments received from stakeholders are summarised in Table 4-3.

Figure 4-8 illustrates the updated proposed walking network, incorporating feedback from the stakeholder engagement workshop.

Table 4-3: Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Date Received	Walking Route	Stakeholder Comment
May 2024	General	The walking zones have omitted the Lidsing Garden Settlement and its adjacent built-up area in Medway.
May 2024	General	The areas of proposed growth such as Heathlands Garden Settlement and Lidsing Garden Settlement appear to not be represented is there a reason for this?
June 2024	Route 1	Somerfield Road is an unadopted street. Crossing over Medway alongside railway is an unattractive environment for pedestrians.
June 2024	Route 2	Gainsborough Drive is more suitable than Malling Terrace in terms of surfacing and proximity to crossing facilities on Queens Road
June 2024	Route 3	Narrowness of footways on Queen Anne Rd/King Street.
June 2024	Route 4	Narrowness of footways on King Street.
June 2024	Route 5	Steepness of Hog Hill. Lack of footways on Weavering St. Grove Green Lane is an unadopted street.
June 2024	Route 6	Ware Street footway provision is disjointed and requires crossing over road several times.
June 2024	Route 7	Narrow and disjointed footway provision on Lenham High St.
June 2024	Route 8	Lack of dedicated crossing facilities at A274/Moat Rd/Kings Rd junction. Lack of footways on western part of Moat Road.
June 2024	Route 9	The northern part of the proposed route is less direct than Maidstone Road/Mill Bank (A274) so may not be well-used

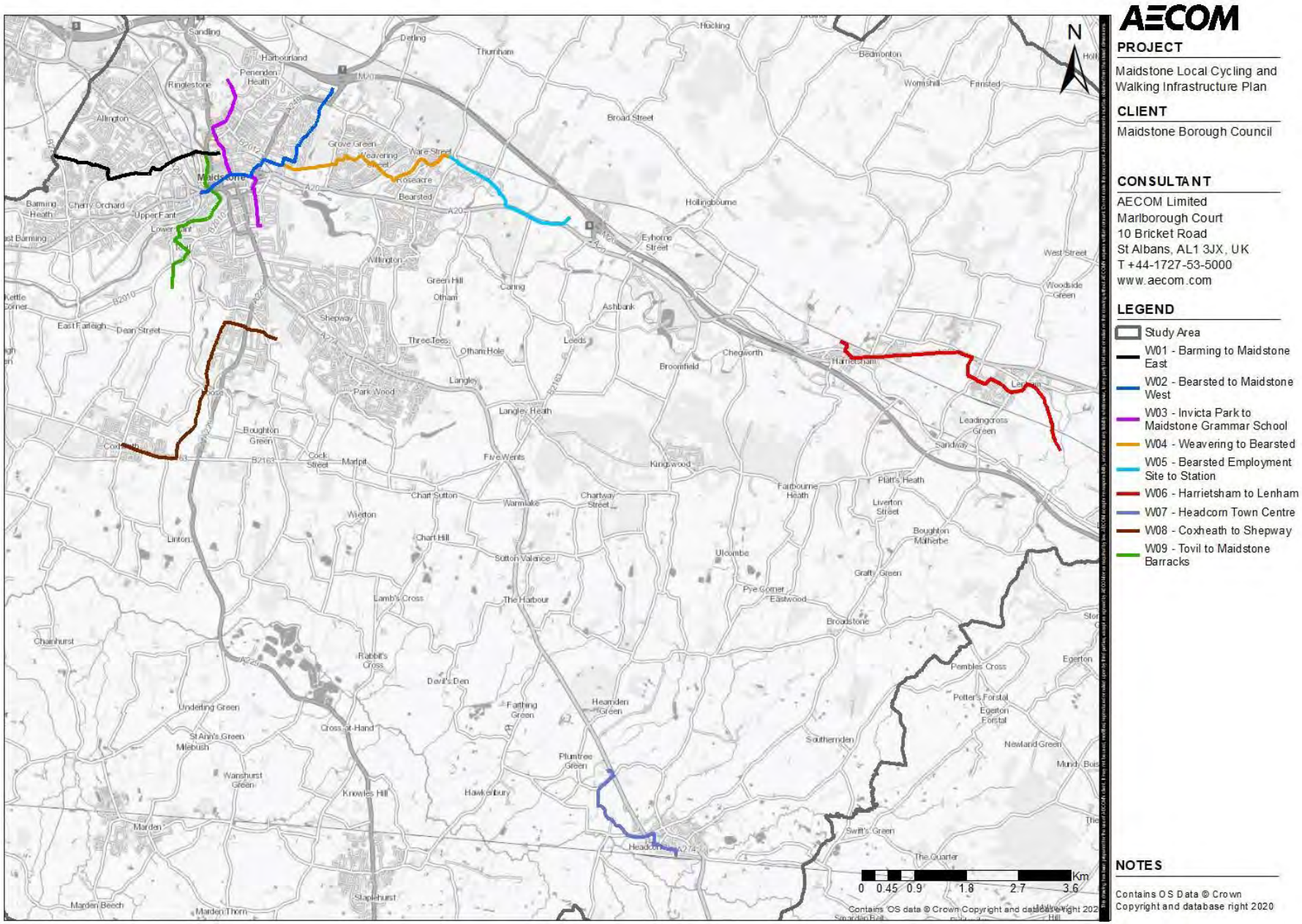

Figure 4-8 Proposed Walking Network Following Stakeholder Engagement

Route Audits & Establishing Infrastructure Improvements

All nine identified walking routes were taken forward for a detailed audit of required infrastructure needs. Proposed improvements were then identified for the highest scoring three routes.

To verify the feasibility of the identified routes, street audits were carried out to examine the current conditions along these routes. The evaluation was conducted by utilising the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT) to assess the current condition and suitability of a walking routes. The WRAT uses a range of criteria to assess how well a route meets the score design outcomes of attractiveness, comfort, directness, safety and coherence. The outcomes of the route audits and the initial high-level improvements were presented to stakeholders in June 2024 to gather feedback. The outcomes of the route audits can be seen in Appendix C.

At this stage, a total of 40 walking improvements were identified, which included

- Improving route continuity and level of provision, including overcoming barriers and severance to pedestrian movement;
- Enhanced safety measures such as lighting and CCTV;
- Installation of new and improved pedestrian crossings, and introducing pedestrian priority at key locations, and
- Implementation of an appropriate wayfinding system.

Figure 4-9 shows the overview of the location of all the improvements required to deliver a safe walking network, while Appendix D provides more detail on the improvements. It is important to note that these are high- level improvements and further study and a greater level of investigation and assessment is required prior to design and implementation.

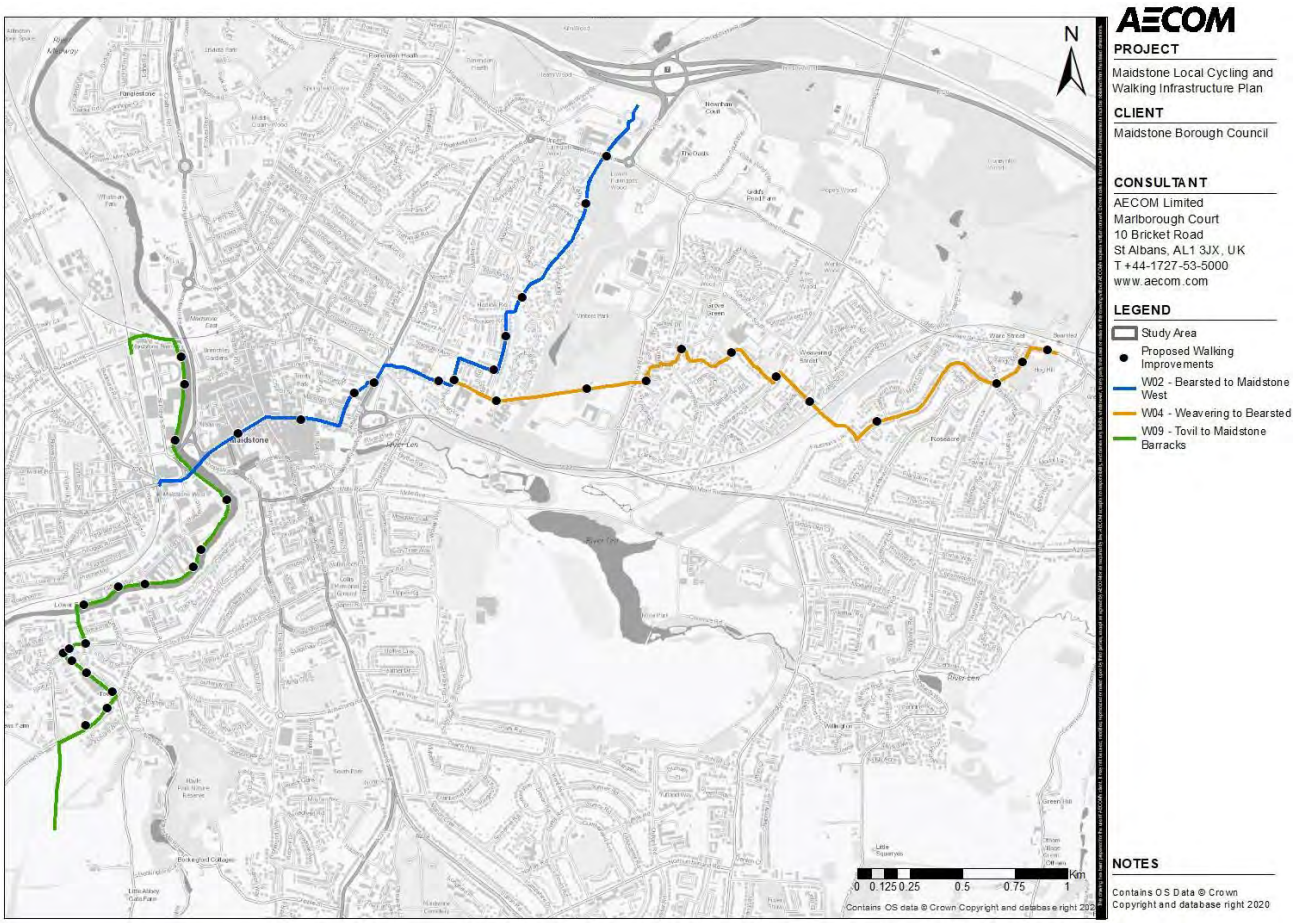

Figure 4-9 Identified Walking Infrastructure Improvements

Public Engagement

The nine walking routes and identified walking improvements for three routes were consulted on alongside cycling routes/improvements from the 22nd July 2024 to the 19th August 2024.

The public had the opportunity to take part in the consultation through an online consultation webpage [27] with an interactive mapping tool (see Figure 4-10) and questionnaire. Written feedback was also received throughout the consultation period from stakeholders.

Appendix E contains the LCWIP consultation report which outlines the public consultation process and consultation responses in detail.

There were 142 complete responses to the questionnaire. There were a significant number of incomplete questionnaires, however, this analysis only looked at submitted responses.

There were 156 pins left on the cycling map by people; 71 of these were not aligned to specific routes, whilst many referenced multiple routes.

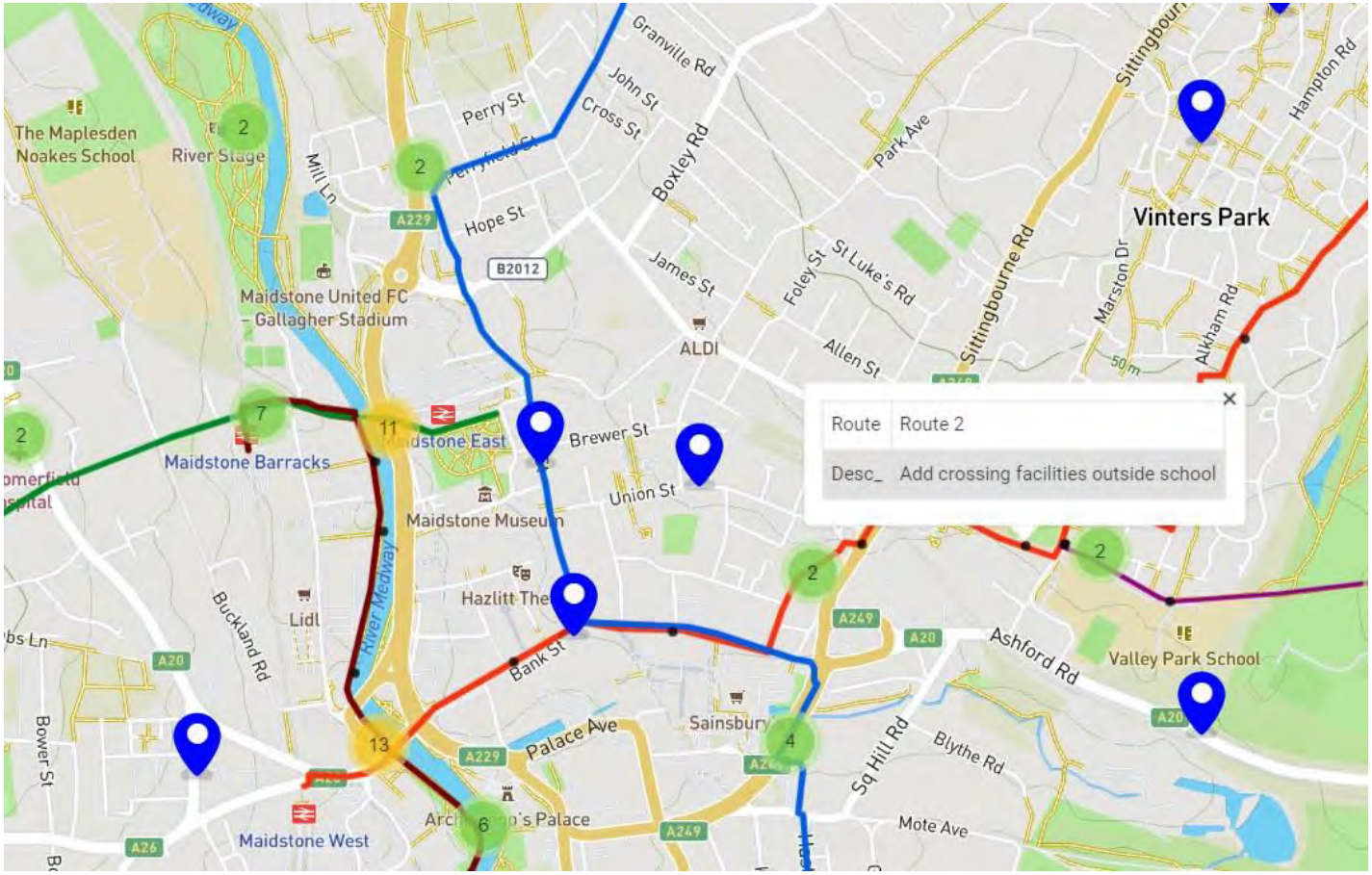

Figure 4-10 A screenshot of the interactive mapping tool, with improvements labelled on Route 2

each route in the questionnaire. The public engagement feedback on each of the proposed routes can be seen in Table 4-4.

[27] Maidstone LCWIP Public Engagement Webpage

Table 4-4 Public Engagement Responses

Consultation Activity	Number of Responses per route								
	C01	C02	C03	C04	C05	C06	C07	C08	C09
Questionnaire	112	109	109	110	111	108	108	109	109
Comments	28	15	10	6	0	1	1	11	21
Stakeholder Feedback	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	-	-

Figure 4-11 shows the level of agreement from questionnaire responses to the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree that this route is a priority?”

On average, 46% of respondents agreed (answering either ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’). The highest levels of agreement were for Route 2 (58%), Route 4 (57%), and both Route 1 and Route 9 (56%). Disagreement (those answering ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’) was much lower, averaging 7%.

It is important to note that a significant number of neutral responses (‘neither agree nor disagree’ or ‘don’t know’) were recorded, averaging 47%. The highest levels of neutral responses were for Route 7 (69%) and Route 6 (62%). Additionally, some comments were not linked to specific routes and are therefore not represented in the visualisations by route.

A thematic analysis of comments left on the interactive map, shown in Figure 4-12, highlights that the most common themes were **accessibility** (61 comments) and **route safety** (37 comments).

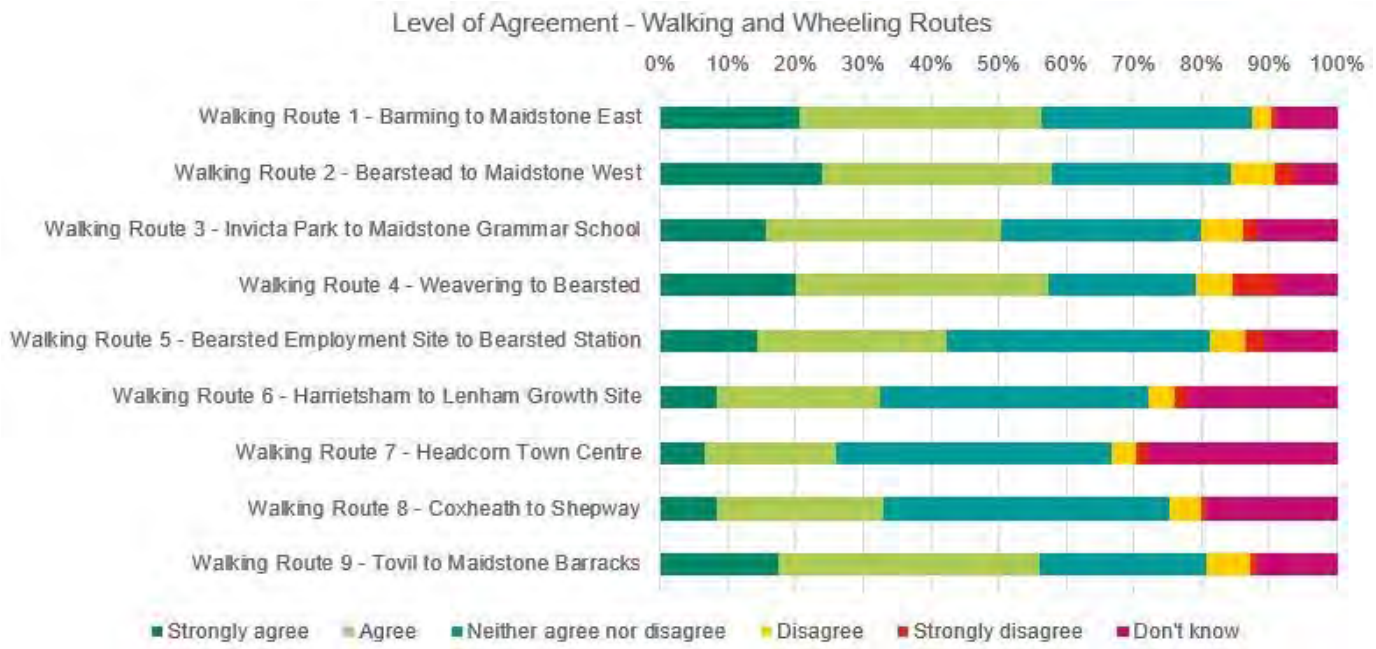

Figure 4-11 Level of agreement: “Do you agree or disagree that this route is a priority?”

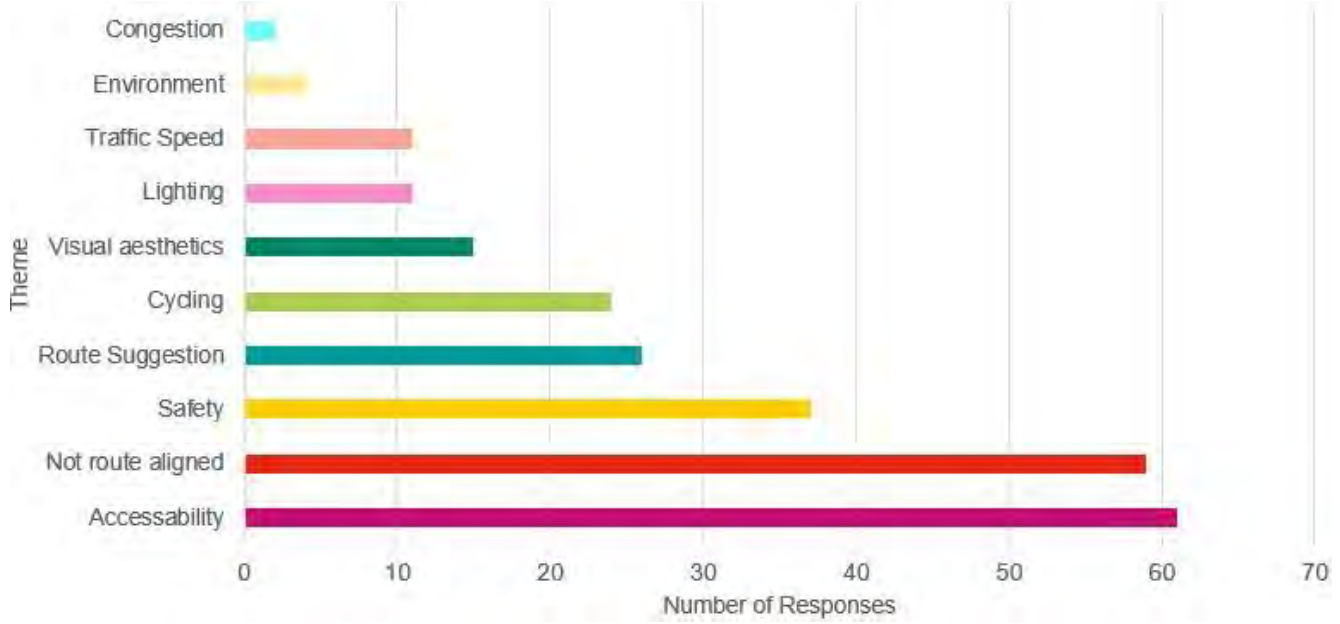

Figure 4-12 Number of comments left on the interactive map by theme

Final Walking Network

The public consultation responses have been analysed, and will be used to ensure the proposed networks address the needs and concerns of local residents, the future users.

The suggestions received at different stages of the consultation process were considered and the walking routes and improvements were amended where appropriate. The comments made by the public were sorted and, based on these, additional improvements were suggested. These potential routes and improvements were sent to MBC for feedback which fed into the final proposed walking network. Suggestions for improvements on routes where improvements were not proposed were noted for future reference, but considered out of scope for this LCWIP. The final routes can be seen in Figure 4-13. For individual route maps, see Appendix G.

The final nine proposed walking routes are summarised below:

W01 – Barming to Maidstone East: An important east-west route connecting Barming, and the hospital to Maidstone Barracks station via Queen's Road so as to avoid the busy A26 and to pass by a number of schools and planned/ committed developments.

W02 – Eclipse Park to Maidstone West: A route which connects the employment site at Bearsted and Maidstone West station. This route utilises PRoWs to create an off-road route which connects the town centra with schools, planned developments and Vinters Park. Improvements were proposed for this route to ensure it is safe and accessible for pedestrians, especially for commuters who might use the route to access the planned employment site with Maidstone West station.

W03 –Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School: A crucial north-south route which connects the major planned development of Invicta Park with Maidstone Grammar School. It intersects with Walking Route 1 and 2 to create a connected walking network.

W04 –Weavering to Bearsted: A route which connects Bearsted station with Invicta Grammar School via Vinters Park. The route is in part an extension of Walking Route 2, which provides an onward connection to central Maidstone. High-level improvements were proposed for this route, to help tackle key existing barriers to walking this route, such as dropped kerbs/ tactile paving and footway maintenance.

W05 – Bearsted Employment Site to Bearsted Station: An east-west connection between the large planned employment site in Bearsted and Bearsted station. This route is an extension of Walking Route 4, which continues the east-west connection into central Maidstone, therefore providing a potential walking route for both leisure and commuting purposes.

W06 – Harrietsham to Lenham: This route connects the Heathlands Garden Community with Lenham Town centre, with an additional spur into Lenham rail station. This route is expected to make use of proposed active travel infrastructure put forward as part of the site Masterplan.

W07 – Headcorn Town Centre: A route which connects Headcorn station with the planned employment site to the north of the village via the planned housing developments, creating a key north-south route through the village which pedestrians are able to pick up and drop off at any stage along the route.

W08 – Coxheath to Shepway: An important route which connects Coxheath with Shepway via planned housing developments and connecting into Maidstone Cemetery and a number of schools. The route avoids the busy A229, running alongside it to provide an off-road alternative for pedestrians.

W09 – Tovil to Maidstone Barracks: This route connects large planned housing development in Tovil with Maidstone Barracks station, making use of the Medway Footpath, to provide a traffic-free connection from the south of central Maidstone into Maidstone.The route connects with Walking Routes 1 & 2, which provides onward

connections to the west of Maidstone and to Bearsted.

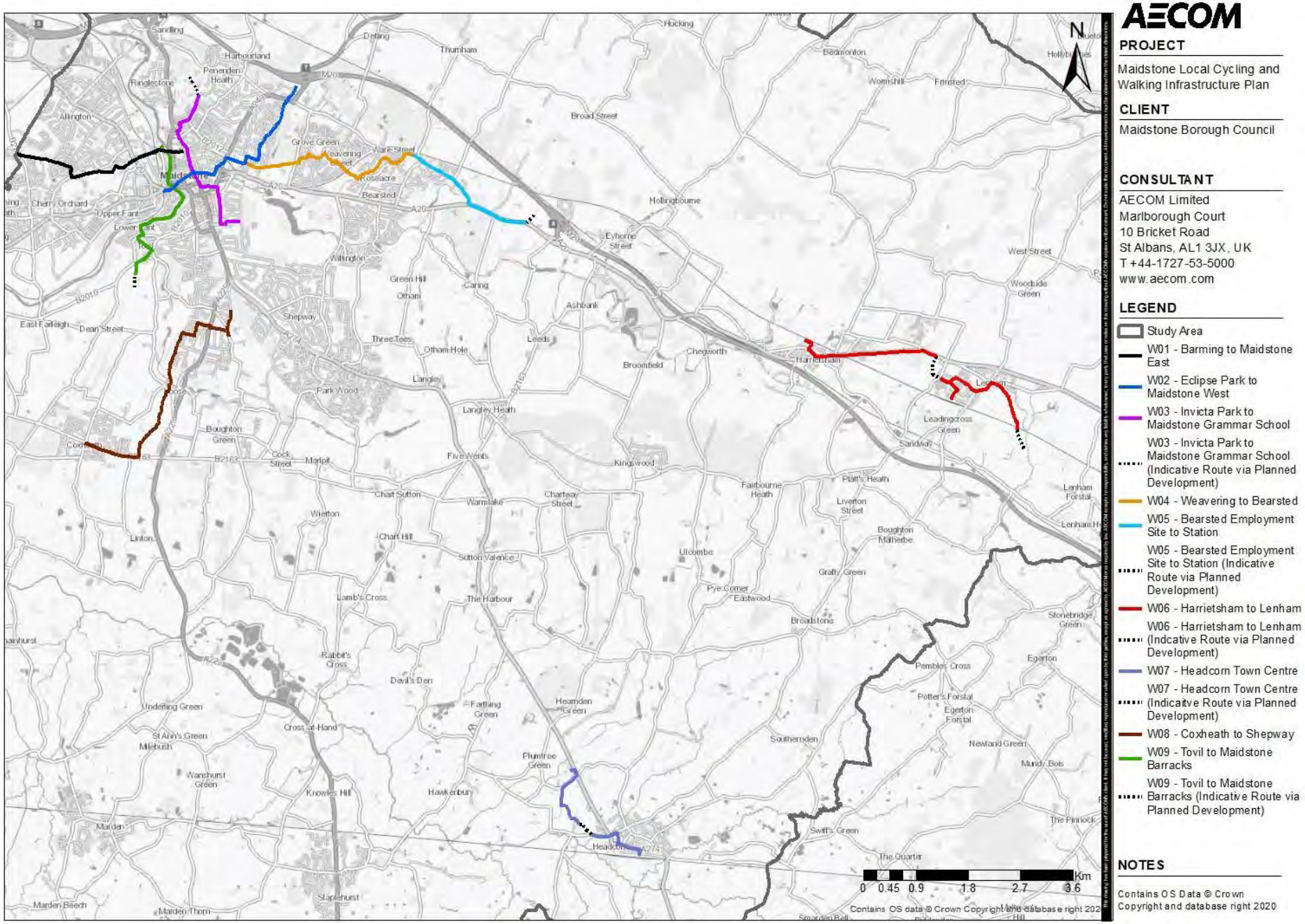

Figure 4-13 Final Identified LCWIP Walking Routes (individual route maps provided in Appendix G)

Final Proposed Infrastructure Improvements

A total of 51 walking improvements were identified, which included:

- Improve wayfinding;
- Improving drainage;
- Additional pedestrian crossings to reduce wait times and enhance safety; and
- Undertaking localised resurfacing.

Figure 4-14 shows the overview of the location of all the improvements required to deliver a safe walking network. Appendix D provides more information on the improvements and Appendix G provides the final route maps and improvements . It is important to note that these are high-level improvements and further study and a greater level of investigation and assessment is required prior to design and implementation.

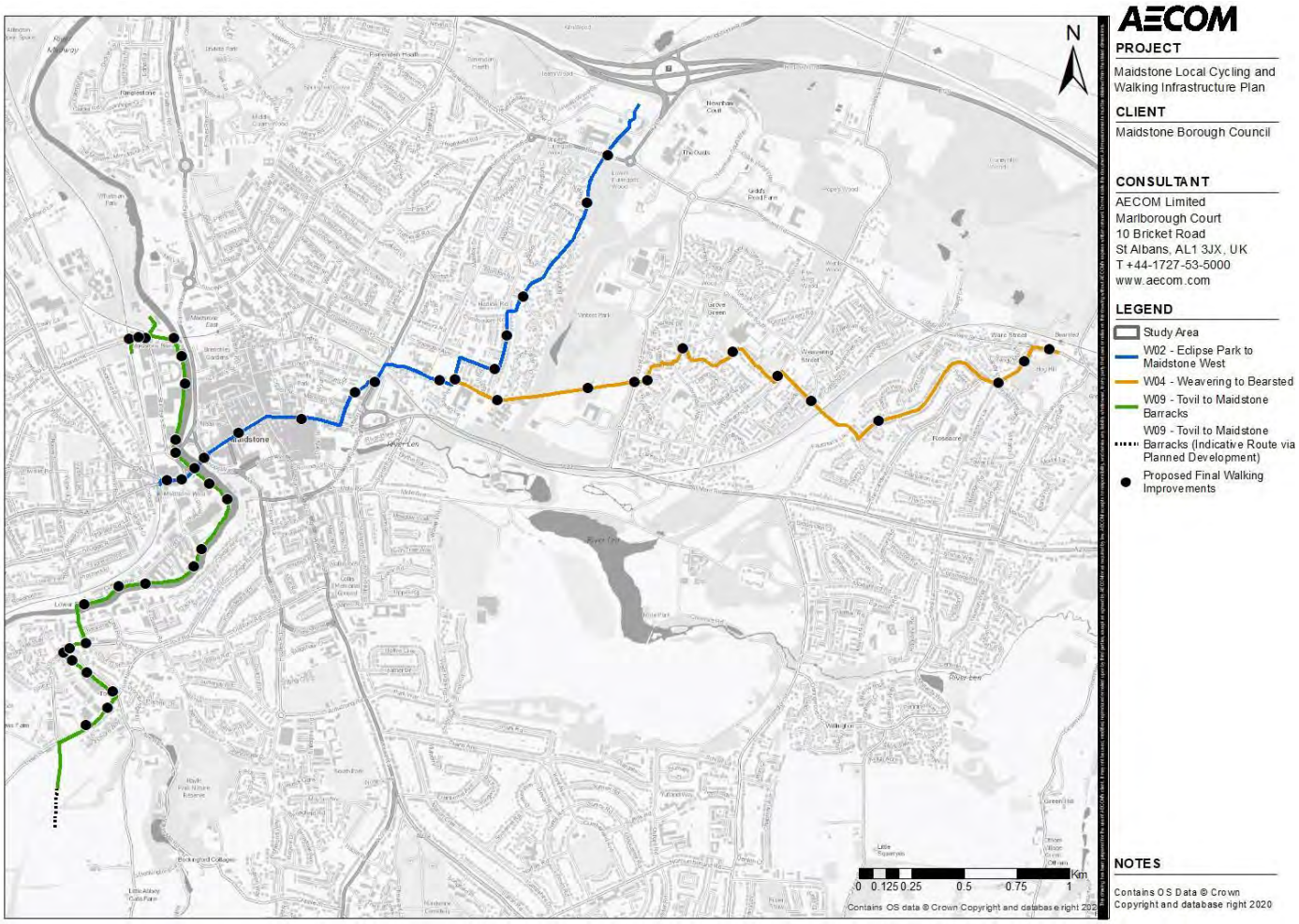

Figure 4-14 Identified Walking Infrastructure Improvements

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05

Prioritisation

Prioritisation

Introduction

Route prioritisation is the final step of the LCWIP process, where the routes most likely to deliver on the aims and objectives of the LCWIP are identified. Combining the information gathered up to this stage, each cycling route and walking and wheeling route presented in Stages 3 and 4 was appraised against a set of criteria.

For the realistic and practical implementation of the LCWIP, the walking and cycling routes will be assessed and prioritised based on policy, strategy, deliverability and financial priorities:

- **Strategic priorities** with regards to cycling routes concern a number of factors that would ensure the route meets current and future demand and fills network gaps, tying it in with the objectives of the LCWIP. For the walking and wheeling zones, connectivity with the existing public transport network was evaluated through the walking and wheeling route's distance from rail stations. This was also assessed by considering the number of bus stops and whether they tackled a severance issue or utilised greenspace. Access to existing residential and employment centres, as well as support for future strategic growth, were assessed based on the existing population and employment density and the site allocations a route would link to in the future.
- **Deliverability** was evaluated by considering public acceptability, by utilising the feedback received through engagement.
- **Financial priorities** concerned the affordability of implementing the proposed improvements along the cycling route/ walking and wheeling zone. This was assessed by assigning a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) score to each proposed improvement, and the average RAG score was assigned to each route. The cost of implementing the proposed improvements was assessed separately since improvements were only identified for three cycling and three walking and wheeling routes. The costs per route can be seen in Appendix H.

The criteria against which cycling routes and walking and wheeling routes were scored varied slightly for a number of reasons. These include the availability of data (e.g., PCT demand for cycling) and for walking and wheeling routes, bus stops, severance and greenspace were considered more significant in the context of walking and wheeling than cycling).

A scoring system of 1 to 3 was put in place, and the score against each of the criteria was summed to give an overall score for each cycling route or walking and wheeling route.

The criteria for scoring each cycling route or walking and wheeling route can be seen in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2. The resulting scoring for each criteria is presented in Appendix H.

Table 6-1: Cycling Route Prioritisation Criteria

#	Criteria		Description
1.1	**Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth**	Meeting Future Cycling Demand	Future Propensity to Cycle Tool flows were assessed along each route. A score of 0-3 was assigned to each route.
1.2		Connectivity Linking to the Existing Walking/ Cycling Network	The route is scored based on the extent to which it overlaps with the existing network or planned/proposed schemes. If the route follows the existing or proposed network by >50%, it receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when 12.5% 25% of the route aligns with the existing or proposed network. Finally, if less than 12.5% of the route follows the existing or proposed network, it is given a score of 3.
1.3		Improving Housing Connectivity	The route is scored based on the population density along its path. A score of 1 is assigned if the population density is less than 2,747. If the population density falls between 2,747 and 6,388, the route receives a score of 2. Finally, if the population density exceeds 6,388, the route is assigned a score of 3. These scoring boundaries are determined using the Jenks natural breaks classification, which divides the population density across Maidstone into three categories.
1.4		Supporting Strategic Growth (Housing)	The route is scored based on its connectivity to planned or committed housing or mixed-use development sites. A score of 0 is given if the route does not pass within 400 meters of any planned or committed development. If the total number of dwellings within planned or committed developments that the route passes within 400 meters of is in the lowest third across all routes, the route receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when this total falls within the middle third across all routes. Finally, if the total number of dwellings is in the highest third, the route is given a score of 3.
1.5		Providing Access to Employment	The route is scored based on the employment density along its path. A score of 1 is assigned if the employment density is less than 24. If the employment density is between 25 and 97, the route receives a score of 2. If the employment density exceeds 98, the route is assigned a score of 3. These scoring boundaries are determined using the Jenks natural breaks classification, which categorizes the employment density across Maidstone into three groups.

Table 6-1: Cycling Route Prioritisation Criteria

#	Criteria		Description
1.6	**Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth**	Supporting Strategic Growth (Employment)	The route is scored based on its connectivity to planned or committed employment or mixeduse development sites. A score of 0 is given if the route does not pass within 400 meters of any planned or committed development. If the total number of dwellings within planned or committed developments that the route passes within 400 meters of is in the lowest third across all routes, the route receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when this total falls within the middle third across all routes. Finally, if the total number of dwellings is in the highest third, the route is given a score of 3.
2.1	**Deliverability**	Public Support	Scoring is assigned based on feedback from public consultation. A score of 1 indicates low support, meaning the route was in the lowest scoring routes in terms of percentage of consultants who either agreed or strongly agreed with the route. A score of 2 signifies medium support. Routes which scored 2 were in the middle scoring routes in terms of level of support. A score of 3 indicates high support, meaning the public overall agrees with the cycling route. Routes which scored 3 were in the highest scoring routes in terms of percentage of consultants who either agreed or disagreed with the route.

Table 6-2: Walking/ Wheeling Route Prioritisation Criteria

#	Criteria		Description
1.1	**Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth**	Connectivity Linking to the Existing Public Transport Network	The route is scored based on its proximity to the rail network and the associated passenger numbers. A score of 0 is given if the route does not pass a train station. If the route passes train stations with passenger numbers in the bottom third compared to all routes, it receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when the route passes train stations with passenger numbers in the middle third across all routes. Lastly, if the route passes train stations with passenger numbers in the top third, it is given a score of 3.
1.2		Connectivity Linking to the Existing Public Transport Network & Key Features	The route is scored based on its proximity to the bus network and the associated number of bus stops as well as the proximity to key additional features. A score of is given if the route does not pass a bus stop or key feature. If the route passes the number of bus stops in the bottom 50% compared to all routes then it scores 1. If the number of bus stops which the routes passes is in the highest 50%, it scores 2. If the route additionally connects to greenspace or crosses a severance feature, it scores an additional 0.5 for each.
1.3		Access to Education	The route is scored based on its proximity to education sites. A score of 0 is assigned if the route does not pass within 400m of a school. If the route passes within 400m of schools with a combined pupil count in the lowest third compared to the total pupil numbers of other routes, it scores 1. A score of 2 is given when the route passes within 400m of schools with a combined pupil count in the middle third relative to other routes. Lastly, if the route passes within 400m of schools with a combined pupil count in the highest third, it is assigned a score of 3.
1.4		Improving Housing Connectivity	The route is scored based on the population density along its path. A score of 1 is assigned if the population density is less than 2,747. If the population density falls between 2,747 and 6,388, the route receives a score of 2. Finally, if the population density exceeds 6,388, the route is assigned a score of 3. These scoring boundaries are determined using the Jenks natural breaks classification, which divides the population density across Maidstone into three categories.
1.5		Supporting Strategic Growth (Housing)	The route is scored based on its connectivity to planned or committed housing or mixed-use development sites. A score of 0 is given if the route does not pass within 400 meters of any planned or committed development. If the total number of dwellings within planned or committed developments that the route passes within 400 meters of is in the lowest third across all routes, the route receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when this total falls within the middle third across all routes. Finally, if the total number of dwellings is in the highest third, the route is given a score of 3.

Table 6-2: Walking/ Wheeling Route Prioritisation Criteria

#	Criteria		Description
1.6	**Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth**	Providing Access to Employment	The route is scored based on the employment density along its path. A score of 1 is assigned if the employment density is less than 24. If the employment density is between 25 and 97, the route receives a score of 2. If the employment density exceeds 98, the route is assigned a score of 3. These scoring boundaries are determined using the Jenks natural breaks classification, which categorizes the employment density across Maidstone into three groups.
1.7		Supporting Strategic Growth (Employment)	The route is scored based on its connectivity to planned or committed employment or mixeduse development sites. A score of 0 is given if the route does not pass within 400 meters of any planned or committed development. If the total number of dwellings within planned or committed developments that the route passes within 400 meters of is in the lowest third across all routes, the route receives a score of 1. A score of 2 is assigned when this total falls within the middle third across all routes. Finally, if the total number of dwellings is in the highest third, the route is given a score of 3.
2.1	**Deliverability**	Public Support	Scoring is assigned based on feedback from public consultation. A score of 1 indicates low support, meaning the route was in the lowest scoring three routes in terms of percentage of consultants who either agreed or strongly agreed with the route. A score of 2 signifies medium support. Routes which scored 2 were in the middle scoring three routes in terms of level of support. A score of 3 indicates high support, meaning the public overall agrees with the cycling route. Routes which scored 3 were in the highest scoring 3 routes in terms of percentage of consultants who either agreed or disagreed with the route.

Prioritised Cycling Routes and Walking and Wheeling Zones

The results of the prioritisation exercise can be seen in Table 6-3 and Table 6-4:

The prioritisation exercise was undertaken on all nine walking routes and the eight cycling routes within Maidstone. The Ashford to Maidstone cycling route was not prioritised given it is not a like-for-like comparison with the internal routes.

Table 6-3: Prioritised Cycling Routes

Cycling Route	Prioritisation Rank
C08 Route 8 Tovil to Maidstone Medical Campus	1
C16 Route 16 Langley to Maidstone Town Centre	2
C11 Route 11 Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy	3
C10 Route 10 Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus	4
C18 Route 18 Lidsing Garden Community to Maidstone Town Centre	4
C09 Route 9 Tovil to North Shepway	6
C14 Route 14 Bearsted to Marden	6
C15 Route 15 Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway	8

Table 6-4: Prioritised Walking/ Wheeling Routes

Walking/ Wheeling Route	Prioritisation Rank
W02 Route 2 Bearsted to Maidstone West	1
W04 Route 4 Weavering to Bearsted	2
W09 Route 9 Tovil to Maidstone Barracks	3
W01 Route 1 Barming to Maidstone East	3
W03 Route 3 Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School	5
W06 Route 6 Harrietsham to Lenham Growth Site	6
W08 Route 8 Coxheath to Shepway	7
W05 Route 5 Bearsted Employment Site to Bearsted Station	8
W07 Route 7 Headcorn	9

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Integration and Application

Integration and Application

The final stage of the LCWIP process considers how the LCWIP should be integrated into local policies, strategies and plans. As well as using the LCWIP outputs to prepare delivery plans and strategies, it is crucial that the LCWIP as a whole is integrated into local policies and plans.

Feedback received from the public consultation indicated that further engagement would be required to ensure there is integration between the LCWIP routes and any forthcoming active travel infrastructure proposed by planned developments. Whilst this is out of scope for this LCWIP, it demonstrates the importance of integration between this LCWIP and planned/ committed planning developments.

It is crucial to create a clear link between the LCWIP and other strategies such as the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Assessment (2018), the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy (2011-2031) and the Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP). Creating this link will help to make the case for future funding for walking and cycling infrastructure as well as ensuring that consideration is given to active travel schemes within Boroughwide transport plans and strategies.

Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy (2011 2031) and Maidstone LCWIP

It is particularly important to highlight the relationship between the Maidstone LCWIP and the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy (the Strategy). The Strategy, developed prior to the LCWIP, contains several proposed and prioritised active travel routes.

The Maidstone LCWIP builds on the approach and actions outlined in the Strategy, and it was integral to the process of route selection to ensure their alignment with the previously identified routes.

Importantly, the Maidstone LCWIP and the Strategy complement each other, working together to create a cohesive network of walking and cycling routes that address key barriers and concerns for local residents. The LCWIP routes do not replace those in the Strategy, nor do they receive funding priority. Instead, the LCWIP routes expand on the Strategy, and when funding becomes available, both sets of routes will be considered for development.

Figures 6-1 and 6-2 illustrate how the final proposed LCWIP walking and cycling net-works integrate with the Strategy routes, creating a more extensive and cohesive active travel network.

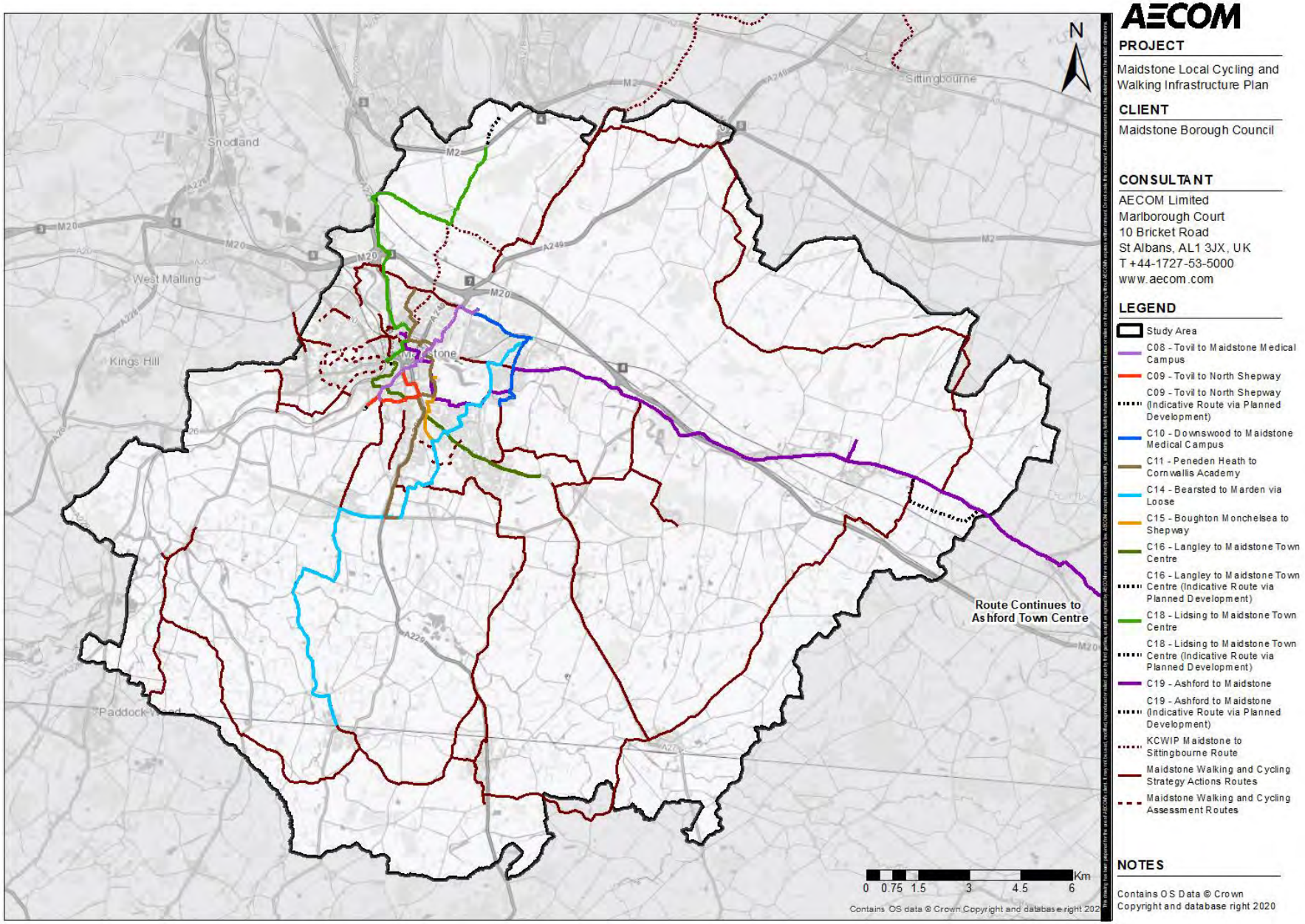

Figure 6-1 Final Identified LCWIP Cycling Routes and Planned/ Committed Active Travel Routes

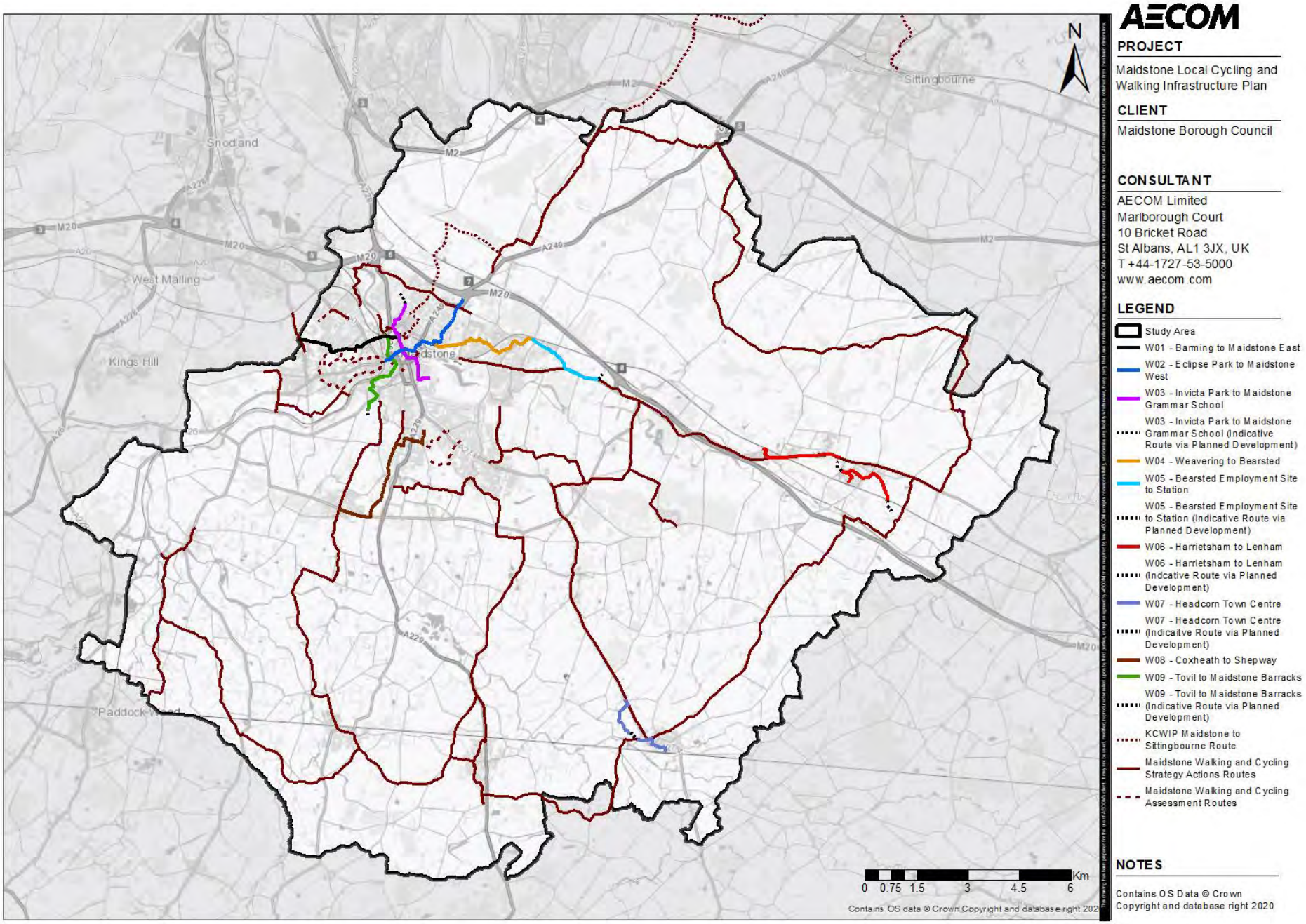

Figure 6-2 Final Identified LCWIP Waking Routes and Planned/ Proposed Active Travel Routes

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Conclusion

Conclusion

The LCWIP analysed the current active travel conditions across Maidstone and developed a cycling, walking, and wheeling network that includes routes and improvements designed to encourage a modal shift towards sustainable transport, promoting healthier and more sustainable lifestyles. This prioritisation process resulted in nine cycling routes, nine walking and wheeling zones, 57 high-level cycling improvements, and 51 high-level walking and wheeling improvements, all shortlisted for further feasibility studies and eventual implementation over the next ten years. The goal is to make walking, wheeling, and cycling more attractive options for both leisure and commuting.

Extensive data analysis (Stage 2) outlined the characteristics of the study area, including the current transport system, demographics, travel patterns, topography, collisions, and physical constraints. National, regional, and local policies were also reviewed to ensure the LCWIP aligns with broader transport objectives and existing or proposed active travel schemes.

Cycling (Stage 3) and walking and wheeling (Stage 4) networks were developed through an iterative process, taking into account current and future trip generators, planned developments, and active travel schemes, alongside local stakeholder input. Public and stakeholder consultations ensured that the proposed networks address the needs and concerns of local residents, tackling barriers such as safety and accessibility. Improvements along proposed routes were identified to address issues like dangerous junctions or a lack of active travel infrastructure that might suppress demand.

To ensure practical implementation, walking, wheeling, and cycling routes were assessed and prioritised based on strategic alignment, deliverability, and financial considerations. This process indicates which routes and zones should be prioritised to deliver the greatest benefits in the short, medium, and long term.

Several existing or proposed active travel schemes in Maidstone, such as the Walking and Cycling Assessment Routes, Walking and Cycling Strategy Actions, and the KCWIP, are already in place. The LCWIP is designed to complement these efforts, creating a cohesive and well-connected active travel network. For the LCWIP to remain relevant and aligned with future policies, regular reviews and updates will be necessary adjustments. The LCWIP is designed to be integrated into local planning and transport policies, making it a dynamic, live document that will evolve over time.

It is important to note that the prioritised network presented in the LCWIP reflects the scope constraints and strategic priorities. These routes should not be viewed in isolation, as only a dense, coherent network can maximise the benefits and significantly shift modes toward sustainable travel. Identified desire lines and routes that were not prioritised at this stage are still potentially important strategic connections that will contribute to building an active travel network that enhances accessibility, safety, and convenience for all. Regular updates and coordination between LCWIPs and other active travel policies and schemes will be essential to achieving this long-term vision of sustainable transport infrastructure.

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Appendix A - Walking and Cycling Strategy Action Routes

Proposed Walking & Cycling Strategy Actions
Maidstone Town Centre

N
W E
S

MTC10
MTC7
MTC8
MTC5
MTC2
MTC6
MTC13
MTC12
MTC1
MTC14
MTC3
MTC4
MTC9

Legend

- Existing Cycle Route
- Proposed New / Improved Route
- Proposed New / Improved Road Crossing
- Proposed Pedestrian / Cycle Bridge
- Proposed Wayfinding Strategy (MTC11)
- Proposed Cycle Parking Improvements
- Medway Valley Towpath
- MTC1 — Walking & Cycling Strategy Action
- Proposed Public Realm Improvements (to include access for pedestrians & cyclists)

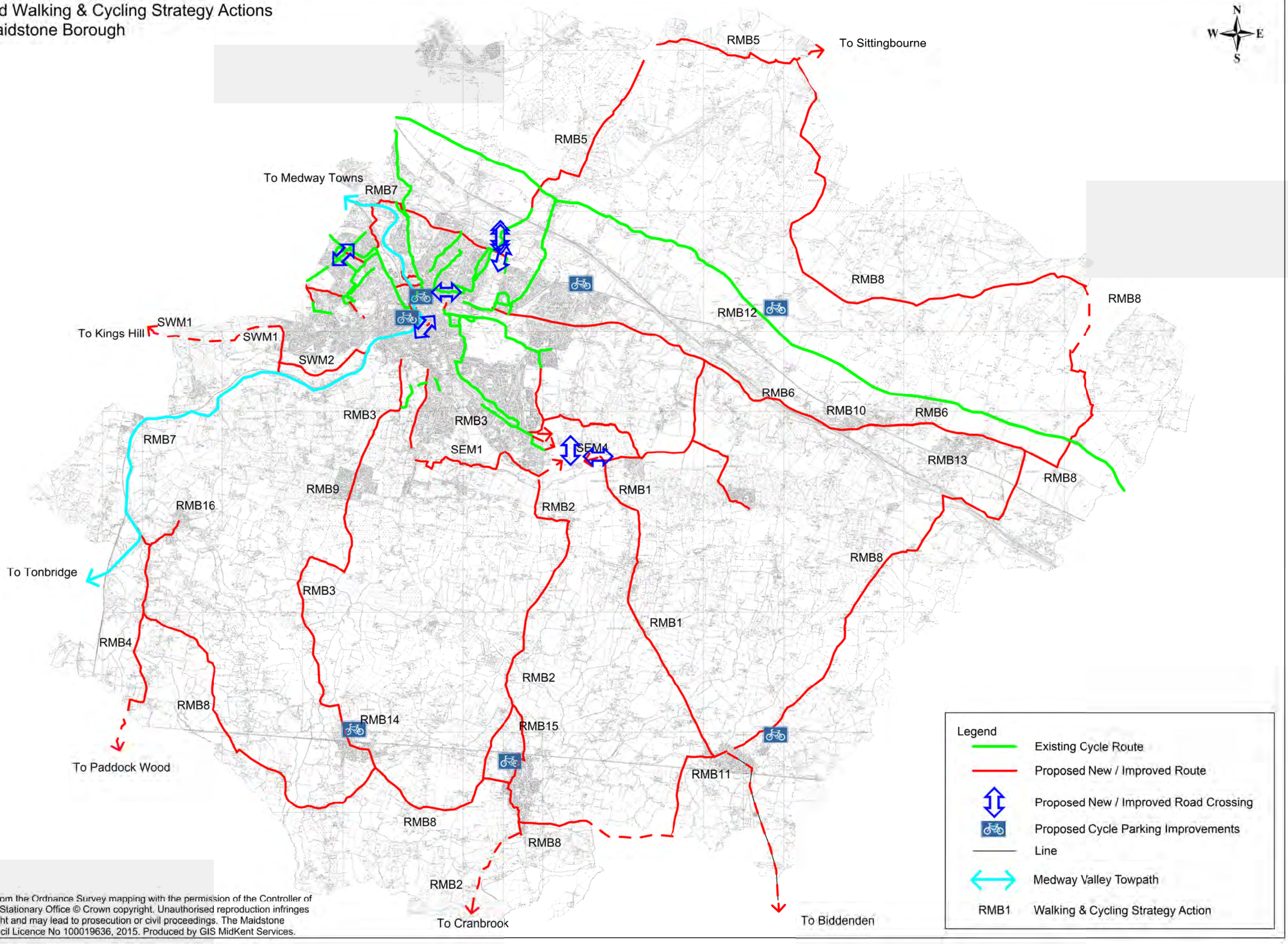
Proposed Walking & Cycling Strategy Actions
Maidstone Urban Area

Legend

- Existing Cycle Route
- Proposed New / Improved Route
- Proposed New / Improved Road Crossing
- Proposed Pedestrian / Cycle Bridge (MTC13)
- Proposed Cycle Parking Improvements
- Proposed Wayfinding Strategy (MTC11)
- Medway Valley Towpath
- NWM1 — Walking & Cycling Strategy Action
- Maidstone Town Centre boundary (see large scale map)
- Proposed Public Realm Improvements (to include access for pedestrians & cyclists)

NWM3
NEM3
NEM2
MTC9
NWM2
NWM1
NEM1
NWM4
NWM5
NEM4
NWM5
NEM5
SWM2
SWM2
SEM3
SEM4
SEM5
SEM1

Proposed Walking & Cycling Strategy Actions
Rural Maidstone Borough



Appendix B - Origin and Destination Clusters

Origin and Destination Clusters

Origin		
Cluster Name	Comment	Location
Marden	Strategic growth site, MBC focus, rail station, rural service centre	Internal
Lenham Growth Site	Strategic housing growth site, rural service centre	Internal
Harrietsham	Town centre, MBC focus, rural service centre	Internal
Yalding	Strategic growth site, rail station, larger village	Internal
Staplehurst	Strategic growth site, MBC focus, rail station, rural service centre	Internal
Headcorn	Strategic growth site, MBC focus, rail station, rural service centre	Internal
Coxheath	Strategic growth site, larger village	Internal
Langley	Strategic growth site	Internal
Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne)	Strategic growth site, rail station, larger village	Internal
Sutton Valence	Strategic growth site, larger village	Internal
Barming	Strategic growth site, high population density	Internal
Allington	High population density	Internal
Tovil	Strategic growth site, medium population density	Internal
Downswood	Strategic growth site, medium population density	Internal
Shepway	Medium population density	Internal
Lenham Town Centre	Strategic growth site, MBC focus, rail station, rural service centre	Internal
Peneden Heath	High population density	Internal
Bearstead	Strategic growth site, high population density, rail station	Internal
Boughton Monchelsea	Strategic growth site, high population density, larger village	Internal
Lidsing Garden Community	Significant mixed-use site	Internal
Maidstone Town Centre	Strategic growth sites, high population density, city centre	Internal
Ashford	KCWIP cluster, major town/ city	Cross-Border
Sittingbourne	KCWIP cluster, major town/ city	Cross-Border
Larkfield/ West Malling	KCWIP cluster, major town/ city	Cross-Border
Chatham	KCWIP cluster, major town/ city	Cross-Border
Cranbrook	KCWIP cluster, major town/ city	Cross-Border

Destination		
Cluster Name	Comment	Location
Lenham Town Centre	Rural service centre, MBC focus, medium employment density	Internal
Leeds Castle	Significant tourist site	Internal
Cornwallis Academy	Key education site	Internal
Maidstone Town Centre (South)	Town centre	Internal
North Weavering	Planned employment development, tourist site	Internal
Eyhorne Street	Planned employment development	Internal
Maidstone Town Centre (East)	Planned employment development, significant education sites, medium employment density	Internal
Maidstone Town Centre (West)	Key retail site, significant education sites	Internal
Barming	Hospital sites, medium employment density, significant education sites	Internal
Shepway	High employment density, medium education sites	Internal
Loose	Medium education sites	Internal
Maidstone Town Centre (North)	Town centre	Internal
North Shepway	Significant education sites, significant greenspace site, high employment density	Internal
Plumtree Green	Significant employment sites	Internal
Marden	Significant employment sites	Internal

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Appendix C - Route Audits

Maidstone Route Audits

Route audits were conducted during the week commencing 27 May 2024 to assess the condition of selected cycling and walking routes. The route audit notes for each route are also provided at the end of this technical note. The assessment of cycling routes was carried out using the TfL's Cycle Level of Service (CLoS) tool which can be used to identify strengths and weaknesses, and therefore what the design needs to address. Walking routes were assessed using the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT) as per LCWIP guidance. The primary function of the tool is to assess the current condition and suitability of a walking route. The results of these assessments informed the development of interventions for shortlisted routes.

Cycle Level of Service

A CLoS assessment provided in LTN 1/20 has been completed to assess the existing condition of the eight priority cycle routes.

The CLoS assessment takes into consideration more than just the geometric conditions of a route, it also takes in consideration the five key design principles – cohesion, directness, safety, comfort, and attractiveness, which contribute to a positive cycling experience. Each of these principles has multiple subcategories and have a simple scoring assessment that identifies strengths and weaknesses. The scoring mechanism is made up of Red, Amber, or Green with an assigned a corresponding value between 0-2 (a red mark indicates a weakness and a green score a strength within the proposals/provisions) with a maximum score of 50 available for each route – the higher the score, the greater the levels of compliance with LTN1/20. The scores can help identify which areas of the route/design require improvement. Only proposed schemes that score 70% or higher (i.e. score of 35 or more) with no critical fails would generally be considered for government funding.

Table 1 provides a summary of the CLoS scores for each of the cycle routes in their existing condition. It should be noted that there was no available traffic flows/speed data for some of the cycle routes. A conservative approach has been taken to assess the existing condition and a score of zero or one was assigned to the corresponding subcategories of routes with no data to ensure the robustness of scoring.

According to the results in Table 1, Route C08 is the only route with a score close to satisfactory (in accordance with LTN 1/20). The remaining routes would require improvements to reach an acceptable level, requisite for potential government funding.

Table 1: Cycle Level of Service Assessment

	Barming to Maidstone East	*Tovil to North Shepway*	*Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus*	*Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy*	*Bearsted to Marden via Loose*	*Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway*	*Langley to Maidstone Town Centre*	*Ashford to Maidstone*
CLoS criteria	**Route C08**	**Route C09**	**Route C10**	**Route C11**	**Route C14**	**Route C15**	**Route C16**	**Route C20**
Cohesion: Connections	1.5	1	2	1.2	0.7	1.7	1	1.6
Cohesion: Continuity and Wayfinding	1.8	0.0	1.3	1.5	0.5	1.5	0.5	0.5
Cohesion: Density of network		1.0		0.0	1.5		0.7	1.0
Cohesion: Notes		*Had to wait ages at the crossing*		*only indication of cycling is a warning sign on approach to the junction/signs and lines to be refreshed. uncertainty in wayfinding (existing routes) should be clarified/Add no entry exception for cycling /Car traffic feels fast/ Had to wait ages at the crossing*	*Similar to last point follows the same scoring*		*Effective width of approximately 3m at this section /No cycle facility/ on road only/Station parking in platform level*	
Directness: Distance/deviation	2.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	0.3	1.3
Directness: Time: Frequency of required stops or give ways	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.0	0.7	2.0
Directness: Time: Delay at junctions	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.7
Directness: Time: Delay on links	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0
Directness: Gradient	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.3	2.0	1.3	1.0	1.1
Directness: Notes							Junction on gradient	
Safety: Motor traffic speed	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.3	0.0	2.0	1.0	1.0
Safety: Motor traffic volumes	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.5
Safety: Risk of collision - segragation	1.7	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.0	1.4
Safety: Risk of collision - conflicting movements at junctions	1.0	1.0	2.0	0.3	0.5	1.0	1.0	1.0
Safety: Legible road marking and road layout	2.0	0.0	1.7	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4
Safety: Conflict with kerbsie activity	2.0	0.0	1.7	1.0	1.7	2.0	2.0	1.6
Safety: Evasion room and unnecessary hazards	2.0	2.0	1.3	2.0	1.0	0.7	1.3	1.8
Safety: Notes	*Not sure what term time would be like for conflicts*	*No segregated path /Road markings very faded for cycle facility /Very steep/ road markings very faded/ very busy section due to two supermarkets being nearby*		*Steep gradient and higher vehicle speeds/ sight loss of visibility uphill*	*Road marking into major road need repaint but seems to be established route/Very tight roads we no room/ no lighting at all/ no road markings on the route/ rural route*		*No markings/ no kerbs/ off road/Bin could be a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists /Risk of collision due to poor visibility /Poor visibility for cyclists going up ramp to the bridge and also going under the bridge/ also obstruction on route*	*Need to refresh markings*
Comfort: Surface quality - major and minor defects	0.8	1.0	1.3	0.5	1.5	1.0	1.3	1.1
Comfort: Surface quality - surface type	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.4
Comfort: Effective width without conflict	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.3	0.7	1.4
Comfort: Wayfinding	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	0.8	1.0	0.8	1.0
Comfort: Notes		*Not enough width for cycle facility so most appropriately should be on the carriageway*		*/no wayfinding and width below desirable/Cycle friendly gully*			*Off road/First signage to indicate shared use path /Visibility is poor and effective width narrows down to 1.3m/ however it is between river and private property boundary/Signage near residential location/Defects on the ground which can be a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists/ effective width of 2.5m/Poor visibility for sign/Narrowing of effective width/*	*Wayfinding plinth*
Attractiveness: Lighting	1.8	2.0	1.0	2.0	0.5	0.3	1.3	0.8
Attractiveness: Isolation	1.3	1.0	0.5	2.0	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.5
Attractiveness: Impact on pedestrians	1.3	0.0	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.0	0.5	1.0
Attractiveness: Street clutter	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.8	2.0	1.8	1.6
Attractiveness: Secure cycle parking	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Attractiveness: Notes	*Maintenance needed to make existing lighting function better Might have parking in school grounds*	*No cycle parking facility*					*Cycle facility available however might be part of shopping centre Obstruction on the route Good signage at this location however maintenance is needed as vegetation is over growing onto the path Signage near residential location Well maintained part of the route No cycle facilities No off road facilities but roads are low speed*	*No cycle storage*
Total	**34**	**22**	**29**	**30**	**24**	**28**	**23**	**31**
%	**69%**	**44%**	**58%**	**59%**	**48%**	**57%**	**46%**	**61%**

Walking Route Audit Tool

The WRAT uses a range of criteria to assess how well a route meets the core design outcomes, with scoring ranging from 2, being the highest, to 0, being the lowest.

The criteria are:

- attractiveness
- comfort
- directness
- safety
- coherence

The WRAT requires to score the route against the following criteria:

0 for poor provision (RED)
1 for provision which is adequate but should be improved if possible (AMBER)
2 for good quality provision (GREEN)

A score of 70% (i.e. a score of 28 out of a potential 40 points) should normally be regarded as a minimum level of provision overall. Routes which score less than this, and factors which are scored as zero should be used to identify where improvements are required.

Table 2 provides a summary of the WRAT scores for each of the walking routes in their existing condition. It should be noted that where there was no or limited data available to score the route, a neutral score of 1 was applied.

It can be seen that none of the routes assessed provide required level of comfort for pedestrians, indicating the need for improved infrastructure.

Table 2: Walking Route Audit Tool assessment

	ATTRACTIVENESS				COMFORT						DIRECTNESS						SAFETY			COHERENCE	
Walking Route	Maintenance	Fear of crime	Traffic noise and pollution	Other	Condition	Footway width	Width on crossings	Footway parking	Gradient	Other	Footway provisions	Location of crossings	Gaps in traffic	Impact of controlled crossings on JT	Green man time	Other	Traffic volume	Traffic speed	Visibility	Dropped kerbs and tactile pavements	**TOTAL**
W01	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	2	1	19
W02	1	1	1		1	0	2	2	1		2	2	2	1	2		0	0	1	2	21
W03	2	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		2	1	1	1	2		1	1	1	1	20
W04	0	1	2		1	1	1	1	1		2	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	2	19
W06	1	2	1		2	1	1	1	1		2	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	2	21
W07	1	1	2		1	0	1	1	2		1	2	1	1	1		1	1	2	2	21
W08	1	1	1		1	0	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	16
W09	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	18

Route Audits Notes

Route W01/C08 – Barming to Maidstone East

The section of this route nearer the town centre was relatively narrow, with the crossing of the River Medway on the railway alignment being both a geographic necessity and width constraint. On the town centre side of the bridge, the existing pathway would benefit from vegetation removal and/or trimming to improve sightlines and make better use of any existing lighting features.

Route W02 – Bearsted to Maidstone West

This route has several distinct sections. The western section, through the town centre and across the River Medway, is characterised by frequent street crossings, multi-lane roads, and the bus-only street, the latter of which is considered to offer the best walking environment for this section. Towards the north, the pathway transitions into a shared path, winding through a residential estate. The path quality is generally good, but often poorly lit and with limited sightlines.

Route W03 – Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School

This route was primarily through residential neighbourhoods to the north of the centre. The southern section had some relatively difficult or circuitous crossings of arterial roads, which contrasted with the pleasant walking environment of connecting streets. Hastings Road was considered a good walking environment, but had poor crossings of side streets.

Route W04 – Weavering to Bearsted

This route had a variety of walking environments. A couple of relatively deep gullies to cross on dirt or gravel paths, followed by sections of steps and byway. In these sections, lighting was largely absent. It was one of the more scenic routes, and could be improved through improved signage, lighting, vegetation clearance for visibility, and localised path widening.

Route W05 – Bearsted Employment Site to Station

This route is predominantly rural in setting, with a significant section along Ashford Road. Here, the route has a wide, sealed shared path, which, when it diverges towards Bearsted, transitions into a narrower footway.

Route W06 – Harrietsham to Lenham

This route largely follows Ashford Road, with a small section through Harrietsham Village. Here, the footway is quite narrow and has a patchy surface quality. Along Ashford Road, it's approximately 2m wide with few driveway crossings; however, there was a pinch point observed underneath the railway overbridge.

Route W07 – Headcorn Town Centre

This circular route uses the parks and residential streets of Headcorn. The route quality is generally good, due to the low-speed streets it uses. Some slower-speed intervention treatment at junctions could be used, and would help people cycling navigate the numerous right-angle turns.

Route W08 – Coxheath to Shepway

This route was predominantly rural, with the section through Coxheath having an approximately 2m wide footway; the effective width of this could be wider with some

vegetation cut-back. Through Loose, there were sections with no footway, alough the low-speed environment of the village seemed conducive to sharing regardless of footway provision.

Route C09 – Tovil to North Shepway

Much of this route follows the River Medway. Relative to other walking and cycling routes, this is of good quality. Most sections are lit, well-paved, and have a variety of amenities such as seating, rubbish bins, and some cycle parking. Vegetation could be cut back along the route for improved visibility, and the canal section without any fencing seemed slightly precarious just south of the railway bridge.

Route C10 – Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus

This route starts with a tree-lined corridor between residential neighbourhoods in Downswood, before using Ashford Road to head west, then north, towards Bearsted. This section is characterised by a relatively fast-moving residential street, with wide turn radii on junctions, a slightly uphill gradient, and a generally smooth asphalt surface.

Route C11 – Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy

Route 11 also passes through a variety of contexts. Predominantly rural at its south and urban at its north, the cycling environment is equally varied in quality. The section along Linton Rd / A229 largely does not have any cycle facility, with a wide flush median and traffic lanes. The section near Mote Park has much of the existing wayfinding found along the route, and has narrow traffic lanes and no cycle facility. Just north of the town centre, the section adjacent to East Borough Primary School has sufficient traffic-calming measures for a shared environment.

Route C14 – Bearsted to Marden via Loose

At approximately 9km, this route has a significant route catchment of the area east of Maidstone. South of Shepway, the route follows some narrow hedgerow-lined lanes; while visibility is limited, the relatively low traffic volume experienced made for easy cycling. A short section of shared path along the A274 was of good quality; approximately 2.5m wide, with lighting and smooth surfacing. It then turns through Mote Park, and ends in some relatively busy residential streets.

Route C15 – Boughton to Shepway

This route links Mote Park with villages to the south. The section from Boughton Green to Maidstone Cemetery follows byways; while scenic, the paths require resurfacing, trees and shrubs need cutting back for better visibility, and lighting should be investigated for all-year usage.

Route C16 – Langley to Maidstone Town Centre

This route links Langley with Maidstone over 7.6km. It largely follows the A274, which has some sections of good standard shared pathway; however, the majority of side street crossings are not traffic-calmed, and will require interventions such as tightened kerb radii and raised tables to improve cycle safety.

Route 18 – Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre

This route from Lidsing to Maidstone if of mixed quality. In some villages that the route passes through, such as Boxley, traffic calming in the form of speed cushions and chicanes

have been installed to lower average speeds. However, in the hiller, more rural sections, limited forward visibility combined with poor surface quality and a narrow carriageway mean people on bikes have to share the carriageway with vehicles.

Route C20 – Ashford to Maidstone

This route offers a longer-distance route that links Lenham with Maidstone. At the Maidstone end, it uses Mote Park to cross into the town. Here, the pathway is of relatively good quality, being wide and well-surfaced. A new signalised Toucan crossing of Willington Street takes people cycling and walking towards Ashford Road, where it largely follows for the rest of the route. Ashford Road route quality is mixed; from wide, paved shared paths, to muddy tracks adjacent to the carriageway, to sharing with vehicles.

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Appendix D - Cycling and Walking Improvements

Cycle Route	Improvement
C08 - Route 8	New cycle lane - segragated and improve wayfinding and signage
C08 - Route 8	Resurface/pave carriageway, clean exising surface from debris and improve signage and wayfinding
C08 - Route 8	Add new cycling crossing
C08 - Route 8	Implement toucan crossing and shared-use/ advisory cycle lane depending on available space
C08 - Route 8	New cycle lane - segragated and improve crossing facilities and signage
C08 - Route 8	New cycle lane - segragated
C08 - Route 8	Improve wayfinding, signage and improve existing crossing - cycle priority, remove fences and implement bollards
C08 - Route 8	Implement segregated cycle lane, clean exising surface from debris, improve signage and wayfinding and improve street lighting
C08 - Route 8	New cycle lane - shared use, resurface/pave carriageway, clean exising surface from debris, improve signage and wayfinding, bollards / double yellow to prevent cars parking
C08 - Route 8	Improve wayfinding and implement secure cycle parking
C08 - Route 8	Improve surface quality, manage overgrown vegetation, implement wayfinding and secure cycle parking
C08 - Route 8	Manage conflicting movements at junction through signalling and improve surface quality
C08 - Route 8	Junction improvements
C08 - Route 8	New cycle lane - segragated and implement signage warning drivers to give way to cyclists
C08 - Route 8	Implement traffic calming
C08 - Route 8	Introduce cycle provision for the right turn out of Square Hill Road
C08 - Route 8	Improve drainage under bridge
C08 - Route 8	Implement segregated cycle lane to separate cyclists from queuing traffic
C08 - Route 8	Improve drainage under bridge
C08 - Route 8	Implement traffic calming measures
C08 - Route 8	Undertake biodiversity assessment to mitigate against any negative impacts on biodiversity
C11 - Route 11	Improve cyclist crossings, wayfinding and improve signal timings
C11 - Route 11	Reduce traffic speeds and improve visibility around bend
C11 - Route 11	Cyclist segregation required to avoid risk of collision. Manage conflicting movements at junction to improve safety
C11 - Route 11	Implement wayfinding and secure cycle parking
C11 - Route 11	Junction improvements to improve signal timings and improve surface quality
C11 - Route 11	Improve signage and road markings to reduce uncertainty in wayfinding
C11 - Route 11	Upgrade surface quality and increase footway width
C11 - Route 11	Improve wayfinding and manage parking on pavements with double yellow lines and signage
C11 - Route 11	Undertake generalised maintenance to increase attractiveness of route
C11 - Route 11	Improve surface quality and widen footway
C11 - Route 11	Upgrade advisory cycle lane to segregated cycle lane along A229
C11 - Route 11	Reduce traffic speed
C11 - Route 11	Implement crossing facilities at key junctions to enhance cyclist safety
C11 - Route 11	Implement segregated cycle lane along A229
C11 - Route 11	Introduce cycle provision for the right turn out of Square Hill Road
C11 - Route 11	Improve drainage under bridge
C11 - Route 11	Implement segregated cycle lane to separate cyclists from queuing traffic
C11 - Route 11	Implement CCTV and signage to enforce 30mph speed limit
C11 - Route 11	Improve cyclist crossings at junction, wayfinding, improve signal timings
C11 - Route 11	Junction improvements across the A249 to increase cyclist safety and priority
C11 - Route 11	Implement traffic calming measures
C16 - Route 16	Improve signage and wayfinding and improve street lighting
C16 - Route 16	Implement cycle facility either on road or on the footway, resurface/pave carriageway, general improvements to public realm, improve signage and wayfinding and implement bollards / double yellow to prevent cars parking
C16 - Route 16	General improvements to public realm and implement bollards / double yellow to prevent cars parking
C16 - Route 16	New cycle lane - segragated and implement shared-use crossing with improved signal timings
C16 - Route 16	Improve signage and wayfinding, introduce 20mph limits/zones
C16 - Route 16	Implement secure cycle parking and improve road markings/ layout
C16 - Route 16	Implement segregated cycle lane along A274
C16 - Route 16	Add markings to shared-use space
C16 - Route 16	Junction improvements
C16 - Route 16	Add markings to shared-use space and implement clear signage for cyclists and drivers
C16 - Route 16	Implement segregated cycle lane where appropriate along A274
C16 - Route 16	Improve cycle access to station and implement secure cycle parking
C16 - Route 16	Improve signage/ wayfinding to Maidstone West Station
C16 - Route 16	Manage overgrown vegetation on shared-use path

C16 - Route 16	Improve surface quality

Walking Route	Improvement
W02 - Route 2	Add new pedestrian crossing
W02 - Route 2	Add additional crossing point, implement traffic calming measures and public realm improvements
W02 - Route 2	Maintenance required to make link from on-street footway to improve links to wider network, remove barriers to make path entrance accessible and vegetation management
W02 - Route 2	Upgrade footpaths which connect into Vinters Park and which connect residents to the proposed walking route
W02 - Route 2	Undertake localised resurfacing and wayfinding
W02 - Route 2	Implement wayfinding
W02 - Route 2	Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving
W02 - Route 2	Add crossing facilities outside school
W02 - Route 2	Add pedestrian crossing
W02 - Route 2	Widen footways
W02 - Route 2	Implement additional crossing point, public realm improvements and wayfinding to stations
W02 - Route 2	Public realm improvements to link into the pedestrianised High Street area, pavement widening over Medway river and provide updated pedestrian priority crossings
W02 - Route 2	Pedestrian crossing improvements to reduce pedestrian wait times, crossing distances, pedestrian priority and safety
W02 - Route 2	Pedestrian crossing improvements to reduce pedestrian wait times, pedestrian priority and safety
W02 - Route 2	Footway widening and implement double yellow lines to manage parking on footways
W04 - Route 4	Maintenance required to make link from on-street footway to improve links to wider network, remove barriers to make path entrance accessible and vegetation management
W04 - Route 4	Undertake lighting accessment and implement CCTV to enhance safety around schools
W04 - Route 4	Improve wayfinding and undertake localised resurfacing and improve drainage
W04 - Route 4	Implement wayfinding and tactile paving and dropped kerbs, ensure footway is continuous and sufficiently wide
W04 - Route 4	Implement dropped kerbs, tacile paving and crossing points
W04 - Route 4	Implement lighting and improved wayfinding
W04 - Route 4	Implement footway
W04 - Route 4	Implement lighting which extends to the bridge, wayfinding, localised resurfacing and implement step-free access across railway
W04 - Route 4	Implement tactile paving, dropped kerbs and crossing points
W04 - Route 4	Implement pedestrian crossing improvements
W04 - Route 4	Implement continuous footways
W04 - Route 4	Improve wayfinding to station and implement pedestrian crossing for access into the station
W04 - Route 4	Improve drainage and undertake localised resurfacing where required
W09 - Route 9	Create new walking link from path to street and manage overgrown vegetation
W09 - Route 9	Manage overgrown vegetation and bin placement to improve visibility and reduce pinch points
W09 - Route 9	Manage overgrown vegetation to improve visibility and surface improvements required near bridge connection
W09 - Route 9	Manage overgrown vegetation and general surface maintenance
W09 - Route 9	Implement tactile paving/ dropped kerbs on entrance to CTD west of Lidl entrance
W09 - Route 9	Vegetation management to improve junction visibility
W09 - Route 9	Implement CCTV to improve safety
W09 - Route 9	Implement fence and signage/ bins to manage litter along this section of route
W09 - Route 9	Improve connection to travelodge, currently narrows at grade change
W09 - Route 9	Vegetation management and surface upgrades
W09 - Route 9	Manage overhanging greenery
W09 - Route 9	Manage parking on footway to improve path visibility
W09 - Route 9	Re-align crossing to desire lines towards north side of road from junction
W09 - Route 9	Add pedestrian crossing, implement dropped kerbs/ tactile paving, improve crossing visibility and undertake general surface improvements
W09 - Route 9	Localised paving repairs and improve drainage along the Medway Footpath
W09 - Route 9	Implement step-free access to Maidstone Market, widen footways and implement wayfinding
W09 - Route 9	Implement wayfinding to Maidstone West Station
W09 - Route 9	Public realm improvements and improve drainage into subway
W09 - Route 9	Undertake biodiversity assessment to mitigate against any negative impacts on biodiversity along the Medway Footpath section of route
W09 - Route 9	Improve pedestrian crossing faciltiies to access Whatman Park and investigate step-free access options into Whatman Park
W09 - Route 9	Investigate implementing step-free access into Maidstone Barracks Station and implement CCTV to enhance safety
W09 - Route 9	Implement pedestrian crossing facilities, traffic calming to enforce 20mph speed limit, pavement decluttering, pavement widening and connect/ upgrade pavements along this section of route
W09 - Route 9	Undertake localised paving repairs and update public realm

AECOM Delivering a better world

Appendix E - Public Consultation Report

WALKING & CYCLING INFRASTRUCUTRE PLAN

August 2024

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Consultation@maidstone.gov.uk

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The consultation was open between 22nd July to September and 19 August 2024. It was promoted online through the Council's website and our social media channels. Residents who have signed up for consultation reminders were notified and sent an invitation to participate in the consultation. Stakeholders were email directly informing them of the consultation and inviting them to participate.

The consultation activities consisted of a survey, where participants could choose to answer questions about either just cycling or walking or both and comments maps for walking and cycling that showed the suggested routes interactively and allowed people to place pins with comments their views and suggestions.

Consultation Reach

- 4,421 people visited the project page for the consultation at least once.
- There was a total of 292 responses to the survey (including 151 partial responses).
- There were 156 pins on the walking map from 67 individuals.
- There were 128 pins on the cycling map from 44 individuals.

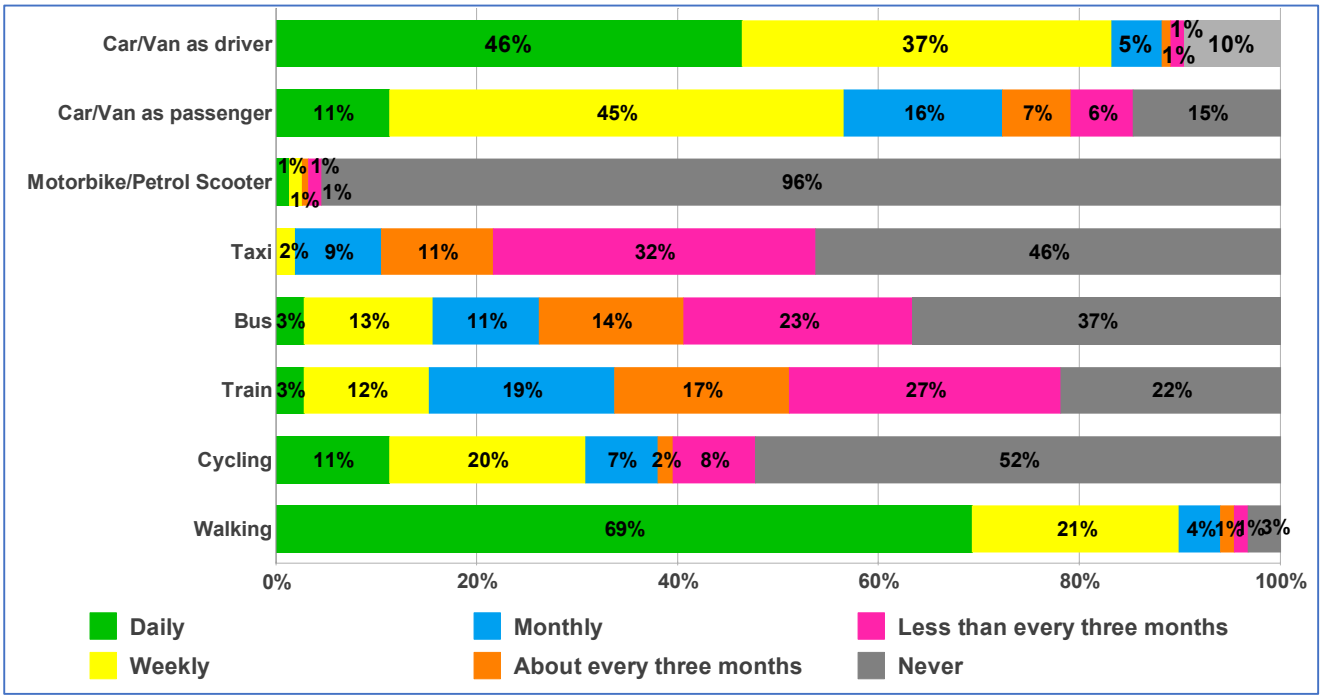
Report Notes

- Not every respondent answered every question, therefore the total number of respondents refers to the number of respondents for the question being discussed not to the survey overall.
- Rounding means that some charts may not add up to 100%.
- Comments have been categorised into themes, some comments may fall into more than one theme.
- Comments that contain a suggestion are shown in full throughout the survey.
- Emailed stakeholder comments are included at the end of the report.

Travel Methods

Survey respondents were presented with a list of transport methods and were asked how often they used each method for journeys up to 20 minutes.

- A total of 220 respondents answered this question.
- 69% of respondents said they walk on a daily basis, with 90% stating they walk at least once a week.
- Just under a third of respondents said they cycle at least once a week.



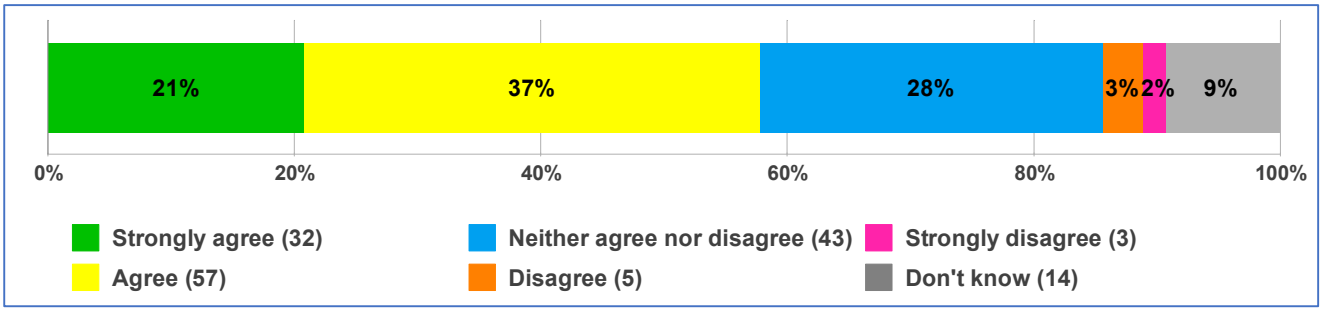
Walking Routes

In the walking route survey, for each route that formed part of the consultation, respondents were presented with maps of the routes and were asked to what extent they agreed or disagree with the route shown being a walking route. They were presented with five answers options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' and a 'don't know' option.

Walking Route 1: Barming to Maidstone East

Survey Agreement Question & Comments

- There were 154 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 1.
- 14 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 57.8% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 1. Barming to Maidstone East being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 116 respondents provided comment.

Agree Comments	**64**	
Theme	No.	Examples
Generally Positive	24	• Away from main roads and quick route, taking in some scenery and interesting roads. • This would be a fantastic route for me and my family to get to town without driving. • makes sense to me, connects where I live now to where I used to live in town. I haven't walked it so don't know how easy it is with buggy. • It takes walkers off the main road yet is still direct.
Station Links	11	• Ideal walkway from the station. • I don't know this route in detail, but a link from the station and town centre is good for the able bodied.
Hospital links	9	• This will give more people access to walk to Maidstone Hospital. • Easy access to the hospital. • It would benefit Maidstone to have a clearly marked walking route between the town centre and hospital, and the many schools along the route would benefit from additional infrastructure to support those of their students who use existing footpaths to travel to and from school/buses.
Safety	8	• The current route is not easy to use as a pedestrian with a pram. Specifically, if you are crossing the road by Maidstone Barracks (opposite the corner shop) you take your life in your hands. • Anything that encourages walking is to be encouraged as long as the routes are safe/well maintained. • A safe walking route into town from that area is needed.
Congestion	8	• This area is very congested with traffic. A walking route will encourage people to go to the hospital on foot. • You need safe walking routes. There are already too many cars on the roads and buses finish too early. Routes MUST be well lit. • It's a great way to connect the hospital back into the town centre, cross through many residential areas as well as schools. This is already used quite well but there needs to be thought given to quality of pavements and also particularly on Queen's Rd where congestion around school times plus on-road parking reduces this to a single lane road. The pavements are too narrow here as well. There are various routes already existing, and which connect off Giddyhorn lane that might be considered for reinforcement as public walkways.
Schools	6	• Make much more of the links with Maidstone Hospital, the collection of schools and college campus and Maidstone Barracks station.

		• Make much more of the links with Maidstone Hospital, the collection of schools and college campus and Maidstone Barracks station.
Go further	6	• The more walking routes, to keep people healthy and less traffic on roads the better. • More routes need to be considered for both walking and cycling across the borough. Whilst I agree with this proposal, I do not feel the proposals as a whole have gone far enough.
Cycling	6	• As long as cycling on this route was banned, I would support a walking route. • It would encourage people who wished to walk, especially those who work at Maidstone hospital. I feel that a cycle lane alongside would be beneficial as i think this would be used by commuters.
Usage	5	• I think it would be a useful route and be used by many. • It is a well used route.
Suggestions	3	• Pedestrian crossing between Maidstone Hospital and Hermitage Court would be very useful for staff. • The route is one which residents could usefully take. However, improvements would need to be made to the ease of crossing at St Peters street and the rest of gyratory for this to work. • This is vital and in need of improvement. It needs to be walkable in winter and at night.
Others		• Accessibility – 3 • Lighting – 3 • Maintenance of surfaces - 2

Neutral Comments	**33**	
Theme	No.	Examples
Usage	8	• Unlikely to use this route. • This is one of the parts of Maidstone that has good bus routes would the walking route be used? • It is not a route I would use.
Accessibility	8	• It's quite long and include a very steep hill. Not suitable for all. • Crossing the busy roads near London Road is horrible and time consuming. No other big town treats pedestrians with such contempt. Buckland Hill and High Level Bridge is a nice and busy route into town but cyclists often cause a hazard to pedestrians - especially at start and end of school day. Keep the cyclists off the footway and the bridge! • Whilst it is a viable route on paper, it is a bit convoluted and not that attractive in reality
Don't know/Unfamiliar with area	7	• I don't know this area very well and it looks straight enough. Is it a nice walk? And not just roads to get you into town? • I wouldn't have a need to use this route so I will let others with stronger opinions answer. • I do not know the area.
Safety	4	• Traffic must be slowed, and crossings made safer. • I am afraid that I do not know this route terribly well. I know that it is busy with traffic and is possibly a route that visitors to the hospital may use which means that it would need to be safe for all users including wheelchair and pram.
Already exists	4	• It is already a safe and usable walking route that i have used. • This appears to be an existing path??
Other themes		• Cycling -2 • Congestion - 2 • Hospital - 2

		• Schools -1 • Station - 1

Disagree Comments	**7**	**Shown in Full**
It is a very long route ok for some but too long for me.		
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few months later the scheme was scrapped, and all the money was wasted.		
It is a walking route to the station if you were on your way to work not something I would do for pleasure with the dog		
I don't think It goes far enough into Barming for people to use it. I think it would better if it ended around Barming Heath, it would be more central then		
Use the money to repair potholes in the road.		
Along congested roads, lots of fumes		
Part of lane is not maintained properly gets very overgrown.		

Don't know Comments	**12**	
Theme	No.	Examples
Don't know /Unfamiliar with area	10	• Not familiar with the route. • It's not near where I live nor where I want to go. It's probably fine for people who want to go there. • This far away from where I live and I don't know the roads.
Other	2	• My comments would relate to walking generally in and around Maidstone not a specific route, i.e. on pavements and footpaths which should be for pedestrians only and should be enforced. • Bits of this, at least ARE walking paths that I know, but map is not as clear as I would like. Also, I would have thought Giddyhorne Lane offered a better route than part of this.

Mapping Comments Summary

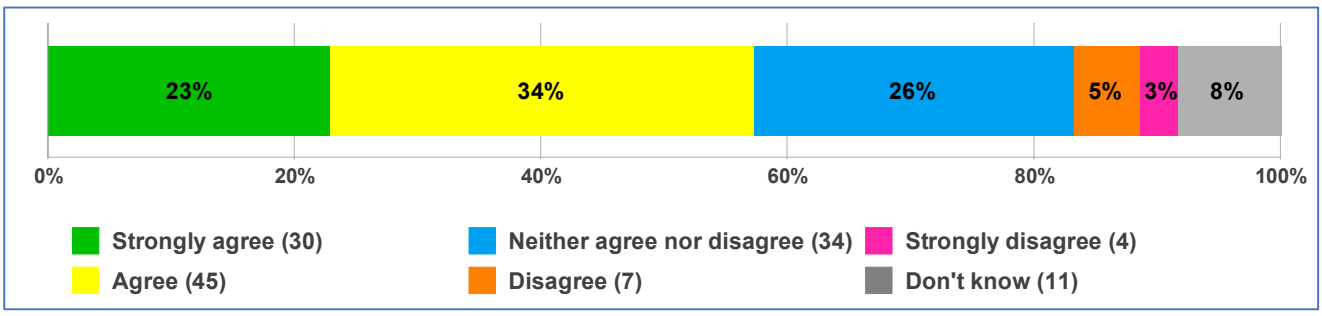
There were 28 comments from the walking map that related to Route 1. Barming to Maidstone East.

Theme	**No.**	**Examples**
Accessibility	13	• Lack of pavements on both sides of the road requires crossing/re-crossing the road at the corner to access Whatman Park. • This pathway is far too narrow for bicycles pedestrians' prams and wheelchairs. The gate to the park is often locked on this side, so you have to walk all the way round to the entrance opposite KFC for step free access. • Not sure I understand how you are supposed to cross half-way down Scrubbs lane and into Somerfield Rd. I don't believe there is currently any access or pathway there. Scrubbs lane itself is a quite well maintained footpath but can be a bit narrow and steep and can be a bit dark at night for those uncomfortable with such.
Safety	9	• No footpaths on either side of the road here. Very dangerous having to share the road with speeding traffic. • It would be helpful to have a pedestrian crossing from/near Hermitage Court to the Maidstone Hospital side of Hermitage Lane. Crossing the road anywhere

		between Maidstone Hospital and the other NHS services located at Hermitage Court is currently very dangerous.
Suggestions	6	• Perhaps this could be a cycle/ walking shared route? This could be very useful link for the major employer in the town. • In addition to proposal already made to divert path/cycleway into carpark- and especially if not possible, explore possibilities of 1. moving the Brenchley Gardens wall to redirect the footpath INSIDE Brenchley Gardens, as per indicative line on this map. or 2. remove the wall and replace both it and the path with new planting and boundary features that reinstate the enclosing effect of the wall in a different way that includes a redirected, wider and greener pathway. or 3. remove the wall and widen the path/cycleway, reusing the bricks elsewhere. • For the route marked green, it is important to have a zebra crossing somewhere between the Maidstone General Hospital site and Hermitage Court campus (where various clinical buildings and office buildings supporting services to patients) are located. Patients, who may be vulnerable or with reduced mobility, relatives and staff need to walk and cycle between the sites and the current provision could be made safer and more welcoming. This includes lighting. Route 10 also needs to be extended into the Hermitage Court campus given this and also planned developments. • A zebra crossing should be installed to make this crossing safe for patients and staff trying to access Hermitage Court. Pathways should be extended down each side of the road and the pathway should be fed directly into Hermitage court rather than ending in the woodland, alternatively proper signposting should be put up where the pathway splits. • New crossing needed for pedestrians using Giddyhorn Lane (or Barming station) to access NHS facilities at Hermitage Court.
Cycling	5	• Queens rd suffers from on-road parking and cars waiting at school times. Often reduced to single lane passing on road. For cycling this is hard to picture being a safe route..... walking can become very congested around school times. • For cyclists this is a very steep hill and dangerous for those heading down at speed - road condition is not great - and even for pedestrians the pavement condition is varied. When there are bad winters the pavements ice-up and are literally unusable - walking on the road is the only (somewhat safer) option.

WALKING ROUTE 2: BEARSTED TO MAIDSTONE WEST STATION

- There were 131 respondents to the agreement survey question for walking route 2.
- 11 respondents answered, 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 57.3% (75) of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 2. Bearsted to Maidstone West being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 84 respondents provided comment.

Agree Comments	**43**	**Examples**
Generally positive	16	• Good walking route from the station to Bearsted. • Any increase in walking & Cycling routes is a good thing • It's a fair route, and predominantly off the main roads. But the start point is not in Bearsted.
Improvements	10	• The proposed improvements details would make this walk much safer and easier for local residents and could potentially encourage more walkers, taking traffic off the roads. • Away from main roads. Like speed restrictions and crossings for pedestrians. • It goes from lots of homes to schools, town centre, entertainment and station. Widening footways and adding good crossing points sounds good. To encourage walking, a route needs to be and feel direct, and it needs to be easy to find the way when using quieter route options (for easier breathing and easier conversation). I am puzzled by the label about 'lighting through park'. The only park I can think of which seems to be on that route would be the nature reserve, and that is closed to people after dark, and needs to remain so for it to be an effective nature reserve. But the map doesn't show detailed location.
Safety	8	• It seems to be a more complex route and quite dangerous in parts. • It is really important to have walking routes in Maidstone where pedestrians are able to cross safely. • Routes to and from stations which are safe encourages train travel also.
Usage	7	• It's an odd one - perhaps I'm looking at too end to end but is anyone going to walk from M West to Marksies?! • Already a Very popular route most of day. Children using it to various schools saves parents using cars unnecessarily to cross R Medway bridges. • I never use it, others might, its out of the way.
Cycling	5	• As long as cycling on this route was banned I would support a walking route. • Could be very useful - even better if it can also accommodate cycles.
Congestion	4	• It is ok as a route but goes to highly trafficked areas of town so not that appealing • The proposed improvements details would make this walk much safer and easier for local residents and could potentially encourage more walkers, taking traffic off the roads
Lighting	4	• There are a lot of problems on the route, lighting, dangerous corners if cameras are needed. • Agree with all suggestions apart from lighting is Vinters Park as this is disturbing for wildlife.
Other themes		• Accessibility – 3 • Maintenance – 2 • Go further/Do more -1 • Don't know route – 1 • Already exists - 1

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**23**	**Examples**
General Positive	4	• With the new changes would be saver for anyone in general.

		• Whilst any new walking route is positive I am not familiar with the route nor the local demand.
Usage	4	• A frequently used route, however, all the road crossing points require long waits for the pedestrian phase and light jumping is frequent. Vinters Park is an area of high biodiversity which requires less lighting not more. The grim toll of artificial lighting on wildlife must be addressed if the ecological decline is to be slowed. • I don't use this route regularly.
Lighting	4	• There is already a popular route through Vinters Park because it is green and pleasant. It does not need more artificial lighting to destroy its wildlife. The urban stretch is very unpleasant an frankly dangerous because the Sittingbourne Road and Maidstone Bridge / Bishop's Way crossings are anti-pedestrian and favour motorists. Safe crossings on the approaches to a town centre are obvious requirements for an economically and environmentally successful town. Maidstone is neither. • Is there parking at Barming to enable us to access this route? Is it a fairly flat route? Not familiar with the road, has it got pavements and street lighting along its whole length?
Already exists	4	• Existing path that could benefit with improvements as suggested. • Already adequate route in place.
Don't know/Unfamillar with area	4	• I do not go in that direction. • Not applicable to my daily life.
Accessibility	3	• A useful route for part or all of its length. I agree there should be better wayfinding markers and dropped kerbs. I do not currently find any problems needing traffic calming, but I am completely mobile and they may well have value for people with less mobility.
Other themes		• Safety – 2 • Cycling -2
Route Suggestions	2	• Whilst most of the proposal is fine lighting the Park seems very unwise. The Environmental and ecological [effect would be quite damaging. It also seems quite unnecessary to build through the park when could use the existing cycleway on the A20, which is quite near or go through Mote Park (in daylight) and then down Mote avenue, which is a more direct route, or cut through Turkey Mill onto Mote Avenue. • It doesn't go to Bearsted. Why not go through Mote Park?

Disagree Comments	**8**
Whilst I believe the route would be better served by routing the Maidstone West stretch via the millennium bridge (less traffic, clearer walkways). The section that runs passed Vinters nature reserve rather than additional street lighting UV pathway treatments could be used to allow nature friendly "glow in the dark" pathways an example of which can be found in Christ's Pieces park Cambridge.	
It's an easier walk than the first but still quite long. If M&S were encouraged back in to the town centre it would also be unnecessary!	
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.	
This is definitely not a walk. I would enjoy.	
I know this area somewhat and it would be nice to have a planned, significant path through this area.	
I agree that it is a walking route, but again has sections that are undesirable to those who feel vulnerable and requires improvements to be suitable for prams/pushchairs etc.	
It run nicely central for Grove Green and Vinters residents. If the path widening did take place it would be a good walk to town.	
Repair potholes in the roads.	

Don’t Know	10	Examples
Unlikely to use this route		
Some of the suggested improvements seem impossible - lights in a nature reserve, speed cameras on residential roads etc		
A walk I would consider with improvements		
You can't call it Bearsted as this does not even start in the parish of Bearsted		
Easy route		
if not shared with cyclists or other wheeled modes of transport. The map not Bearsted it is Vinters. Finishing the proposed roundabout should be a priority rather than this.		
It's not useful to me. I walk along Tonbridge Road to get shopping go to the market go to the library etc.		
I don’t know this route - never used it		
I am unfamiliar with it		
I don't know this part of town very well.		

Mapping Comments Summary

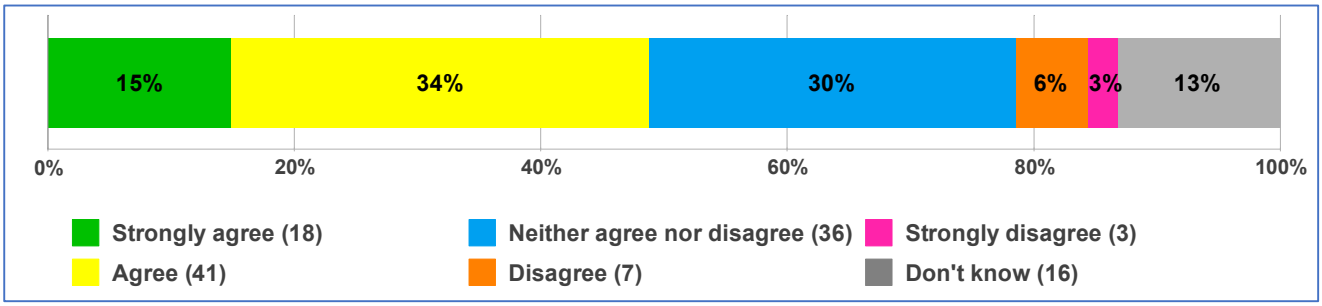
There were 15 comments from the walking map that related to Route 2. Bearsted to Maidstone West.

		Examples
Accessibility	8	• Vehicle movements from Broadway into Barker Road need to be slowed. The current staggered crossing with staggered timing does not prioritise pedestrian movement and needs amending to a single straight crossing. • Footpath here is too narrow and too near the road. Cars and lorries park on the footpath with impunity. Horrible when it rains as all pedestrians get splashed by passing traffic.
Safety	6	• The crossing across the Bridge Gyratory System is anti-pedestrian and dangerous. Priority is clearly given to vehicles on the crossing and pedestrians have to wait for long periods in a grim, polluted and exposed location. Further, pedestrians are often left marooned on the traffic island for long periods. Priority must be given to pedestrian movement across the crossing which should allow a full crossing (not just to the pedestrian island) and a countdown visual as used in London should be introduced to help pedestrians. • Too narrow pavements to walk on safely and very dark and feels unsafe at night.
Suggestion	2	• Probably not within scope of this project but a direct, safe, accessible pedestrian and cycling route from Maidstone to Detling Showground would be ideal. The showground's location, along with the fact most people have no choice but to drive there, causes excess vehicle traffic and congestion in the area - despite not being that far (as the crow flies) from Maidstone town centre. • Route 2 connects Bearsted to Maidstone West. Residents of Vinters Park may wish to connect to rail at Maidstone East. A walking and wheeling route along Union Street to join route 3 would provide this essential connection.

WALKING ROUTE 3: INVICTA PARK TO MAIDSTONE GRAMMER SCHOOL

- There were 121 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 3.
- 16 respondents answered ‘Don’t know’.

- Overall, 48.8% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 3. Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammer School being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 74 respondents provided comment.

Agree & Strongly agree comments	**37**	**Examples**
Generally positive	12	• A good route for people coming into town or continuing to the school. • Anything that encourages walking is to be encouraged as long as the routes are safe/well maintained. • Agree ish, on assumption is feeds kids to school, otherwise a waste.
Safety	9	• The area around Invicta School is very congested to the point of being dangerous. I collect my granddaughter from there. A safe walking route would enable many students and carers to walk instead of using their car. • This is a walk used by many school children and it is important to make this journey as safe and easy for them as possible. • Walking route would be safe for children returning to and from school.
Schools/Students	9	• A lot of school children would use this route. • Good for schools.
Accessibility	6	• I think it would be good to improve pedestrian infrastructure along this route, although this would be reliant upon pedestrian-supported crossings of major roads, as currently there are long waiting times stood adjacent to busy traffic, and this is not something which encourages people to walk more. • Again, the map lacks road names which would make the route clear to me. This one looks as if it has a detour. A more direct route, if one were possible, would be useful from our area to to MGS. The maps need more detail to be able to locate the routes properly and comment sensibly.
Cycling	5	• As long as cycling on this route was banned I would support a walking route. • There needs to be a safe route for children to get to school. The route currently on A249 is joint cycle and walking. There isnt enough space for both types of transport on the pavement. This would benefit from a dividing line being put up the pavement, similar to the walking/ cycle route on Mote Road.
Usage	5	• Well used by adults accessing town & stations & children to & from school. • A popular route I would think and would be useful
Suggestion	2	• All walking routes are important. Why does this route not use the back entrance of Maidstone Grammar School opposite the leisure center entrance to Mote Park and then use the park to travel north and continue to cross the Len on the footpath west of Turkey Mill and then follow this to Square Hill where crosses into the centre of Maidstone? That route is almost entirely off road.

		• Make much more of the links with Maidstone East station, Mote Park and the Leisure Centre.

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**20**	**Examples**
Accessibility	6	• Crossing points in the town are currently anti-pedestrian. On this route Wat Tyler Way is a racetrack dual carriageway where nobody respects the speed limit. Maidstone town is dangerous for pedestrians, the air is toxic and the quality of the public realm is very poor. • Is there parking at Invicta Road to enable us to access this route? Is it a fairly flat route? Not familiar with the road, has it got pavements and street lighting along its whole length?
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	6	• Not applicable to my daily life. • Don't know this area.
Route already exists	3	• Existing route should already be safe with plenty of controlled crossing points.
Suggestions	3	• Should be extended to Northumberland Road via West Park Road, South Park Road, Kent Avenue and Cumberland Avenue. This way it would serve a high population area with identified socio-economic need. • Some of the roads here are quite narrow. Might it be easier to connect Invicta with the already existing cycle path along the River and avoid narrow town centre roads until reaching around All Saints. • All along primary routes…… why are we not extending footpaths and cycle ways? People in more rural areas are the ones who need them!
Safety	3	• This route is grim, hazardous and traffic choked with motor vehicles ruling the roost from Sittingbourne Road across Wat Tyler Way. Traffic speeds must be slowed (speed camera on Wat Tyler Way) and pedestrian crossings redesigned to give priority to active travel modes.
Other themes		• Congestion/Traffic -2 • Usage -2

Disagree Comments	**9**	**Examples**
The route should follow those already used and this does not. MGS students rarely using Hastings Road, but use Kingsley Road. King Street, is normally switched with Lower Stone Street. Scott Street is often used to join Sandling Road rather than being followed to the end to avoid the traffic noise and takeaway restaurants.		
The very top part of this walk uses a restricted MoD path! Are you encouraging people to trespass on MoD land?!		
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.		
I don't think your idea of a nice walk and my idea of a nice walk other same thing.		
Not necessary, I walk most of this already and pretty easy to figure this out. Not sure what you are asking me, if this is about upgrading the route so that disabled have an easier time then fine but for most people this will make no difference.		
I would be uneasy for my child to use this route to walk between schools, you pass through far too many unsafe areas where the kids would be vulnerable.		
It's too close to the A249, should be more central to Penenden Heath to make it accessible to more residents. People wouldn't want to cross the A249 to get onto the route it would be too dangerous.		
too much traffic		
Repair the roads.		

Don't know comments	**8**	**Examples**
Unlikely to use this route		

Central part through town is obviously a route people use
Not a route I need to use but I am sure an advantage d For school children that walk or cycle to school
Dont use it.
I am unfamiliar with it.
Again , it's not a route I use for my daily needs.
Don't really use this route.
Map unclear.

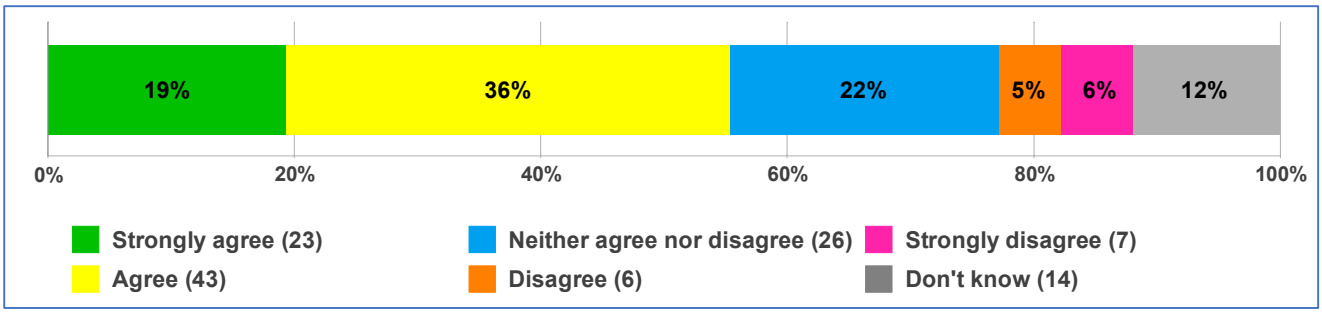
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 10 comments from the walking map that related to Route 3. Invictia Park to Maidstone Grammer School.

		Examples
Safety	6	• It can be dangerous to walk on this pavement as cars mount the pavement at high speeds to avoid the speed bumps. Some bollards next to the speed bumps would improve safety for pedestrians. • A hotspot for antisocial behaviour. Probably shouldnt promote this as a good pedestrian route.
Traffic issues	3	• This is a horrible stretch to walk on, shared with cycle path but too narrow for both. And cars drive way to fast which is a risk to both pedestrians and cyclists. Maybe make the road one lane? Loads of room then for separated cycle lane.
Accessibility	3	• People and the school children don't use Wat tyler way to access the town and bus station, but cut across the car park at the bottom of Hastings road, and use the alley and crossing to the back of the shopping centre and bus station. The alley and pavement to the crossing are in a terrible state, with humps which are dangerous, and cracks caused by tree root growth. Over the crossing on the opposite side of wat tyler way the pavement is in an equally poor unsafe state as is the crumbling and unsafe wall round the planters. It needs urgent attention and this would be a more used and better improved routes as it is the one everyone uses.
Suggestion	1	• The path is narrow and the road is steep, low light at night and misused by drivers going the wrong way on one way street. I suggest routing via Hope Street and Albert street. Where there is also access to a bench and grass. Alternatively, close the road to traffic

WALKING ROUTE 4: WEAVERING TO BEARSTED

- There were 119 respondents to the agreement survey question for walking route 4.
- 14 respondents answered, 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 55.5% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 4. Weavering to Bearsted being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 79 respondents provided comment.

Theme	**45**	**Examples**
Generally positive	22	• Excellent and useful connection to Bearsted rail station. • That route starts from Vinters, not Weavering. It's a fair route for walking and cycling, though the route from Fauchon's Lane to Grove Green/Weavering over the railway bridge would need some lights for it to feel safer for children and lone females. • looks well thought out.
Safety	12	• This walk covers a number of schools so would be important for the parents and children so that they would be safe and it encourages walking. • if for pedestrians and not shared with cyclists, escooters electric bikes - shared spaces are dangerous and do not take into account the needs of the walker, Improvement need to cars parked on the footpaths and cutting back of vegetation. • A safe route here would encourage more walkers.
Accessibility	11	• Some current paths are almost impassable during school start and end times. Overgrown, uneven, muddy. Not easy to walk on. • Looks potentially useful to some pedestrians but it is very indirect. • This route is very needed. Areas have no footpaths or narrow unsafe footpaths.
Improvements	8	• The improvements listed would vastly improve this route. This is key for safe commuting for school children. • Like increase in route finding and lighting, in fact features to make it a safer route. Particularly lighting, so could be used when dark in winter.
Usage	6	• Well used. Needs better surface water drainage - soaked recently by inconsiderate driver. • I use most of this route regularly.
Suggestions	3	• I live virtually in the middle of this route and use it in both directions, although towards Bearsted station I usually go via Averanches Road as the walk across the valley is very steep in both directions. A less steep, more curved route would be much better but is probably not possible due to both land ownership and costs! Certainly improved lighting through the Vinters cut-through would be an improvement. I am less keen on too much additional lighting or footway that touches Weavering Street as the lack of both is one of the attractive aspects of that road. Much better would be to make the whole of Weavering Street 20mph, preferably with a camera as the road nears the exit from the Diamond Jubilee Orchard.
Other themes		• Cycling – 2 • Lighting - 2

Neither Agree nor disagree	**14**	**Examples**
Don't know/Unfamiliar with area	5	• I don't know this route, but would like to think it is a nice walk with all the improvements planned. Can it also be a cycle path? • I don't live near there, so I don't know if this route will improve my walk.
Usage	4	• Wouldn't use it.

		• I wouldn't have a need to use this route so I will let others with stronger opinions answer.
Accessibility	2	• Again, part of this are very steep (where is crosses railway), includes a number of steps (again, where is crosses the railway) and is not suitable for all.
Funding/Spending	2	• It seems like a waste of money I would say. • Yet another you will have to spend lots of money on!
Other themes		• Cycling – 1 • Improvements - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree comments	**12**	**Examples**
Already good routes in place		
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.		
Can't see it being used, strategically - it doesn't go anywhere obvious, unless it's for MGS again?!		
Congested		
Unsafe route, even with lighting etc		
These are not walking routes for enjoyment they are roots to the stations		
Lighting within Vinter's Park would be an ecological catastrophe. Any widening of existing paths would damage biodiversity along this entire route. Please leave it as it is a pleasant green route to and from the town.		
No! Vinter's Park is loved because it has retained a rural quality and the proposal to light the route through the middle of the Park would shatter the 'dark skies' and harm wildlife for no gain. People won't use this route at night unless they like the dark. This Strategy appears to completely ignore ecological damage. Has it undergone an Environmental Impact Assessment? No lighting in dark skies and no loss of vegetation to hard surfacing further fragmenting our natural habitats!		
not required, just walk along the A20 its safer and already has the necessary dropped kerbs lighting etc		
I walked along the Ashford Road from Bearsted to Maidstone yesterday. The broad footway has been demarcated to some 3/4 of its width for cyclists (on the inside). Pedestrians have been permitted a narrow strip at the edge of the carriageway. Yesterday I saw a group of cyclists ding their bells and demonstrate with pedestrians (including a family with a pushchair) who had strayed onto the cyclists domain away from the busy carriageway. In term time this route is heavily used by school children at the start and end of the school day. There is no way they can safely fit into the traffic slipstream buffeted narrow strip at the carriageway edge. The Ashford Road is too wide where the cycle path is demarcated, and this increases traffic speeds. Taking the cycle lane from the carriageway rather than the footway would therefore have been more appropriate. This underlines the point that pedestrians, though numerous, are treated as third class citizens in some ways. A proper footway along Ashford Road with the cycle path relocated to the carriageway should be progressed. This will avoid destructive and expensive proposal to put lights into beautiful and dark Vinter's Park. Lighting would devastate biodiversity and everyone will still walk along Ashford Road.		
This route crosses the rail line at Banky Meadow, is very steep and i am not sure would be a safe route.		
I don't have a problem with most of it. I don't think you should be going through Weavering Heath or Vinter's Park with this intrusive scheme, and you don't need to anyway given the existing route on the A20		

Don't know comments	**8**	**Examples**
Usage	4	• Would not be used as much as outside where I would need to walk. • Unlikely to use this route
Don't know / Unfamiliar with Area	3	• I do not live in this area and do not walk there so do not have enough information to judge.
Other	1	• Maps are awful!

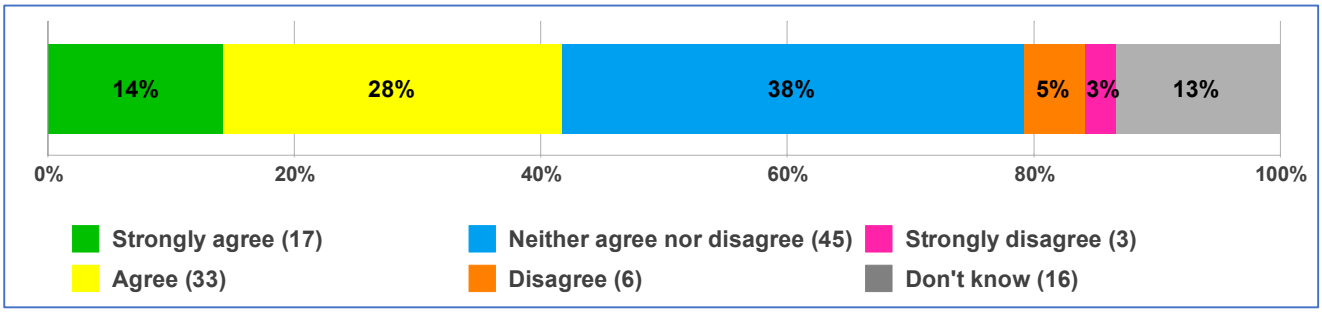
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 6 comments from the walking map that related to Route 4. Weavering to Bearsted.

Uneven path in need of improvement, very narrow some trees along path make getting past difficult. Not over looked so be careful, no lighting over grown. Not enough room for pedestrians and cyclists.
Very uneven and overgrown path, lots of standing water and mud. During school start and end times almost impossible to walk against the flow.
I am puzzled how Birling Avenue and Hog Hill become cycle routes - do you mean just cycling along the road?
A proper pedestrian crossing is required at/around the vehicle entrance to the station. The new crossing lower down Ware Street is not viable for those wishing to walk to Grove Green area.
Over grown most of the time, not enough room for pedestrians and cyclists. No lighting and has dog poo over the path most of the time.
The access point to the valley from Fauchons Lane is very steep, as is the climb to the railway bridge. There are steps and it is now paved but still unsuitable for wheelers. Very treacherous underfoot in the winter. I believe a lot of school children already use this route.

Walking Route 5: Bearsted Station to Woodcut Farm

- There were 120 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 5.
- 16 respondents answered, 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 41.7% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 5. Bearsted to Woodcut Farm being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 71 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**33**	**Examples**
Generally Positive	16	• Good straight walk. Can it also please be a cycle path? Especially as commuters like to cycle the other end. • Quick, straight route and safe. • A useful route that many would appreciate.
Usage	6	• I regularly walk something approximate to this route for pleasure. I have zero problems with it as it stands, but can imagine improvements would assist people who are less mobile. • I agree that it is a walking route, however it is highly unlikely that anyone would use this route unless the weather was fine. Walking along the A20 in the rain is undesirable, as you get splashed by every passing vehicle.
Cycling	6	• If implements as a walking walk and not as a shared space.

		• I think it's fine as a walking route. For cycling it would need slightly more cycling infrastructure in places as it would involve riding along the A20 currently, which is not particularly safe.
Safety	4	• Giving people a safe road to the station is much needed. • Safe walking route.
Accessibility	3	• This is not a very nice walk along Ware Street unless the path is going to be widened. The new cycle route along the A20 needs to be marked up to enable pedestrians and cyclists to be separated for the safety of both forms of transport. • The least hilly of the lot!
Other themes		• Go further / Do more – 1 • Already exists - 1 • Maintenance - 1
Suggestions	2	• The route is direct and coherent, connecting residential areas with the village centre and station. As the distance from the station increases the number of properties benefiting decreases. This could be mitigated by extension to the Bearsted Caravan and Motorhome Club, allowing holiday makers to walk safely to the village centre and station. • Make much more of the connection with Route 4 (of which this is really a continuation).

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**21**	**Examples**
Usage	7	• Uncertain but may be more used now by workers at the new industrial estate. • Not sure enough people warrant the costs.
Don't know	4	• I don't know enough about woodcut farm to comment. • Not familiar with this route.
Accessibility	3	• This route is fine except for the speeds on Bearsted Road at crossing points and the dysfunctional controlled crossings on the urban dualled section. • The pavements along the road from Bearsted Green to Woodcut farm are not very wide and the route is used as a rat run
Traffic Speed	3	• The widened footway along Ashford Road harmed biodiversity and urbanised this route and lessons must be learned for the future around environmental sensitivity. Traffic can be dangerous at junction of. Roundwell and the Ashford Road. Further, traffic speeds along the Ashford Road make walking unpleasant, speed cameras would help manage excess speed. • Traffic speeds appalling along A20 and dangerous to cross junction with Roundwell.
Other themes		• Safety – 1 • Already exists – 1 • Generally positive - 1
Suggestion	1	• What is at Woodcut Farm? Why not go to Hollingbourne

Disagree & Strongly disagree comments	**8**	**Examples**
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few months later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.		
Congested		
You need walking roots that people want to use from the train stations in the town to the schools clean them up make them safe. Put cameras up stop wasting your money on walking routes to nowhere.		
Already a fairly safe walking route.		

Marginal value as it doesn't go anywhere useful and very few people would need this route.
Quite a lot of intervention would be required here due to the nature of the road surface and age, its a tricky lane to drive down let alone walk down
Ware street is treacherous past the green, very narrow where the houses are by the Oak pub, it would need to be quite a bit wider. There are a lot of cars parked along that stretch too so visibility wouldn't be good.
too much traffic

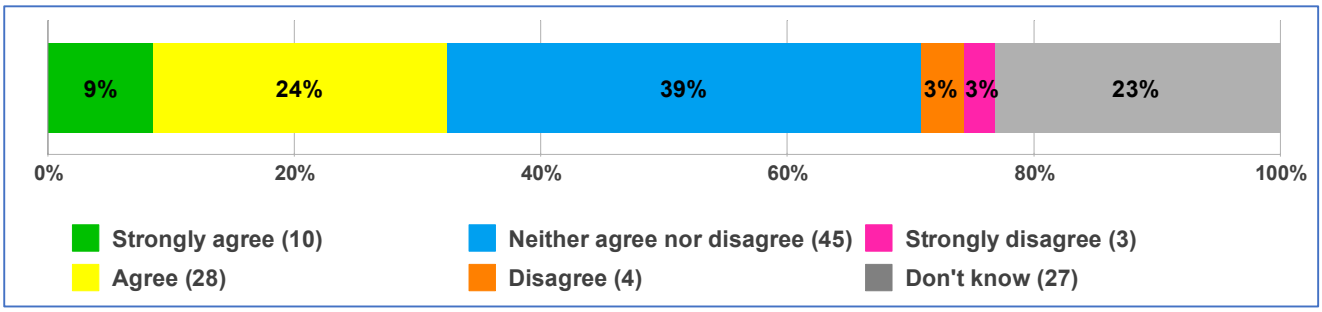
Don't Know	**9**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	5	• Not at all familiar with the area. • Not familiar with this route
Usage	2	• Don't really use this route. • Unlikely to use this route.
Other themes		• Maps – 1 • Maintenance – 1 • Improvements - 1

Mapping Comments Summary

There were no pinned comments on the walking map for Route 5. Bearsted to Woodcut Farm.

Walking Route 6: Harrietsham to Heathlands Garden Community

- There were 117 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 6.
- 27 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 32.5% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 6. Harrietsham to Heathland Garden Community being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 66 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & agree comments	**21**	**Examples**
Generally positive	11	• I like Harrietsham, and this route seems all right. • It looks like a viable walking route.
Safety	3	• A safe route is needed but not just from traffic. It also needs to be safe from predators. • Great for health safe walking routes are a much welcome edition
Cycling	3	• More cycle routes are needed.

		• As long as cycling on this route was banned, I would support a walking route.
Other themes		• Accessibility – 1 • Go further /Do more – 1 • Already exists – 1 • Don't know – 1 • Traffic – 1
Suggestion	1	• The route is direct and largely coherent. There should be a connecting spur to Lenham railway station. Immediately South of the A20 the route does not appear to follow any established highways or PRoW. Any new route will require a hard bound surface, appropriate lighting and a level of surveillance similar to that offered on Ham Lane

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**26**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamillar with area	12	• I don't know this area, so don't feel I can really comment. • Not familiar with this route.
Usage	7	• I don't see any fundamental objections but again its a long way so i doubt whether it will get much use. • I walk this way along the Pilgrim's Way/North Downs Way for pleasure but not often along the road. I find the current provision of pavements adequate and regularly see cyclists there too. The main requirement is crossing the A20 which can feel perilous as people regularly exceed the speed limit there.
Traffic Issues	4	• I guess it's fine but I'm not sure many will relish walking along the A20. High speed traffic (regardless of speed limit) lots of HGVs, noisy and high in vehicle fumes. • Very busy road for main part.
Generally positive	3	• i would not use this so much but nice area for others walking.
Accessibility	3	• Is there parking at Harrietsham or Heathland Garden Community to enable us to access this route? Is it a fairly flat route? Not familiar with the road, has it got pavements and street lighting along its whole length?
Suggestion	2	• The 30mph sections of A20 are good in this area because they are enforced by cameras. Extend the 30mph zone to make this route safe. • Extend reduced speeds section on A20. Already being looked at by KCC.
Other	1	• If the Heathlands development goes ahead calming traffic along the A20 and ensuring protection of verges, hedgerows and other semi-natural vegetation must be a priority.

Disagree & Strongly disagree comments	**6**
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.	
Don't know how useful this would be, would it be worth the cost ?	
Would need improvement of footpath and lighting on the A20 stretch.	
There will never be a Heathlands Development Therefore this route is not necessary.	
This entire development is inappropriate.	
Don't build the heathlands.	

Don't know	**13**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	9	• I don't know this route, so can't comment.

		• I do often visit Harrietsham as i have friends there but do not know the area well.
Usage	3	• Unlikely to use this route. • Don't use this route.
Improvements	1	• I have no strong feelings about this route as it is beyond my range, but definitely support the proposed improvements as I believe they would be of benefit to local residents.

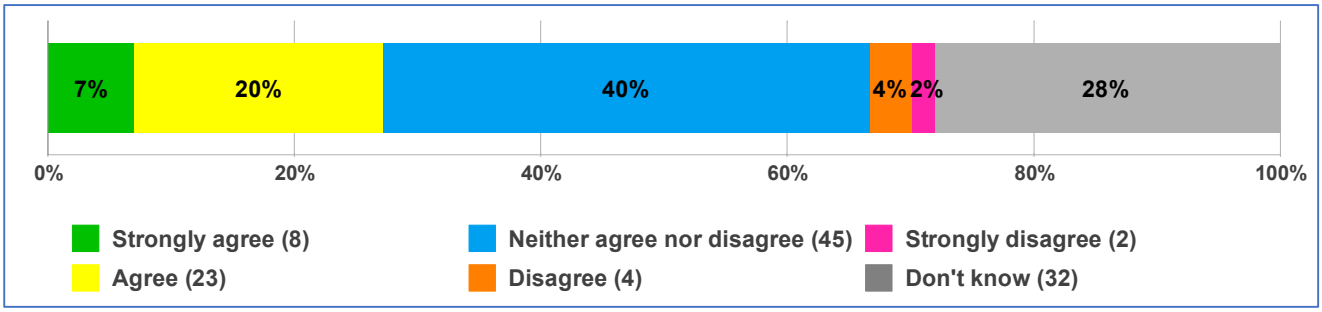
Mapping Comments Summary

There was 1 comment from the walking map that related to Route 6. Harrietsham to Lenham Heathlands.

A controlled crossing of the A20 will be required, giving priority to those walking and wheeling. The speed limit on the approach to the crossing will require reduction.

WALKING ROUTE 7: HEADCORN TO EMPLOYMENT ALLOCATION EMP1 (1) WEST OF BARRADALE FARM

- There were 114 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 7.
- 32 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 27.2% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 7. Headcorn to Employment Allocation EMP1 (1) Land West of Barradale Farm being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 56 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree comments	**18**	**Examples**
Generally positive	9	• It looks like a viable walking route • Nice rural walk.
Safety	7	• This route provides a safe walk for employees to their work place which is important. • Such a fast road in this area safer routes are needed.
Don't know	2	• Seems ok although I am not familiar with the area.
Cycling	2	• More cycle routes are needed.
Maintenance	2	• Already existing, not very well maintained

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**21**	**Examples**

Don't know / Unfamillair with area	12	• Not an area I visit. • Not familiar with this area.
Usage	3	• I do not go in that direction
Traffic issues (speed)	3	• Traffic speeds intimidating pedestrians on the Weald. Tame the speed and more people can walk.
Other themes		• Generally positive – 1 • Accessibility – 1 • Low priority route - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree comments	**5**	
I cant think there would be many users this route going to an industrial estate. The footpath acroos fields from Moat road was the sunject of a planning application and no doubt will be again. Seems like a waste of resources on this route. Would be better to look at a safe walking route to the airfield, rather than across muddy fields and poorly maintained footpaths or having to walk down a dangerous A road with no footpath.		
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.		
Doubtful it would be used, as the road route is shorter.		
Two sections of this route require walking along un-pavemented busy and dangerous roads. Also there is no pedestrian crossing at the cross roads in Headcorn. If the purposes of this is for people to arrive by train and work at the business estate, wouldn't it be a good idea to check how many unfilled jobs are actually there? Very few I'd think. As well as ask the question "who wants to walk the longest possible route to work through the countryside and on unpaved roads to reach their destination?" It doesn't seem very well thought through.		
Nobody would use this route unless it is for leisure walking. If you think an employee would walk from the train station to Barradale Farm using this route you're a bit deluded.		

Don't know Comments	**12**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	9	• I have no strong feelings about this route as it is beyond my range, but definitely support the proposed improvements as I believe they would be of benefit to local residents. • Don't know the area well enough to comment.
Usage	3	• Very rarely go that way to walk. • It's not some where I go. I just hope the bikes keep off pedestrian pavements.
Other themes		• Improvements – 1 • Cycling - 1

Mapping Comments Summary

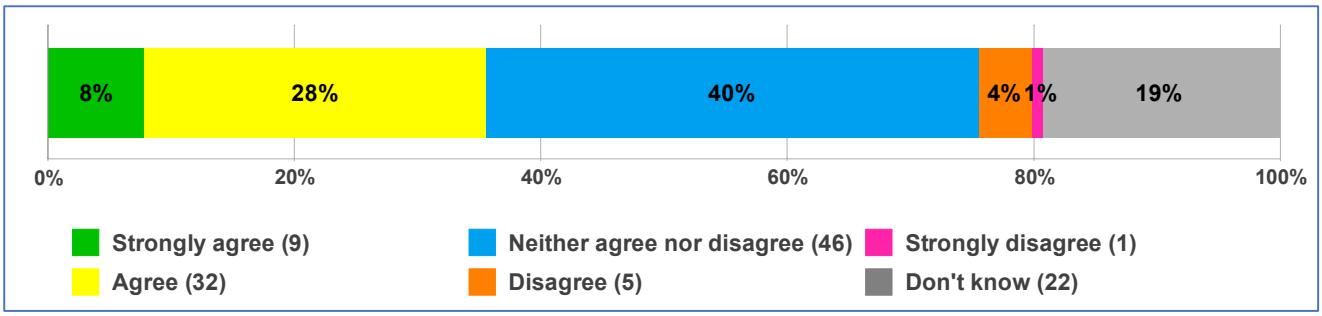
There was 1 comment from the walking map that related to Route 7. Headcorn to Employment Allocations (EMP1) 1 Land West of Barradale Farm.

Really? What is the benefit of this. It is far easier to walk in a straight line down the Maidstone Road/Millbank. The proposed route is rural and isolated in nature.

WALKING ROUTE 8: COXHEATH TO SHEPWAY

- There were 115 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 8.

- 22 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 35.7% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 8. Coxheath to Shepway being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 63 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**28**	**Examples**
Generally positive	11	• Having visited this area, I can confidently say that the proposed route is of significant benefit to local residents, and improvements to it would greatly enhance the experience of those who use it. • Route 8: Good for pedestrians, but I not use it fully, so may not be wide enough for Cyclists in places.
Cycling	4	• As long as cycling on this route was banned I would support a walking route. • I only know part of this route from Loose past Lancet Lane to Cripple street and think of it more as a cycle route.
Safety	3	• Anything that encourages walking is to be encouraged as long as the routes are safe/well maintained.
Suggestions	3	• Needs to connect with Route 9 to form part of a coherent network. • It would be great to have a walking route away from the busy A229 with its pollution and fast-moving traffic. • I have made detailed observations on the interactive route map. But this route could be extended to the Sutton Road via Boughton Lane, Pheasant Lane and then either via the cemetery
Accessibility	3	• The pavements are quite good along the route. • Needs a safer route path currently is not wide enough and traffic speed is an issue.
Other themes		• Improvements – 2 • Maintenance – 2 • Already exists – 2 • Traffic issues - 2

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**21**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	9	• Not familiar with walking done in the area, but it includes some traffic snagging points so reducing car journeys would be good and an appealing route could help. • Never been out this way so feel I cannot comment.
Usage	5	• I do know this area but am not convinced that it will be well used.

		• Wouldn't use it.
Accessibility	3	• Crossing A229 is challenging as priority given to motorists and pedestrians left for long periods. Phasing of lights requires attention. • Is there parking at Coxheath to enable us to access this route? Is it a fairly flat route? Not familiar with the road, has it got pavements and street lighting along its whole length?
Traffic Issues (Speed)	2	• Traffic speeds are excessive on main road and need to be enforced if this is to be a safe route.
Generally positive	2	• Looks ok

Disagree & Strongly Disagree Comments	**5**	
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.		
Again it would be safety concerns, how safe are the walk ways going to be ?		
Great for walkers living there		
Doesn't seem to give easy option to meet the main A229 to pick up bus routes.		
You cant get to Shepway through Oldborough Manor School, so this mapping is wrong. You can get there through Pheasant Lane & the Bluebell Wood which arrives in the playing fields at Mangravet, from which you can then walk to Shepway. Even then its a very long walk & vulnerable people would only use it during day light hours & it is not navigable for prams/pushchairs through Loose. The Council have been offered an improved Cycle/Walking Route from Coxheath to the Loose Greenway by my company as part of the site allocation of Site LPR312, which would significantly improve the quality of the route and remove the majority of the impediments as well as improve access to New Line Learning at Linton Crossroad, but Local Councillors have rejected this offer.		

Don't know	**9**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	6	• It's not somewhere I walk. Just make sure the bikes keep off the pavements, so pedestrians are safe. • I am not sufficiently aware of this route to feel able to comment.
Usage	3	• Unlikely to use this route. • Don't use this route

Mapping Comments Summary

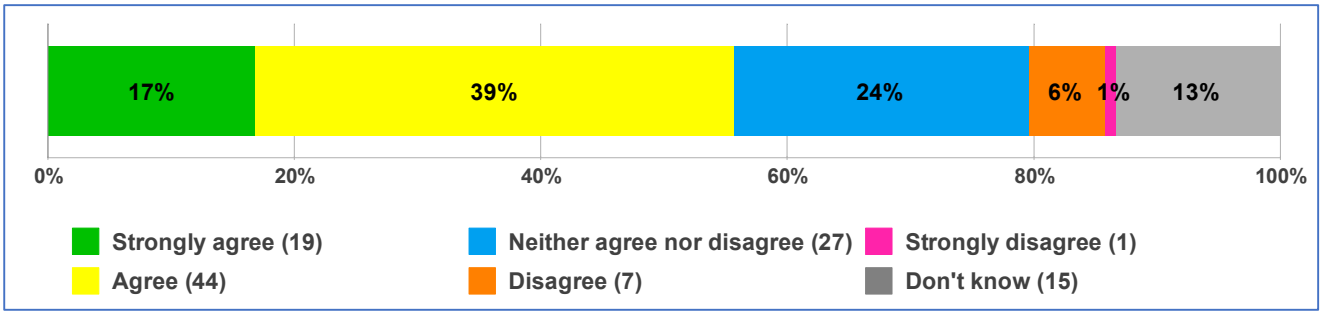
There were 11 comments from the walking map that related to Route 8. Coxheath to Shepway.

Theme		**Examples**
Accessibility	9	• I hate using this road - it is noisy and smelly, the path is narrow, overgrown by thick hedging, it's dangerous to pass people if they have pushchairs, as the path is narrow and uneven, often meaning one has to step into the road to pass pedestrians, and the traffic travels at 40mph. • Extremely steep and very uneven poorly placed steps, path is very narrow and and deeply rutted.
Safety	2	• This part of the footpath is often heavily overgrown, as is much of this route, making it extremely difficult to use. For a single woman it feels vulnerable to use this path as it is so narrow and long, and there is no way of getting off it if there is someone else on the path that makes one nervous. It is also not overlooked, so is a perfect muggers' paradise
Visual aesthetics	2	• Footpath is too narrow, dirty, overgrown and of poor quality
Suggestions	2	• Be nice if this one went through to Sutton Rd, so could walk at least some of way from Coxheath to Dentist off Sutton 'road.

		• There is no route from the Loose Greenway to Sheppey drive.

WALKING ROUTE 9: TOVIL TO MAIDSTONE BARRACKS STATION

- There were 113 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 9.
- 15 respondents answered, 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 55.8% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 9. Tovil to Maidstone Barracks being a walking route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 72 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**46**	**Examples**
Generally positive	23	• An excellent walking route that makes use of the River Medway. It will increase footfall through the town centre section of Maidstone River Park. • My wife and I use this often, as walking and cycling route ....it is relatively safe and traffic free .....only major problem is that the towpath floods on occasion. • I think this would be useful to residents in the area.
Accessibility	10	• I agree that it is a walking route, but again has sections that are undesirable to those who feel vulnerable and requires improvements to be suitable for prams/pushchairs etc. • used by walkers - footpath very variable especially when wet. • Curbs & crossing most important on this route.
Maintenance	9	• A vital section and one of the most beautiful in the area. Needs to be maintained, improved and loved. • I regularly walk the Medway Path for pleasure and also in recent times as a litter picker for Medway Countryside Partnership. I think the need is less for vegetation management, as I love seeing it looking wild and woolly rather than manicured, and more for additional bins and stricter enforcement of litter regulations. Food outlets at the cinema site should be more actively involved in managing this too as they are the source of a lot of the litter. • I support the route, but I am concerned by the repeated mention of vegetation management. These routes are an opportunity to create a shared space with wildlife by creating wildlife corridors keeping to the recent motion passed at full council for nature recovery. I would hate to see them being used to propagate the brutalist approach to the riverside we see in parts of town or the "hack and slash" approach from KCC on pathways management that saw swathes of habitats strimmed and mowed away earlier this summer.

Safety	8	• This walking route currently feels dangerous to use with a pram due to the lack of fencing, uneven paving and flooding. • The route should provide a link to Maidstone West station via Lockmeadow and Hart St. The route does not provide as direct a connection to either Maidstone West or Maidstone Barracks stations as utilising footways alongside roads, making it unnecessarily indirect. Additional lighting and flood mitigation measures will be required to produce a route that is safe and attractive 24/7 365. Parts of the route are shared with cycle traffic, there is limited scope to widen paths and separate people walking/wheeling from those cycling.
Cycling	5	• This is a great route and i would use it more if the path was wider. Currently you have dog walkers, walkers and cycles all using the path which feel very narrow and unsafe if you have a cycle passing. • As long as cycling on this route was banned I would support a walking route. • More cycle routes are needed.
Station	4	• Why walk past Maidstone West to get to Maidstone Barracks? • Could be useful although most people would look to catch a train at Maidstone East or West
Other themes		Usage – 3 Improvements – 3 Schools -2
Suggestions	2	• Make much more of the connections to other routes in the centre, and needs to connect with Route 8 in the south. • Route 9; I Suggest add signing to "Maidstone West BR Station" from Riverside, using access through MBC's owned Lockmeadow carpark and teeing into BR Station's pedestrian 'east' gateway, &/or to join fp's network across to High Street.

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**13**	**Examples**
Maintenance Ecology & Vegetation)	4	• Mega money this one and up keep of vegetation. • References to vegetation management and 'improving lighting' are highly concerning as the River Medway corridor is an area of high biodiversity. Lighting is particularly disastrous by watercourses, while semi-natural vegetation is already confined to a narrow strip. The reference to cctv has no real value and is hugely expensive.
Usage	3	• Wouldn't use it.
Accessibility	2	• Is there parking at Tovil to enable us to access this route? Is there a bus service back to the start? Is it a fairly flat route? Not familiar with the road, has it got pavements and street lighting along its whole length?
Safety	2	• Needs to feel safe walking the stretch of the river and parts of town without much through traffic. Access to footpath from Barracks needs upgrading.
Don't know unfamiliar with area	2	• All these routes are out of my area. I'd love to try them BUT ... I would have to get to the start and get home from the finish. What about a circular route (and Parking) for people like me?

Disagree Comments	**6**
The Council spent tens of thousands of pounds of our council tax money on a cycle lane though the centre of Maidstone, a few month later the scheme was scrapped and all the money was wasted.	
I would rather the proposed money was used elsewhere.	
A lot of work needs to be completed before it would be a suitable route.	

Mostly unnecessary, most of this is along Medway Cycle Path. See earlier response about general maintenance of paths. If our existing paths were maintained it would help tremendously.
Maidstone West is nearer, why would you walk to or from Maidstone Barracks?
This is already a walking route in that people regularly walk it. frankly it's been widened enough already and doing so has damaged the ecology and landscape of the river and reduced both biodiversity and flood resilience. It definitely does not need additional lighting or any other works to further urbanise and damage the environment already damaged by previous works The occasional careful vegetation trim is all the work needed.

Don't Know Comments	**7**	**Examples**
Usage	2	• Unlikely to use this route.
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	2	• Do not know this route.
Other themes		• Station – 1 - access • Improvements (positive) – 1 • Safety/Cycling – 1 – speed limits for cycling.

Mapping Comments Summary

There were 21 comments from the walking map that related to Route 9. Tovil to Maidstone Barracks.

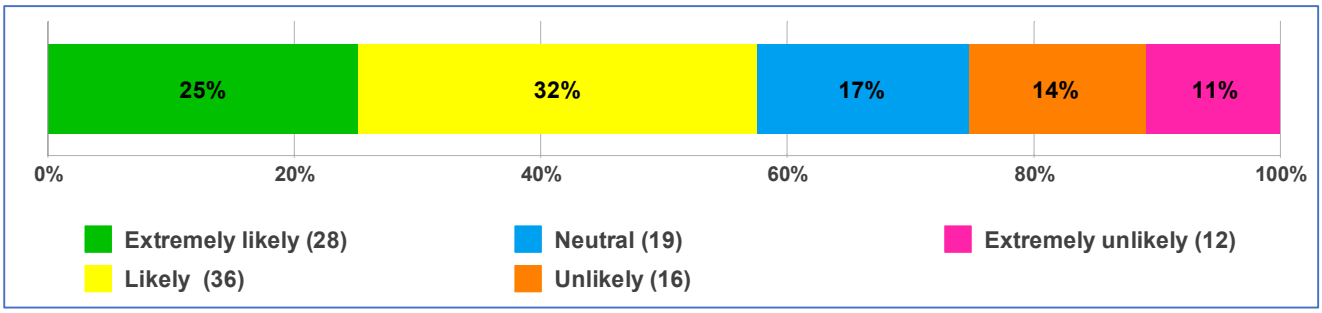
Theme		**Examples**
Accessibility	10	• Uneven paving slabs and broken street furniture (whether benches or bins) - this bit of towpath is neglected. The 'higher' path that runs parallel is sometimes intimidating to walk along because a number of homeless people sleep here throughout the daytime (and I feel bad bothering them). The higher path is too dark to use at night time. • Bottom of Buckland Hill is dangerous for pedestrians: 1. No accessible access to route 1 from St Peters St or Whatman Park. 2. Maidstone Barracks station has no step free access
Safety	6	• Crossing London Rd to access Whatman Park & or St Peters St at the grocery store/ snooker hall is tricky and potentially dangerous. • No footpaths on either side of the road here. Very dangerous having to share the road with speeding traffic.
Lighting	3	• The riverside tow-path is prone to flooding, has poor surveillance from neighbouring properties and is unlit. It may be attractive during daylight hours but not on dark winters evenings. The local road network provides more direct routes to both Maidstone West and Maidstone Barracks stations. with better lighting and surveillance. Consideration should be given to how walking and wheeling routes will be experienced 24/7 365.
Visual aesthetics	3	• Existing walkway here is very neglected. The path invariably suffers from river flooding making it unusable, there is a small but potentially nice sitting area which is very sad to be honest, the series of under pass routes are grimy and often flood / silt-up.
Environment	2	• Concerns regarding impact on riverside biodiversity from additional length of footpath under High Level Bridge. When the opposite natural riverbank was destroyed to facilitate the construction of the Spine Road dual-carriageway this bank utilised wooden boarding to naturally vegetate and mitigate to a small extent the resultant loss of biodiversity. A hard engineered footpath extension will be as grim and sterile as the existing path on this side of the river.

Suggestion	1	• A suspended/ cantilevered walkway under the arch on the western buttress would be a creative suggestion... that would be underwater, just like the path alongside the Thai Orchid at certain times. Still a good idea, if made of the right materials. A coated and self draining steel grid, with a side railing and grid to make falling in without being seen impossible.... which makes for a significant engineering proposal. I would like to see this scoped out as for the majority of the time, when dry, would be well used, I feel.

Walking Routes Usage

Survey respondents were asked how likely or unlikely they were to walk more due to the improvements to walking routes outlined in the survey.

- There were 111 respondents this question.
- Overall, 57.7% of respondents said they were very likely or likely to walk more frequently due to the improvements to walking routes that were set out in the survey.

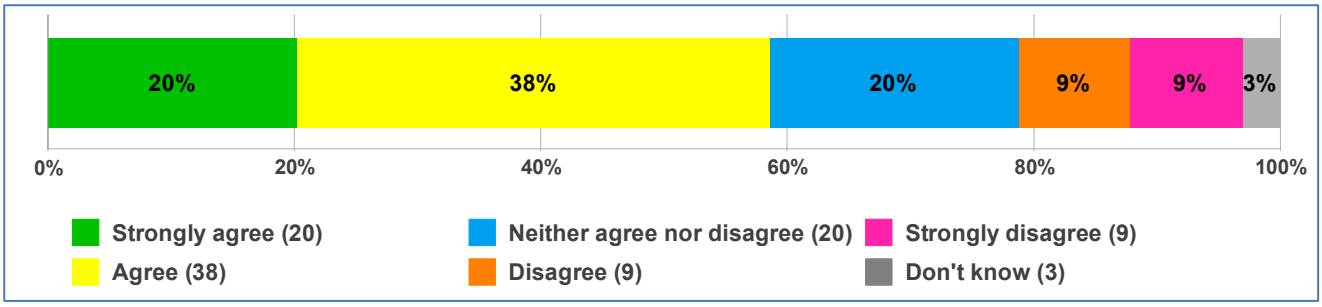


CYCLING ROUTES

In the cycling route survey, for each route that formed part of the consultation, respondents were presented with maps of the routes and were asked to what extent they agreed or disagree with the route shown being a cycling route. They were presented with five answers options ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' and a 'don't know' option.

CYCLING ROUTE 8 - TOVIL TO NEWHAM PARK/MAIDSTONE MEDICAL CAMPUS

- There were 99 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 8 – Tovil to Newham Park.
- 3 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 58.6% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 9 – Tovil to Newham Park being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 62 respondents provided comment.

Agree & Strongly agree comments	**33**	**Examples**
Generally positive	17	• I love cycling and the more routes the merrier. • As things like cycle lanes make routes safer this is a very effective use of money. • Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield.
Safety	7	• The route has segregated areas improving safety. • We need to make cycling safer in this town!
Shared spaces/lanes	7	• The segregated cycle lanes are very valuable as long as they are in accordance with LTN1/20 and properly segregated so that people are able to easily identify where they are supposed to be walking or cycling. Where there are crossings, these need to be convenient so that cyclists do not constantly have to mount and dismount their bikes. • Any segregated cycle lanes would be welcomed. No bollards though please in the cycle lanes
Accessibility	6	• The route takes in the alleyway from Bargrove Road to Eclipse Park. This needs to be cleared of over-hanging bushes and trees, and the surface needs upgrading. The use of designated cycle lanes is pointless really because our roads are not wide enough to embrace cyclists AND vehicles. • Would help get across town.
Other themes		• Maintenance – 2 • Pedestrian priority 2

		• Usage – 2
Suggestion	1	• Could be very useful for those working or as patients at the developing medical services. Would be even better if it extended to Bearsted Green.

Neither agree nor disagree comments	**12**	**Examples**
Usage	6	• Don't know if there would be any use for this. • If cycling from Tovil into town I would use the towpath as it is safer and less traffic, fumes etc.
Accessibility	2	• It would be a good cut through for cyclists, but old tovil road/B2010 is not wide enough for segregated cycle lanes without removing residents parking bays. Cyclists would not use a specific crossing across Sheals Crescent
Shared lane/spaces	2	• Are the cycle lanes just going to be white lines painted on the road? If all the improvements are completed it might be safe for cyclists. • Whilst desirable in some ways the pavement space on much of the area is insufficient and there are already conflicts on pieces of the route that are already shared surfaces. ie by the entrance to the Invicta site. This proposal is probably building in additional clashes. Its all very well to say manage conflicts but i would like to know how?
Other themes		• Funding – 1 • Already exists – 1 • Safety -2 • Walker/Pedestrians - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**14**	**Examples**
Safety	9	• It looks like this route uses footways and this is unacceptable in safety and practical terms (these footways are packed at parts of the day). The environmental sensitivity of parts of this route flag risks around harm to vegetation and wildlife. • Requires much improved to provide safer environment for cycling; ''shared use'' lane with town traffic is disappointing.
Shared lane/Spaces	6	• This feels deeply unsafe unless there are dedicated crossing lights installed across College Road and Upper Stone Street? Brunswick street and Kingsley road are very narrow. Adding a cycle lane may make cars think they can successfully pass a cyclist. There isn't space for a car and a cyclist on these roads, adding a cycle lane isn't going to change the overall width of the street. • I do not agree with bicycles riding along cars. I would agree with that route if new cycle paths were built, to safeguard my family to cycle safely from cars.
Generally negative	3	• I strongly object to encouraging cycling. Cyclists are a menace on the roads and even more so on pavements. • I don't really understand what is happening but I don't agree with changing roads to create specialised cycle lanes.
Other themes		• Improvements – 1 • Accessibility – 1 • Environment – 1 • Pedestrian priority - 1

Don't know comments	**3**	**Examples**

This isn't a route I would use.
Won't impact me.
I do not currently cycle so have no opinion.

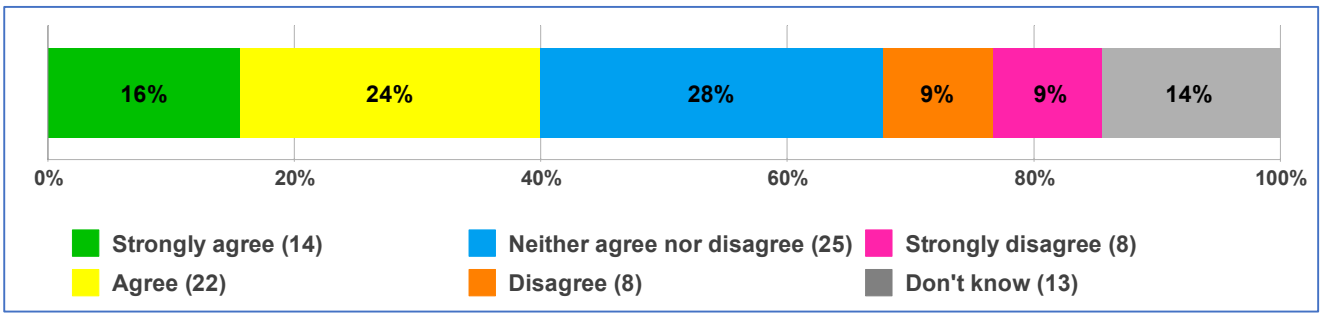
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 14 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 8. Tovil to Newham Park / Medical campus.

Theme		Examples
Safety	7	• This is another very busy junction where traffic is approaching from various angles. Turning right onto Mote Road is unsafe. • We (cyclists) would be keen to know what interventions are planned for College Rd in order to make it cycle-friendly. As it is, at the moment, only experienced cyclist would dare to cycle along this busy road, without a safe space for cyclists.
Traffic issues	6	• This is one of the most dangerous crossing points anywhere in Maidstone. Traffic volumes and speeds make it virtually impossible to cross safely here. • This is no right turn for motorists, so you'll have cyclists turning right across a constant stream of traffic turning left.
Accessibility	4	• The road is prone to flooding under this bridge. • There is a permanent line of parked cars here which makes passing oncoming traffic difficult for drivers. Cyclists are likely to be tailgated or forced off the road.
Suggestions	2	• This route would benefit from an uninterrupted recognised cycle path direct to the crossing of the river Medway at the Archbishops Palace bridge - this would link it directly to the A26 and therefore to the major schools up the Tonbridge road and the hospital at the top of Tonbridge road. • Could the Pink route connect to the yellow route to make a safe method of crossing to King Street and into town for cyclists.

CYCLING ROUTE 9 - CYCLING ROUTE 9 - TOVIL TO NORTH SHEPWAY

- There were 90 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 9 – Tovil to Shepway North.
- 13 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 40.0% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 9 – Tovil to Shepway North being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 51 respondents provided comment.

Agree & Strongly agree Comments	**17**	**Examples**
Generally positive	7	• This would be a wonderful addition to infrastructure and make getting to open country spaces feel much safer. • I use the part from Tovil to Loose road which is ok, but the continuation I use to Mote Park leisure centre is unsafe due to traffic swerving around the calming measures.
Safety	5	• Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield. • We need to make cycling safer in this town.
Shared lanes/Spaces	2	• It looks like a viable route, although too much mixing with motor traffic.
Usage	3	• But it's not really a destination to cycle to.
Other themes		• Go further /do more – 1 • Generally negative – 1 • Accessibility – 1 • Already exists - 1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**12**	**Examples**
Usage	5	• I would never use it. • I (and others in our village such as school children) have little need to use this route on a regular basis, so I feel inappropriate to comment.
Don't know	3	• Not familiar with the needs of the community but could improve access to schools
Other themes		• Generally positive – 2 • Accessibility – 1 Surface types • Improvements – 1 • Walking route - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**13**	**Examples**
Safety	7	• This route looks highly dangerous on the Cave Hill bit and lots of the route is off-road path unsuitable for road cycling, including an extremely steep hill which as a very experienced cyclist I would find very difficult. • This route impacts popular footways and is potentially hazardous and not practical at start and end of school day. Potential negative impacts on green spaces from path widening presents a further concern.
Shared laned/Spaces	3	• I would agree with that route if new cycle paths were built to safeguard my family from cycling safely from cars. Not to cycle in the middle of the roads. • All at cost of pedestrian space, take cycle paths from carriageway not footway.
Accessibility	3	• Changing footpath kb31 from Cave Hill to allow cycle use would not be acceptable to local groups. The path would be difficult for cyclists.
Usage	2	• Not safe for children unless putting in segregated cycle lanes. There is not room for those and i cant see anyone else wanting to use this route.
Generally negative	2	• I strongly object to encouraging cycling. Cyclists are a menace on the roads and even more so on pavements.

Don't know Comments	**9**	**Examples**

Don’t know / Unfamiliar with area	6	• Not my area, don't know. • I don't know this route, so can't comment.
Usage	2	• Not a route I would use.
Suggestion	1	• The route connects residential, educational, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. However, sections of the route lack surveillance and lighting. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20.

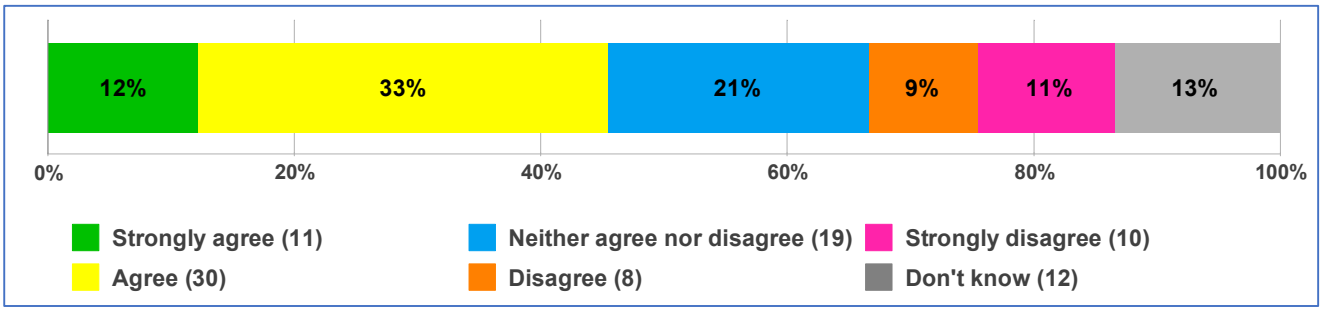
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 5 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 9. Tovil to Shepway North

There is already a cycle 'route' of sorts on Farleigh Hill which is woefully inadequate and hasn't been maintained in years.
Straw Mill Hill is a lethal ratrun. Traffic speeds down heere are beyond dangerous.
Farleigh Hill / Dean Street is another rat run. The 30mph limit has never been enforced, it is very narrow, poorly lit and has a series of unsighted bends with high banks on both sides. There is zero room for safe cycling infrastructure here.
The speed of traffic on Farleigh Hill makes cycling on the road here extremely dangerous. One police officer told me that they couldn't enforce the limit here because there was nowhere to safely stop traffic.
What protection will there be from emerging traffic for cyclists crossing the exit from the Lidl unit? Cyclists are likely to be travelling faster here down the hill where the hedges towards Tesco are poorly maintained and with it being on a right hand bend going uphill, all make this a very dangerous section of road for cycling.

CYCLING ROUTE 10 – DOWNSWOOD TO NEWHAM PARK

- There were 90 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 10- Downswood to Newham Park.
- 12 respondents answered ‘Don’t know’.
- Overall, 45.6% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 10 being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don’t know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 50 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**19**	**Examples**
Generally positive	7	• I think it would be a good route especially for school children from Downswood to get to senior schools. • The A20 portion would be useful.

Safety	4	• We need to make cycling safer in this town. • Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield.
Shared lane/Spaces	4	• The stretch of Ashford Road from Weavering St traffic lights along the north side of Mote Park is dangerous and quite scary to use as a cyclist right now, any cycle route should try to separate cycles from vehicles as much as possible. • Most of the route can probably take a cycle route without significant works. I have cycled it myself without undue difficulty even as it currently exists.
Usage	2	• Looks good but not sure it will be used much.
Accessibility	2	• Direct route.
Already exists	2	• Already existing, not very well maintained, cycling on pavements mostly
Suggestions	2	• Use Mote Park for part of the route. • I agree with this route, as it part-enables cyclists (including school children) to use part of it for key routes from schools along the A20. However, the A20 route needs extending to the B2163 in Hollingbourne, such that senior school age pupils might have any option other than being driven to school (they have a train option, but that is expensive).

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**11**	**Examples**
Usage	5	• I would have use the cycle path through mote park instead. • I would never use it.
Accessibility	2	• Route 10: Using A20, alongside Mote Park, is dangerously narrow because of fast-moving cars approaching to beat the t/lights. Better to cross and use Mote Park itself, if lighting & safety & 'Dusk-closing'? of Mote Park is then a problem.
Don't know	2	• Don't know enough about it
Other themes		• Generally positive – 1 • Traffic issues (speeding – 1 • Walkers - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**15**	**Examples**
Safety	5	• New Cut Road and the Ashford Road are extremely unsafe for cyclists. • This involves riding along the A20, where it is narrow and people drive too fast. The Downswood end and the Weavering end are generally fine, but the A20 section is too dangerous for most cyclists, and the footpath there is too narrow to be used as a shared path. So that needs to be improved to be a proper cycle route.
Cycle lanes/Shared spaces	4	• Cycling along A20 needs improving to provide dedicated cycling path. • I would agree with that route if new cycle paths were built to safeguard my family from cycling safely from cars. Not to cycle in the middle of the roads.
Walkers/Pedestrian priority	3	• All at cost to pedestrians, take space from cars not pedestrians. Pedestrians should have priority over cyclists as far more numerous and vulnerable.
Suggestions	3	• Crumbs! Why on earth would you go that way? The national cycle route which is already linking Downswood through Mote Park to Weavering Street is a much better route. We should connect Mote Park and Vinters park with a cycling and walking bridge to create a unique off road aerial passage way connecting the schools, retail, medical and natural areas.

		• Cycles could cut through the park. A cycle lane on Lord Romney Hill would still be dangerous. • The route would be better routed via KH3 footpath Fauchon and Plantation lane to minimise time spent on the A20.
Other themes		• Generally negative – 1 • Traffic issues – 1 • Usage – 1 • Environment - 1

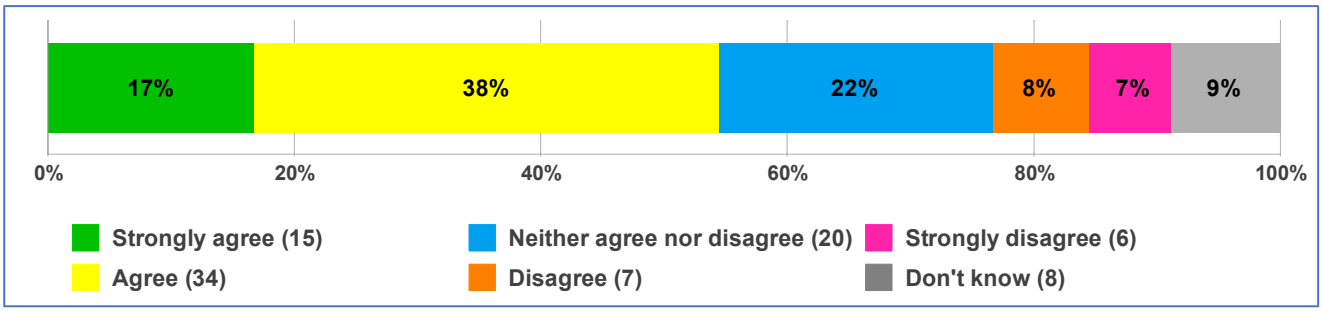
Don't Know Comments	**5**	**Examples**
Usage	2	• Not a route I would use
Don't know/Unfamiliar with area	2	• Don't know it
Suggestion	1	• The route connects residential, educational, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20.

Mapping Comments Summary

There were 14 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 10. Downswood to Newham Park.

Theme		**Examples**
Safety	8	• Dangerous and inappropriate. This is the main A20 with a wall on the south side and only a narrow footpath on the north side. The A20 is used extensively by all classes of vehicles and a major route for vehicles between Willington Street and new Cur Road heading from the M20. • Will there be a dedicated cycle lane along spot lane as its already a rat run and seeing how some drivers disregard other vehicles cyclists could be injured.
Accessibility	6	• You cannot cycle along here to pick up the green route. Let there is a cycle path on the A20 after new cut rd. You have permitted huge building projects and kids are in range of cycling to maidstone, but not on this route- Ashford rd is a death trap. Further, as I cycle most days - you cannot cycle using cycle lanes from Quarry Wood to Bearsted safely. You can get along London rd, then the cycle route so far, then its armageddon unless you drop down and use the narrow pathway thats full of walkers/schoolkids heady to the girls grammar school or Maplestone Noakes. Then, you can use the rates but there's no c cycleway up the high st/king st to link to the route 177. You run the gauntlet of unauthorised cars and taxis. Kids should be able to cycle safety- id suggest cyclists ride the route and they will see. Ive spoken at many public Meetings on this subject. BTW- you proposals just seem to shoot people off into undesirable areas. • Need to remove the barriers on the roads closed to motor vehicles and open them up to the cycle design vehicle as defined in LTN 1/20.
Traffic issues	5	• This is narrow, with super heavy traffic at all times where the speed limit is 40mph. How exactly are you proposing to implement a safe cycling route here? Just crossing out of the park onto Ashford Road would be life threatening experience. Can you imagine children doing this? • This is another very dangerous junction for cyclists. Traffic on Ashford Road almost always exceeds the 30mph limit, which isn't enforced and makes turning right out of Spot Lane will be very difficult.

- There were 90 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 8.
- 8 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 54.4% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 56 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**26**	**Examples**
Generally positive	8	• Yes this would be a good route. • Good use of money to help cycling. • Improved route across north Maidstone would help, however residential roads in Boxley Road area often have lots of parked cars and road surfaces are not great with patches/potholes.
Safety	6	• This is a busy route and potentially quite dangerous. The plans seem to acknowledge this and make adequate provision, however I'm a bit concerned about the vagueness of the word 'manage' and would hope that the final infrastructure ensures that these difficult junctions are as safe as possible. • I use this route all the time. I worry about traffic on Willow way. Its used as a learner driver route and some of the driving is very dangerous with close passes. • Needs to be safer for cyclists, so agree to this.
Cycle lanes/ Shared spaces	4	• Segregated cycle lane on A229 would be brilliant. • Pedestrians' safety priority on shared pathways - cyclists nearest the road.
Traffic issues	4	• Agree but the section from the Wheatsheaf to Park Way has not taken into account the recent changes to that section of road. Traffic north, into town, backs up to past the cemetery and up to Mangravet Avenue with the inside lane on Loose Road permanently at a standstill and with the outside lane dedicated to turning right into Park Way. Any "improved signal timing" and "improved crossing..." could only make horrendous current problems worse. In addition, the pavement is so narrow that the northbound bus stop at the Wheatsheaf takes more than the width of the pavement and requires the front hedge of the nearest house to be cut back - where would the cycles go and where would the passengers waiting for the bus go to avoid them? • Need to keep the route away from A229 traffic.
Usage	3	• Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield. • I sometimes use some of this route, although too much mixing with motor traffic.

Improvements	3	• It can be an unsettling route to cycle, any improvement welcomed.
Suggestions	2	• The route connects residential, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20. • Route 11: IMPORTANT Suggestion: Will Save about 1km of Route 11, and safer, if cross A229 near A274 turning, utilising new t/lights and central refuges. then joins Plains Ave further east, towards its roundabout.

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**15**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	3	• Not my area.
Usage	3	• I would never use it.
Traffic issues	2	• The Newham traffic lights just before the Kims roundabout are what cause numerous traffic jams tailing back to j7 - this whole Area is not walking or cycling friendly. The money would be better used to put towards funding for a supplier to redo the whole area.
Cycle lane / Shared spaces	2	• This would be a decent route, but it's not clear on your map just how much of the route will have a segregated cycle lane. A route where the cycle lane appears and then disappears at regular intervals is not an adequate cycle route for general use.
Walkers / Pedestrians	2	• Care must be taken not to further inconvenience pedestrians, who already get a rough deal.
Accessibility	2	• Only the hardiest of cyclist's would use this route. Loose Road is highly undesirable for cycling due to the traffic weight and air quality. If there was an improved Loose Greenway that went all the way to Coxheath, as proposed by my company, then you might have a workable route.
Suggestion	1	• This is a possible route for bike only the traffic of car make it unsafe on the road. I would personally see the cycle lane go behind the cemetery and news line learning. And try to arrange with the farmer a route going through harlequin forest school (if possible to avoid Boughton lane turns very dangerous.) And cut across to the small farm lane to the left of Boughton lane. Then negotiate with the farmer for a path at the back of horse riding school in between existing boundaries to be made across the valley to the end of Atkins hill joining the foot path that leads to hubbubs lanes. To avoid by all mean bicycle to meet dangerous car and minibus along bottle screw hill.
Other themes		• Safety – 1 • Funding/Expense - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**11**	**Examples**
Safety	6	• Part of this run very close to the KCC proposed cycling infrastructure yet the two are not linked. Holland Road, the A249, A20, and A229 are all notorious roads to cycle along due to the levels and types of traffic on them yet the route proposes changes detrimental to motorists without ultimately improving the safety of cyclists, especially when there are obvious minor alterations to the route that would be a safer, more pleasurable route whilst also running passed more schools. • This cycle needs significant improvement to be considered safe and effective cycling route

Walker pedestrians	2	• The A229 and A249 require dedicated cycling lanes in order to become safe routes for cyclists.
Accessibility	2	• The road up past Mote Park would be horrible for cycling as with all the traffic calming, it is narrow for 2 cars to pass even without bikes, and it is quite busy.
Other themes		• Generally negative – 1 • Usage – 1 • Improvements – 1 • Cycle lanes / shared spaces – 1 • Traffic - 1

Don't know Comments	**4**	**Examples**
Don't know /Unfamiliar with are	3	• Don't know it.
Usage	1	• Not a route I would use.

Additional Email Comment

Sorry a late submission on the LCWIP consultation but I would appreciate if you could take my comments into account as a local user of the walk and cycle networks under consideration.

My suggestions are focused on the Maidstone town centre to Shepway area and the walking route down the A229 into the town centre.

The cycle route takes in the existing cycle route past the west side of Mote Park. The main road route of Lower Road and West Park Road to the town centre, once having routed from Plains Avenue via the public right of way that connects that to South Park Road is narrow and passing vehicles run very close past each other on the corners. Large HGVs cause significant slowing of traffic and the narrowness of the lanes result in degradation to the drains along the route. As ever, there is also substantial speeding above 30 mph. What this means for cycling is that it is an uncomfortable road to route along. Therefore I recommend two main options I would like to see MBC pursue with KCC:

Increase signage and awareness to drivers that the Lower Road and West Park Road route is a main cycle route to increase their anticipation and expectation that cyclists will be ahead of them. Given the proximity to Mote Park which many families head to for cycling from the local area, consider making the West Park Road and Lower Road shared pavements on the park side of the road.

1. Alternatively, improve signage, way finding, driver awareness and provide shared pavements at crossing points outside the Mote Park Leisure centre or where the cycle way on the PROW between York Road meets the zebra crossing on West Park Road for onward travel down Upper Road towards the town centre. These sorts of improvements would help encourage cyclists to use more the parallel routes such as York Road, Upper Road, Birch Tree Way and Greenside, as well as the route through the west side of Mote Park and its car park area to its exit onto Mote Avenue as alternatives to the less comfortable route of West Park Road and Lower Road. The PROW to Blythe Road also provides another potential route onto a part of the quiet way network – currently the PROW is footpath only and not for cyclists. A change would be welcome, and a mirror at the turn along the PROW would help reduce risk of cyclists and pedestrians sharing that PROW. Effectively, make these parallel routes part of a clear and coherent quietway. The benefit of quietways is they are far more likely to be used by families with young children, or by young children alone. Improving the interception points with the main road as I have detailed helps to overcome the severance it causes and enables cyclists to feel they are able to use a more continuous network.

Which of the above options is best is for MBC and KCC to determine in future consultation with stakeholders. As you can see though, the improvements I have set out as cyclist on those routes, is that there do not need to be significant changes to highway layout or capacity. I think the most important thing is to make the demarcation of the routes clearer to increase awareness and raise expectations and understanding for motorists that these are designated cycle routes where they should expect to encounter and share the road with cyclists.

On walking, there are a series of improvements that I would encourage are made on the A229 Upper Street – specifically the crossing point with the Romney Place is challenging for pedestrians. Those heading south in particular have to look back right over their shoulder and vsibiility of traffic turning onto Romney Place is poor. The flared junction and high traffic volumes means that pedestrians often having to take a risk and guess / hope that the next car won't be turning into the Romney Place. Many vehicles do not indicate too which makes this crossing additionally challenging. My suggestion is to reduce the scale of the junction flare for vehicles making a left hand turn off the A229 into Romney Place, or add a zebra crossing between 5 to 10 metres along Romney Place from the junction, to give better pedestrian priority. A further challenging point is the pedestrian crossing at the A229-A249 junction and specifically the left turn lane from the A249 onto the A229. This lacks any signalised control for understandable reasons, but also means that vehicles frequently block the crossing point where the dropped kerbs are and due to two lane queuing it can also be difficult and risky for pedestrians to venture out and eye-contact with each vehicle driver in each lane is difficult to achieve. The risk of motorcycles between traffic is also a risk. It would be helpful at this point if again a zebra crossing is provided to safeguard the space on the turning slip so that pedestrians are given more priority and confidence to cross at this point and can do it where the dropped kerb points are. It is important to recognise this is a main route for pedestrians arriving into the town centre. The current signalised crossing points route is convoluted requiring some pedestrians to make several crossings of the road from the east side to the west side and back to the east side of the A229. The volumes of traffic mean long wait times for pedestrians which I understand as a motorists on that stretch – I would not want to see a significant change to those, hence why I have set out ways to improve the more direct desire line into the town centre. As a parent with young children, crossing this part of the road is a deterrent to walking to town rather than driving. Again, I hope you will see that the proposed improvements I have set out are low cost and do not require any significant alteration to the road layout or capacity per se.

Mapping Comments Summary

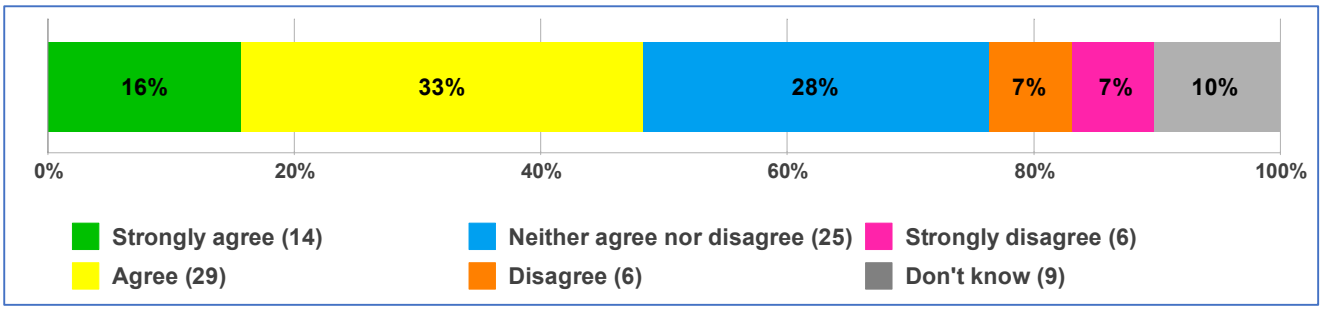
There were 8 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 11. Penenden Heath to Cornwallis Academy

As a cyclist I feel the A229 is not safe to cycle on. The existing painted line on the road is worn out by the number of motor vehicles that drive over it. Also it needs to be a solid line to prevent parking on cycle lane.
I am a very experienced cyclist, but I would never ride along this busy and narrow road, let alone recommend that children from the nearby schools do so. Unless serious interventions are planned for Holland Rd, I would feel safer cycling along Union St and then right on to Wheeler St.
What's the plan for drivers when cycle routes are created? This route is so scary even for walkers - I do walk to the park often and cannot imagine drivers sharing space with cyclists. They don't care about walkers and dive fast - the priority is always given to them. Invest in an education programme and engage with drivers and cyclists.
This is no right turn for motorists, so you'll have cyclists turning right across a constant stream of traffic turning left.
The road is prone to flooding under this bridge.
This road is 40mph and lethal. I'm an experienced cyclist, motorcyclist and car driver. I wouldn't feel safe cycling up here.
Why would anyone want to cycle on Loose Road? This is a permanent car park. Mega heavy traffic, much of which is trucks. Can you imagine small children cycling down here? No, neither can I.
How will cyclists be expected to navigate the almost permanent queue of traffic which forms on the hill at this junction?

Cycling Route 14 – Bearsted to Marden

- There were 89 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 14. Bearsted to Marden.

- 9 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 48.3% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 50 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**21**	**Examples**
Generally positive	10	• This would be a nice route. • Looks good provided it is traffic free. • Great route and would be great if it was safer.
Safety	6	• This would be a useful route. I'm concerned about the section on the A229, a very dangerous stretch of road with no safe option for cyclists or walkers. There will need to be a segregated path and a safe crossing. • A long route, probably mainly weekend use, but would give a longer safe cycle route for exercise & fitness purposes.
Usage	5	• Good to see a route of this sort but given the terrain I am unlikely to use it. • May use this route to cycle from home to Maidstone.
Suggestions	3	• Agree in principle, but need to keep away from busy, narrow roads (e.g. by using Tilden Lane, Loddington Hill, converting footpaths to bridleways through Boughton Green and Boughton Mount, etc.) and connect to Route 15 to form a more complete network. • All cyclists would want to go through Downswood to get to Marden conveniently. • The route connects residential, employment and shopping areas. The route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20. The sections of route south of Boughton Monchelsea lie outside of Kent CRP's area of operation.
Other themes		• Traffic issues -2 • Accessibility – 1 • Do more/ Go further – 1 • Maintenance – 1 • Already exists – 1 • Cycle lanes /Shared space -1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**17**	**Examples**

Usage	5	• I would never use it. This is probably the closest to me house but to reach a starting point, by local roads, is far too dangerous. • Are there that many people riding around?
Accessibility	4	• Appears that cycle space comes from footways rather than carriageway. Crossings are problematic as they favour motorists and phasing needs to be revisited (countdown screens would help at crossings). • Its a long route using I assume roads which are not very wide.
Don't know	3	• don't know it well enough.
Safety	3	• This would be a good long route, but there are places which are a dangerous for cyclists, and would need improvements for it to be a route for wider use. The portion of the A229 is too fast, so that would need improvements, and there are other areas that would be useful too. But it has the potential to be a great route.
Suggestion	2	• Cliff hill is a very narrow lane not safe for children to ride to school. I would join to previous cycle lane in loose from the police training centre gate through to the Bmat land to go down Atckins hill and through the pass to hubbubs lane. • I don't know the Southern part of the route well enough to comment, but again why go through Vinters Park and not on the cycle paths already crated on the A20.
Other themes		• Improvements -1 • Traffic issues – 1 • Cycle lanes / Shared spaces -1 • Walkers / Pedestrians - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**8**	**Examples**
Safety	2	• There are parts of this route that are unsafe for cyclists (A20, B2163, A274).
Traffic issues	2	• This route is entirely inappropriate for cycling- Stilebridge Lane/ Pattenden Lane are heavily used by HGVs. As an experienced cyclist I avoid this area.
Accessibility	2	• Seems unrealistic to expect people (children particularly) to cycle along those roads.
Other themes		• Walkers / pedestrians retain space – 1 • Generally negative - 1

Don't know Comments	**4**	**Examples**
Usage	2	• Not a route I would use.
Don't know	2	• Don't know it

Mapping Comments Summary

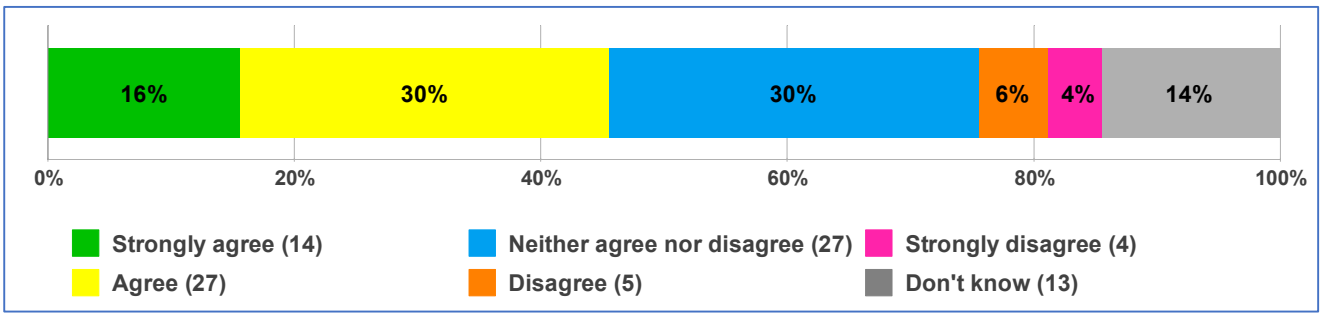
There were 26 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 14. Bearsted to Marden.

Theme		**Examples**
Accessibility	14	• I can't imagine that anyone would want to cycle around the lake when there is a far shorter route in front of them. Cycling and walking should generally take the most direct routes if possible. • The gradient of this route will deter all 'casual' cyclists - only those entering the tour de France will manage this safely. Narrow lanes, steep hills, fast cars and cyclists do not feel like a safe combination

		• The gates behind the Police HQ leading from Cliff Hill onto Landsdowne Ave are locked on Saturdays and Sundays with restricted opening times Monday to Friday. How are you supposed to get a bike through when these gates are locked?
Safety	12	• This crossing is another guaranteed fatality. Travelling southbound on the A229 where the speed limit is 60 mph, this junction comes into view very late on the right hand bend. Anyone crossing here will have very little notice of oncoming traffic. • The gradient of this route will deter all 'casual' cyclists - only those entering the tour de France will manage this safely. Narrow lanes, steep hills, fast cars and cyclists do not feel like a safe combination.
Traffic issues	8	• This is a very fast section of the A229. Will you be providing segregation for cyclist safety? • Heading uphill towards the Willington Street junction, most cyclists will be moving not much quicker than jogging pace. Traffic will almost certainly be tailgating here.
Suggestion	5	• I fail to see how this is one of the most important routes put forward in the borough. Marden to Bearsted????? In all my years living in Marden I have probably seen a handful of cyclists cycling up Linton Hill or the equivalent of the Greensand list gradient!! Maybe this will be a one-way route……downhill only! • Potentially a good school route but the footway is narrow. Ware Street can be very busy with vehicle traffic, particularly at school run times. • The Landway could be used by cyclists, but there are many dropped kerbs and drives. The Landway is very busy at school run times. • This route through Mote Park seems to ignore all established tracks. Instead, it ploughs across the grass through the site where festivals are held. The crossing of Ashford Road west of Willington Street is hazardous. Following Route 19 along Spot Lane to Willington Street and the taking the track in the park around its south eastern corner would provide a sensible route between Bearsted and Shepway. • One can only assume that the drawn lines are not accurate, as there are already existing paths in the park that could be used for this good route through the park connecting Shepway to town centre. Of course, the existing paths should be widened to accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians.

CYCLING ROUTE 15 – BOUGHTON MONCHELSEA TO SHEPWAY

- There were 90 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 15. Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway.
- 13 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 45.6% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 15, Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 47 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**20**	**Examples**
Generally Positive	7	• This looks like a sensible route and would improve safely for cyclists by keeping away from major driving route. • This looks like a sensible route and would improve safely for cyclists by keeping away from major driving routes.
Safety	7	• Agree with the proposal and have used part of this route often but where the route crosses South Park Road there is a blind bend making it difficult to cross unless the cyclist goes to the roundabout at Park Way / West Park Road and does an (unexpected for motorised vehicle users) U turn back to York Road. York Road itself is dangerous as there is a steep gradient, much parking to obscure the view of bikes by motorised vehicle users and a very poor surface. (I have been knocked off my bike here which resulted in much blood and a costly repair to my bike.). • This looks like a sensible route and would improve safely for cyclists by keeping away from major driving routes.
Usage	4	• Would help me ride to working. • I occasionally use this route, although too much mixing with motor traffic.
Suggestion	3	• Connect to Route 14 to form a more complete network. • The route connects residential, educational, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. However sections of the route lack surveillance and lighting. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20. • See Route 11 Comment, IMPORTANT Suggestion: to save upto 1km of both routes, using new refuges due construct soon at J of A229 & A274.
Other themes		• Accessibility – 1 • Traffic – 1 • Go further / Do more – 1 • Maintenance – 1 • Already exists - 1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**15**	**Examples**
Usage	6	• Improved cycle route might encourage use, but not sure people will use this much. • Wouldn't use it.
Don't know / Not familiar with area	5	• don't know it well enough. • Unfamiliar with the area & community needs
Walking / pedestrians	2	• Ensure that cycle routes not at detriment to pedestrians. Crossing phasing currently prioritises motorists. Any threat to green spaces and biodiversity from destruction of vegetation, landscape fragmentation and artificial lighting must be avoided.
Other themes		• Safety – 1 • Generally positive – 1 • Accessibility -1

Disagree & Strongly & Disagree Comments	5	Examples
Dangerous for bikers.		
I strongly object to encouraging cycling. Cyclists are a menace on the roads and even more so on pavements.		
Concerns regarding conflict with pedestrians in Pheasant Lane / cemetery locality. This is also an area of high biodiversity where lighting and loss of vegetation would be ecologically harmful.		
No cycle paths must be taken from footways.		
It is disappointing to see that Sutton Valence has not been linked to the cycling route 15. Sutton Valence is classed as a larger village so therefore should be considered for a route.		

Don't know	7	Examples
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	5	• I don't know this route, so can't comment.
Usage	2	• Not a route I would use.

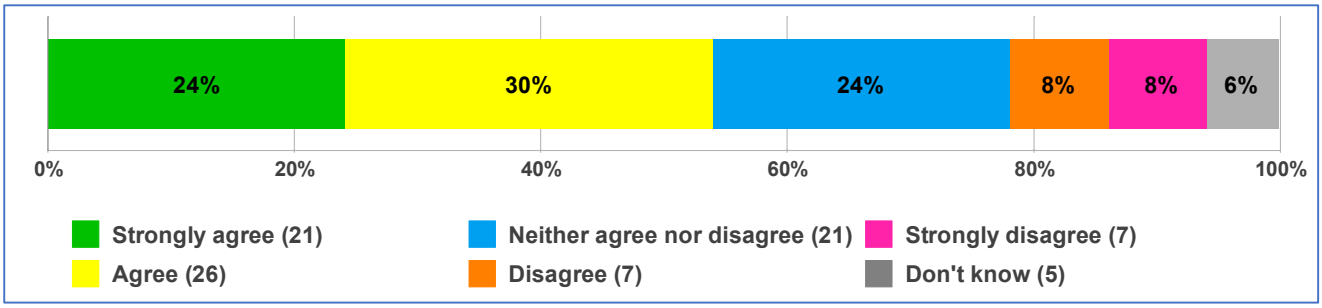
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 5 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 15. Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway.

These pavements in Marion crescent and Plains Avenue are used by many older residents of the local care home etc. Certainly, no motor scooters!! No riding on pavements please.
This section of the route is affected by springs and is wet for most the year. Deep mud in winter.
There is a barrier here to prevent motorbike access. How are motorbikes going to be restricted whilst enabling cycle access?
Why not join this up with the other route through Mote Park? Many cyclists will do this anyway. Make it a circular route.
Since the closure of Cranborne Avenue junction, traffic in the North end of Marion Crescent has increased enormously, but more worrying is the speeds. Often 40, 50 even 60 mph on a narrow residential road. Two family pets have been killed since this change. Residents are very wary of crossing the road. Using our Road as a safe cycle route is putting cyclists at severe risk.

CYCLING ROUTE 16 – LANGLEY TO MAIDSTONE (TOWN)

- There were 87 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 16. Langley to Maidstone (Town)
- 5 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 54.0% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 16. being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 52 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**16**	**Examples**
Generally positive	5	• Any increase in walking & Cycling routes is a good thing. • I love cycling and the more routes the merrier.
Safety	5	• There is a lot of work to be completed before the route would be safe enough. Its a shame that separate cycle lanes were not included in the plans for the Langley Estate. As all those houses has meant more cars and therefore more dangerous for cyclists • Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield
Traffic Issues	3	• I regularly use some of this route, although too much mixing with motor traffic. • Car routes can't be restricted as will only increase fumes.
Suggestion	2	• Needs to start from Sutton Valence. The main road there is terrible, and a good pathway/cycle route is well needed, particularly with all the schools there. A safe route is needed but not just from traffic. It also needs to be safe from predators. • Route 16: Suggest for last 1-2km of cycle route to Maidstone West BR Station: Add short-cut thru MBC,s carpark and west of B&Q to enter station approach via their non-vehicle east gateway.
Other themes		• Accessibility – 2 • Go further / do more – 1 • Already exists – 1 • Usage - 1 • Maintenance – 1 • Don't know – 1 • Cycle lanes / Shared spaces - 1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**16**	**Examples**
Usage	6	• This route doesn't affect residents in my village or myself, so I am partly unaffected; however, I do see a great number of people waiting for busses on the A274 in/around Langley and would hope that a safer cycling route would allow more to feel it is safe and enjoyable to do so. • Never likely to use this route.
Generally positive	4	• A very useful route the success of which would be determined by how successfully cyclist are separated from traffic.
Safety	3	• I know the road and drive it regularly. You'd have to have a death wish to ride this with all the continental lorries and commercial traffic.
Suggestion	1	• It needs to connect to the Oakwood campus. I don't agree with 20mph speed limits as they cause congestion and pollution.
Other themes		• Traffic issues - 2 • Accessibility – 1 • Cycle Lanes / Shared spaces – 1 • Walking / pedestrians – 1 • Development - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	10	Examples
Safety	3	• You need a segregated cycle lane the whole way down the main road and then safe cycle crossing at the Wheatsheaf junction (not mentioned on map).
Walkers / Pedestrians	3	• Cycle route must not eat into already inadequate pedestrian infrastructure. Harm to green spaces must be avoided and spread of artificial lighting avoided. Crossings currently favour motorists and phasing must be changed to support active travel.
Suggestion	1	• This route has cycle lanes in the main part so is workable, although once at south park, the quickest way is down Postley Road & past All Saints Church, no one would go down to Tovil and use the river path, its impractical.
Other themes		• Generally positive – 1 • Generally negative – 1 • Traffic issues – 1 • Cycle / Shared spaces – 1 • Environment - 1

Don't know Comments	10	Examples
Cycle land / Shared spaces	4	• This is a great route, but the map is not clear how much will have a segregated cycle lane. It's imperative that the A229 is fully segregated or uses a shared path where there is not a segregated lane, as it's a fast road with a lot of heavy goods traffic. But it would be great to have this route built more safely for cyclists. • Shared space use along A20 is too hazardous.
Safety	3	• Shared use space is not sufficient on the A274 where cars drive very fast - it leaves cyclists very vulnerable. • Definitely needs improving for safety.
Traffic issues	3	• Don't really know, but could certainly benefit from a reduction in cars, and maybe some of the car journeys could be replaced by bikes.
Suggestions	2	• The route connects residential, educational, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20. • The cycleway should be segregated along the entire length of the A274 which is a very busy road quite unsuited to cycling. It would be good to extend it further to the SE eg to the Leeds junction.
Other themes		• Don't know / Unfamiliar with area – 2 • Usage – 1 • Generally positive - 1

Mapping Comments Summary

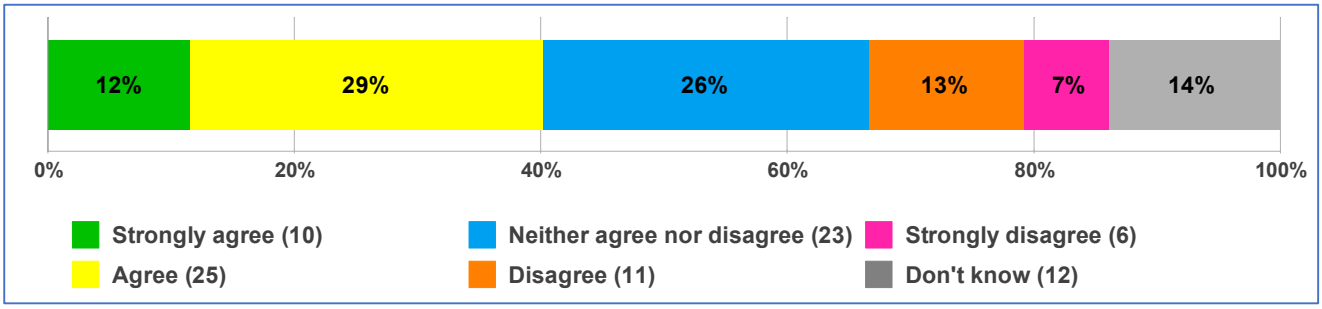
There were 9 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 16. Langley to Maidstone (Town)

Theme		Examples
Accessibility	4	• This section of pathway, from the trade centre all the way to past the petrol station is in a poor state and quite narrow. There is an issue with brambles and undergrowth overhanging the path as well which means two people cannot pass each other let alone cycles. With some work, there is room to achieve this though. Having a designated walking and cycle route beside the main Sutton Road is a really important and good idea.

		• Overall, this is a very good route suggestion. There will be a need for very clear signage from Tovil Bridge onwards away from the town. The cycle lane must be clearly marked along the public highways as experience shows that motorists often have little regard for cyclists.
Traffic issues	3	• Cycling from Langley Heath / Horseshoes Lane on the A274 towards the town can be dangerous because of the narrow road, the uphill gradient and double white lines. This causes frustration to drivers stuck behind a slow moving bike and leads to impatient manoeuvres that inevitably put the cyclist and others at risk. There is a wide verge at this location that could accommodate a cycle lane or widened carriageway.
Safety	3	• Do you really expect young and/or inexperienced cyclists to ride next to cars in this incredibly busy part of Maidstone? Please be brave and provide proper segregation, so children and young people trying to access Maidstone West railway station can do so safely.
Suggestion	2	• This route would benefit from a recognised cycle crossing of the river Medway at the Archbishops Palace bridge - this would link it to both the 'orange and pink routes that approach the west of Maidstone from the east / and southeast. • We need a cycle path that approaches the Maidstone Hospital from the south/ southeast connecting to centres of population / transport links.

CYCLING ROUTE 18 – LIDSING TO MAIDSTONE (TOWN)

- There were 87 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 18. Lidsing to Maidstone (Town).
- 12 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 40.2% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route 18 being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 47 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**15**	**Examples**
Generally positive	7	• Necessary for integration if Lidsing Garden Settlement proceeds. • I'm not very familiar with this route but it looks potentially a really nice rural route to encourage people to get out into the countryside.
Accessibility	4	• This would be a great route, but I'm not sure how you do it through Boxley. The road is already narrow and winding. I have had a collision in this area with

		an impatient driver. It is currently dangerous to cycle in the Boxley area, although beautiful and a great way to connect to Medway. • A very challenging and hilly route. Concerns are how the bury & narrow road would be negotiated by cyclists
Safety	4	• Clearly a popular route that would provide safe cycling for many residents along the route and also those from further afield. • A safe route is needed but not just from traffic. It also needs to be safe from predators.
Suggestion	1	• MTW would recommend improvement in cycling routes connecting MGH with the town via Maidstone West (extending route 18) and connecting MGH with Aylesford and Barming Station end of Hermitage Lane be included in local plans. It is noted that a route 18 extension might additionally support linking Oakwood park schools to the town.
Other themes		• Go further / do more – 1 • Traffic issues – 1 • Cycle lanes / Shared spaces – 1 • Don't know unfamiliar with area - 1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**14**	**Examples**
Accessibility	6	• Boxley Hill, is not safe to cycle up towards Bredhurst, it's to narrow for other road user to pass safety, so tailbacks are created by Cyclists. Requires a separate path, as an example Detling Hill. • Traffic speeds are lethal along this route, footways narrow or non existent and biodiversity high. Lizard orchids would be lost to any path widening in Boxley valley.
Usage	5	• Never likely to use this route. • A nice long hilly route, but who would use it?
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	3	• don't know it.
Other themes		• Traffic issues - 2 • Cycle lanes / Shared spaces – 1 • Safety - 1 • Environment – 1 • Walkers / Pedestrians - 1

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**12**	**Examples**
Safety	5	• You don't describe how this route will be made safe- the route suggested is currently very scary cycling territory. • The road from boxley to lidsing is not suitable for cyclists. Safe vehicle overtaking is not possible.
Accessibility	3	• The route is up hill toward Lidsing. The roads along the route are narrow country roads. Is the tunnel under the M20 flood free?
Traffic issues	2	• Not quite sure where this goes, but if it's through Boxley village, i don't see how that road could possibly be made safe for cycling at busy times. There's so little space and so much traffic.
Walking / Pedestrians	2	• No loss of pedestrian space to cyclists should be enabled. All cycle routes must come from carriageway to send out a message on priorities and safety. The safety of pedestrians is paramount. The crossing points at Maidstone bridge

		and Penenden Heath Road are difficult and require attention. No verges or other green spaces must be lost.
Other themes		• Environment -1 • Already exists – 1 • Maintenance -1

Don't know Comments	**6**	**Examples**
Don't know / Unfamiliar with area	5	• I don't know the roads of this route. • I don't know this route, so can't comment.
Usage	1	• Not a route I would use.

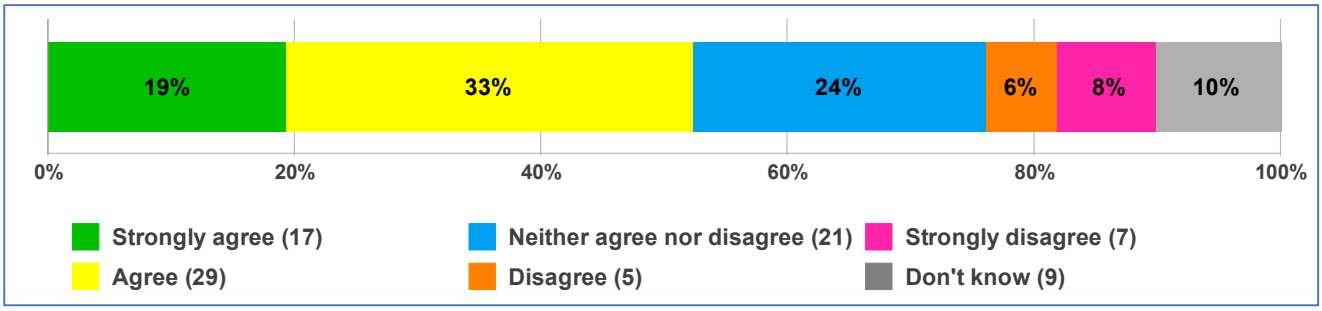
Mapping Comments Summary

There were 10 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 18. Lidsing to Maidstone (Town)

Why not continue towards Wigmore and return through Bredhurst. This is quite good for cyclists, although priority needs to be given through the village.
While the southern section, as far as Boxley Wood follows Bridleway KH12, the route as shown thereafter seems to avoid any tracks at all. Even where there is a track this is very steep - impossible uphill and dangerous downhill without extreme caution.
Do you really expect young and/or inexperienced cyclists to ride next to cars in this incredibly busy part of Maidstone? Please be brave and provide proper segregation, so children and young people trying to access Maidstone West railway station can do so safely.
This is a key access point for cyclist trying to get to Maidstone West railway station. Are we supposed to ride next to traffic is this incredibly busy part of Maidstone? Please be brave and provide segregation for school children, young people and everyone trying to get to Maidstone West station from town centre.
Are you really suggesting a cycle route along the main pedestrian shopping area? If so, it will need to be very carefully thought through to prevent harm to shoppers.
This is a good place for a cycle lane as long as there is segregation from cars and pedestrians, and it is two way.
TRL Report PR 15, 1993, Cycling in Pedestrian Areas, concluded that cyclists and pedestrians mix well in "pedestrianised high streets and shopping areas". There has been additional learning since around the safest ways to facilitate. Good to see this important link in the proposals.
This may look good as a line on a flat paper map, the gradient alone would makes it impractical as an all ages and abilities cycle route.
Roundabout requires remodelling, the current arrangement with a painted cycle lane on the outer edge for north-south movements leads people cycling into danger.
This is a good cycle path to avoid the main road through Boxley Village.

Cycling Route 20 – Ashford to Maidstone (Town)

- There were 88 respondents to the agreement survey question for route 20. Ashford to Maidstone (Town)
- 9 respondents answered 'Don't know'.
- Overall, 52.3% of respondents agreed (strongly agree and agree responses combined) with route being a cycling route.



The survey provided respondents with a free text box to explain why they had responded to the agreement question. These comments have been grouped by the broad response given to the agreement question (agree, neutral, disagree and don't know. into themes. The top themes with example comments are shown below.

- A total of 47 respondents provided comment.

Strongly agree & Agree Comments	**24**	**Examples**
Generally positive	13	• For those wanting to have a long cycle ride I am sure this would be suitable. • hmm That's ambitious but oddly despite that raises relatively few issues, except of detail. Could be worth pursuing.
Safety	6	• In summer, my son (and he passes some others) cycles from Langley to Ashford for work, and any improvement is welcomed, BUT NOT AT RISK OF CYCLISTS BEING Road-Width RESTRICTED & HENCE LESS SAFE!! • We need to make cycling safer in this town.
Suggestions	4	• I strongly agree with this route, as it enables cyclists (including school children) to use part of it for key routes from schools along the A20. However, the A20 route needs extending to the B2163 in Hollingbourne, such that senior school age pupils might have any option other than being driven to school (they have a train option, but that is expensive). I would however, suggest that most would connect to the other cycle route along the A20 rather than through Downswood - which is fine. Also, the LOC8 site is in Hollingbourne but there is no safe way for residents to commute there for work, potentially, and as such have the benefit of such as large employer being within its own parish. That should be addressed. • The route connects residential, educational, employment and shopping areas. As part of a wider network the route connects to railway stations. The route caters for short everyday journeys. East of Lenham the route lacks directness and coherence, and shortly before crossing the borough boundary with Ashford it joins what is little more than a dirt track. All elements of the route design should be delivered in accordance with LTN 1/20. • Need to keep the route away from A20 traffic, but needs to connect with Heathlands Garden Village. • However, the A20 Ashford Road from New Cut to Willington Street needs a cycle path and the proposed scheme shouldn't stop to the East of the River - a fundamental missing link for cycling in Maidstone is West - East through the town centre - safe cycle lanes are needed on the gyratory by the river and aren't in any of the proposals which in my view is crucial for making cycling realistic in Maidstone.
Accessibility	3	• In summer, my son (and he passes some others) cycles from Langley to Ashford for work, and any improvement is welcomed, BUT NOT AT RISK OF CYCLISTS BEING Road-Width RESTRICTED & HENCE LESS SAFE!! • Very useful route but would prefer direct route along or parallel to A20.
Other themes		• Traffic issues – 2 • Cycle lane / Shared spaces -2

		• Go further / do more -1 • Usage -1

Neither agree nor disagree Comments	**11**	**Examples**
Walking / Pedestrianss	3	• Concerned by potential conflicts with numerous and vulnerable pedestrians. New cycle paths should come from carriageway space not pedestrian space. Any path widening could harm biodiversity, which is a non starter. Conflict with pedestrians is a big safety risk.
Traffic issues	2	• already existing, not very well maintained, cycling on pavements mostly or sharing busy road with cars.
Safety	2	• I would never use it. Reasonably close to me but getting to a start point by cycle is far too dangerous.
Cyle lanes / Shared spaces	2	• It would be great to have this route made more safer. There are places where a segregated lane or shared path would make the route far more accessible to general use.
Usage	2	• Wouldn't use it.
Other themes		• Don't know / not familiar with area – 1 • Already exists -1 • Maintenance - 1
Suggestion	1	• I would like a safe route from Maidstone town centre to the hospital. There are a lot of people working at the hospital, there is a railway station. Tonbridge Road is often unsafe for cyclists.

Disagree & Strongly disagree Comments	**8**	**Examples**
Traffic issues	3	• The A20 is unsafe for cyclists. I usually cycle on the pavement as cars drive too fast too close to me. And, more concerning, big lorries do too. I have nearly been hit by one on the A20.
Accessibility	3	• As long as you are Olympian, that is a very long way using country roads which have a lot of traffic on them, especially when the M20 is closed for Operation Brock, which happens quite a lot
Other themes		• Generally negative – 1 • Safety – 1 • Cycle lanes / shared spaces – 1 • Walking / Pedestrians - 1

Don't know	**4**	**Examples**
Don't know	2	• Don't know it.
Other themes		• Generally positive – 1 • Usage - 1

Mapping Comments Summary

There were 22 comments from the cycling map that related to Route 20. Ashford to Maidstone Town.

Theme		**Examples**
Safety	9	• The general use of the park as a route for cyclists is good but segregation is needed to ensure pedestrian safety.

		• This road has a 60mph speed limit and needs to have a segregated cycle facility. An on-road route will be far too dangerous. • What protection will there be for cyclists at these roundabouts where the speed limit is still 70 mph? Roundabouts are the most dangerous road features for cyclsits to negotiate at the best of times.
Accessibility	6	• How will the cyclists get past the legions of parked cars outside the takeaways on kings street. It causes many potential accidents for cars and cyclists trying to pass. A dedicated lane would be great but will cause uproar from the delivery drivers and takeaway restaurants. • Need to remove the barriers on the roads closed to motor vehicles and open them up to the cycle design vehicle as defined in LTN 1/20.
Traffic issues	6	• This would be a great route and help alleviate major congestion through Bearsted and the Ashford Road. • This is another dangerous junction where traffic likes to emerge very quickly onto the A20 where the limit is 60 mph. Measures need to be put in place to deter that and at the same time protect cyclists at the junction.
Suggestion	4	• Could the Pink route connect to the yellow route to make a safe method of crossing to King Street and into town for cyclists. • Love the idea of this being heavily favoured towards cycling and pedestrians - it would be even better to close the road to motorised vehicles from Wyke Manor all the way down to Mill Street. • There is no connection between here and National Cycle Route 17, which runs along Pilgrims Way. After the Dirty Habit, heading towards Charing, it becomes very rough terrain unsuitable for road bikes, especially other than in summer. A better connection is needed between the A20 and NCR17. • Unlit poorly surfaced tracks have no place on a cycle network. In terms of connecting Lenham to Charing the direct coherent route follows the line of the A20
Lighting	2	• Mote Park provides a cycle route away from motor vehicles. However outside of daylight hours there is no passing surveillance and routes are unlit. The current signed cycle route to/from Parkwood is signed "Daytime Unlit Route / Daylight Only". Ecologically sensitive lighting options will need to be considered and ensuring routes through the park are accessible 24/7 365.

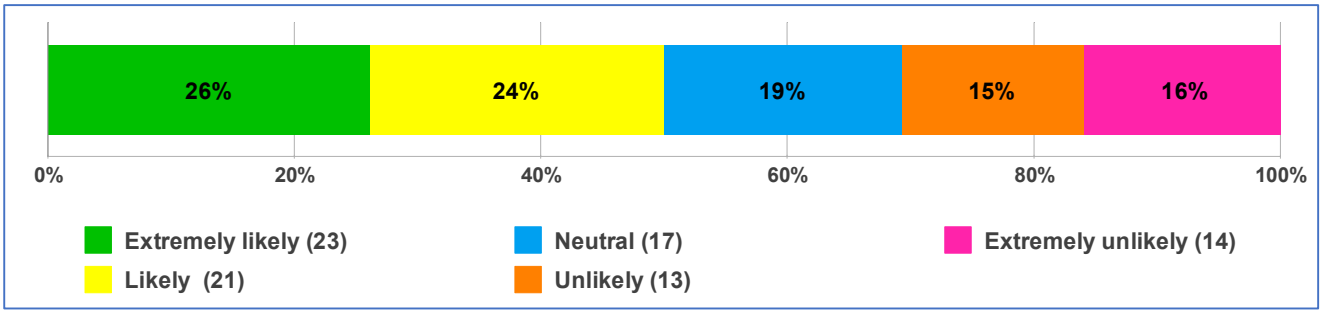
Other Stuff

Although not in the remit of the plan there was one responder who raised the issue of bridle paths and weather or not horses would be considered acceptable users of shared lanes/spaces.

CYCLING ROUTES USAGE

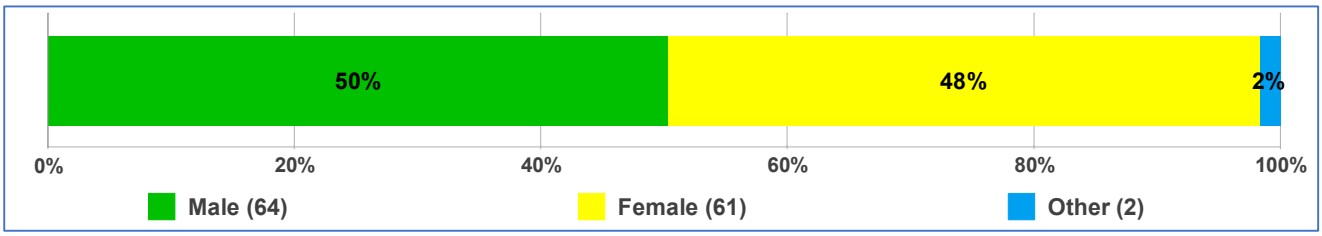
Survey respondents were asked how likely or unlikely they were to walk more due to the improvements to walking routes outlined in the survey.

- There were 88 respondents this question.
- Overall, 50.0% of respondents said they were very likely or likely to walk more frequently due to the improvements to walking routes that were set out in the survey.

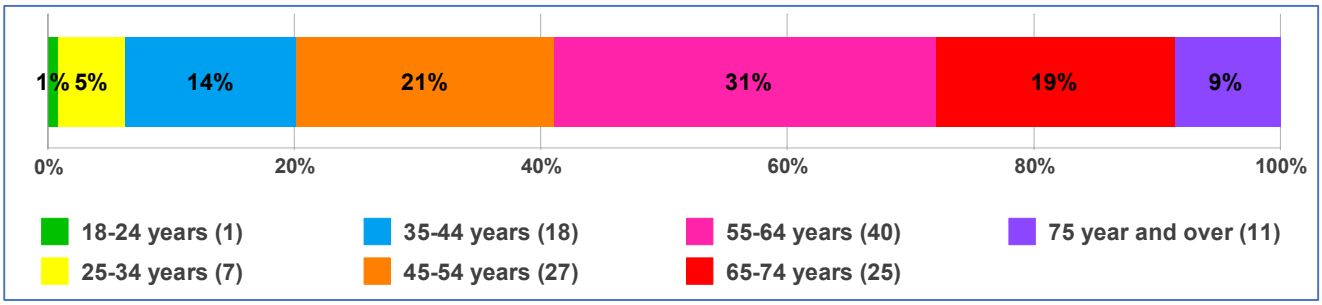


SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

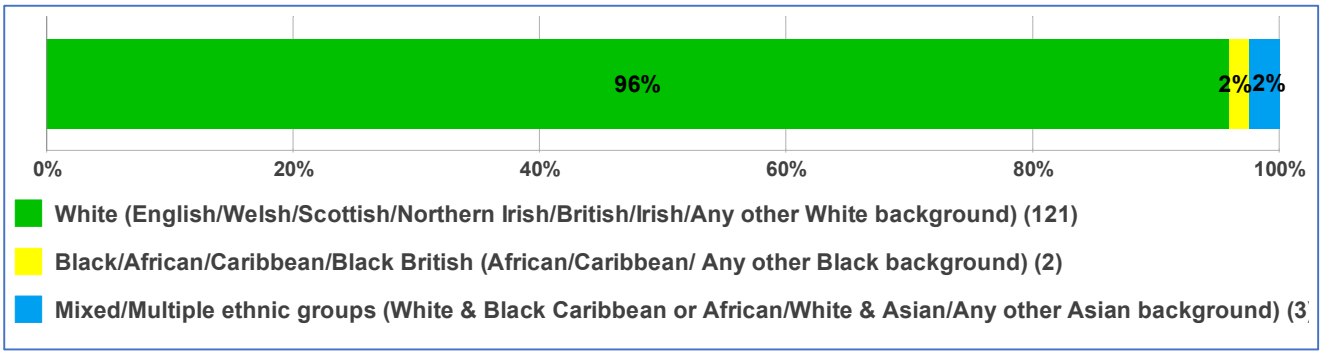
Gender



Age



Ethnicity



Southern Water
Southern Water is the statutory wastewater service provider to the Maidstone district, and supplies water to the very north of the district. Route 18 may therefore cross over some public water supply mains and related assets, all routes may cross over wastewater assets. It is therefore possible that where cycle paths are due to be constructed (to a full road depth for example) that the excavation could impact our assets especially our water mains, which are typically at a nominal depth of 900mm, although sewers are likely to be deeper. We therefore stress that care needs to be taken to determine the exact position of the public assets at the detailed planning stage for the cycle paths, and before proposed layouts are finalised. In addition, for both walking routes and cycle paths, no 'development' or tree planting should be carried out closer to the external edge of public assets than as specified in our Stand-off Distances. No construction or excavation inside these boundaries is permitted without prior consent from Southern Water. All existing infrastructure, including protective coatings and cathodic protection, should also be protected during the course of construction works. Please refer to: https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/st5orjvm/stand-off-distances.pdf For more information on our restrictions on tree planting proposals nearby Southern Water sewers, rising mains or water mains (or any such proposed assets) please refer to Southern Water's Guide to Tree Planting near water Mains and Sewers here – https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/pddob0vn/ds-tree-planting-guide-1_nwm.pdf and also the sewage sector guidance here - https://www.water.org.uk/sewerage-sector-guidance-approved-documents/ In order to protect public sewers, Southern Water requests that the Local Authority must first agree with Southern Water, prior to commencement of the construction, the measures to be taken to protect the public sewers and water supply mains. Where plans are that paths will lie over an existing public sewer or water main, the exact position of the public apparatus must be determined before the layout is finalised in agreement with Southern Water.

Natural England
Natural England does not have any comments on the draft Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for Maidstone Borough Council.

Historic England
We have no comments to make on the draft Maidstone Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan.

National Highways
We have reviewed the online material and have the following comments: 1. We would welcome further engagement as the LCWIP evolves generally. In particular we will need to be consulted on any individual walking/ cycling routes that may require works in or close to or may lead to a change in user behaviour in the vicinity of, the strategic road network. For example, Cycling Route 18 Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre that crosses the M20. 2. While we completely appreciate LCWIP producers initially focusing on the schemes providing quick wins and good benefit cost ratios, we look forward to the time when an even more strategic view can be taken as this will facilitate longer distance cycling (up to 10km cycle routes) for everyday as well as leisure activities. For example. connecting areas such as the Medway Towns and Kings Hill, Leybourne, Malling and Snodland to/from Maidstone via the LCWIP guidance advocated coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive routes. It will be such routes that are likely to impact most on the propensity of people to travel by cycle rather than by car and to travel using local routes rather than as occurs often now, junction hopping along the M20 or using the heavily congested A229 Bluebell Hill. We hope our comments assist and look forward to working with you as the LCWIP progresses.

Homes England

On behalf of Homes England and Maidstone Borough Council ('the Heathlands Garden Community Site Promoters'), we write in response to Maidstone Borough Council's ('MBC' or 'the Council') consultation on the Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2024 ('LCWIP'), which closes on 19 August 2024.
Homes England is the co-promoter for Heathlands Garden Community (the 'site') which is allocated in the newly adopted Local Plan Review.
We welcome the Council's ambition to deliver improved walking and cycling infrastructure across the borough, and this intention broadly aligns with our ambitions for Heathlands. Over the coming months we will be developing a masterplan for the site with the intention of facilitating a comprehensive network of high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes which will provide excellent sustainable travel choices for movement throughout and beyond the settlement.
We note that, in relation to the LCWIP 2024, MBC has not previously engaged with landowners or promoters affected by the proposals, therefore we make these comments based on information available through the Council's online engagement platform.
Cycle Route 19
Route 19 suggests a cycle route between Ashford and Maidstone, broadly following the A20. The section between Lenham and Charing diverts from the A20 through the allocation at Heathlands,with the route dissecting land north of the railway line. This does not follow any pre-existing public access routes.
As you will be aware, this part of the site contains significant landscape sensitivities which will need careful consideration, and there will be a need to balance the landscape led approach with any infrastructure requirements. The promoters are in the early stages of technical work and masterplan development so it is not yet known whether the indicated route will align with the masterplan and comprehensive movement networks being developed, nor whether the route indicated would be affected by existing constraints.
Whilst we have been advised that this route is indicative only, it is felt that the LCWIP should clearly identify where routes are definitive, and where they might indicate an intention only to see a suitable route through the development. It is expected that there will be a route through the Heathlands development which will follow the main spine road. There will also be additional routes planned to ensure the development is permeable for cyclists and pedestrians between key desire points.
To the east of Heathlands, the route shown crosses A20 northwards onto a byway track then via the PROW network/North Downs Way towards Charing and beyond. The Heathlands allocation with the Maidstone Local Plan Policy LPRSP4(A) requires 'cycling and footpath connections between Charing and Lenham along the A20' to be delivered as part of the preliminary work for the development, with a concept design produced to support the Local Plan process. The route proposed within the LCWIP would for some of its length be a quieter route away from vehicular traffic but would be less direct for regular cyclists commuting between work and home. It may be that that both routes are required i.e. to provide a faster commuter route along A20 delivered by Heathlands and a more attractive leisure route signed via the North Downs Way. The necessity of two parallel routes should be considered further to avoid duplication and to ensure compliance with the guidance as set out in LTN1/20 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' published by DfT.
There is no detail set out for Cycling Route 19 regarding necessary interventions, as proposed for some other routes within the LCWIP. Whilst Heathlands may be able to facilitate improvements and interventions within the site as the masterplan development progresses, interventions off-site along the wider route e.g. lighting, surfacing, safety etc. do not appear to have been considered further or costed to understand whether the route in its entirety is deliverable, viable and can therefore achieve the aims set out by the Council.
Walking Route 6
We note that Route 6 – Harrietsham to Lenham, follows the local highway network through Lenham then follows the PROW network via footpath 398 across the fields, under the railway via the existing underpass, and to a point just north of the existing sewage treatment works i.e. Route 6 enters the proposed Heathlands development to the west of the site. The end destination for Route 6 is currently shown as north of the sewage treatment works, and should instead terminate within the development at a suitable attractive and accessible destination point.
As with the proposed cycle route, the promoters are in the early stages of technical work and masterplan development, and so it is not known whether the indicated route will align with the comprehensive movement networks being developed. Again, we ask that this route be clearly identified as an intention to see strengthened linkages from the west of the site to Lenham village without becoming a fixed route and potential constraint to the development masterplan at Heathlands.

Again, as with the proposed cycle route, there is no detail regarding necessary interventions required to ensure that the route can be made safe (given that it crosses some rural areas with no existing lighting or natural surveillance), or associated costs or funding streams. In order to ensure that the whole route is deliverable, viable and therefore achievable, further detail would be welcomed.

General comments

It is not clear from the consultation what the Council's expectations are with respect to the construction and ongoing maintenance of these routes, and how the cycle and walking routes proposed within the plan will be funded. The expectations for the specification/materiality of the routes within the development site should be considered alongside the masterplan with early discussions with the promotors to ensure positive alignment between the developing plans and emerging strategy.

We would also like to draw the authority's attention to the three ongoing bridleway claims that are under consideration with Kent County Council.

Within the consultation, there are no timescales set out for implementation to demonstrate which routes are prioritised for the short, medium and long term in relation to securing investment. There is also no draft report published to provide detail of the underlying analysis of existing patterns, conditions and barriers which has led to the selection of the proposed routes, alignments and in some cases specific interventions. Understanding the Council's analysis in relation to how the proposed routes fit into the 'Maidstone Cycling and Walking Strategy 2011-31' for both short and longer journeys, and how they fit with the wider Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) would enable a more holistic view of the proposals to be provided.

Thank you again for consulting on the LCWIP and we look forward to working closely with MBC on the masterplan for Heathlands, which will deliver a comprehensive walking and cycling network as part of the development. We would be happy to discuss further any points we raised in this consultation response.

KSL Planning

We recommend your Plan takes account of relevant Local Planning Authority's policies, plans and strategies including Local Planning Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, flood risk strategies (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-current-schemes-and-strategies), and the South East River Basin Management Plan (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/south-east-river-basin-management-plan/) as appropriate.

The information below explains the key issues for us.

Flood risk

Development must be safe and should not increase the risk of flooding.

You Plan should conform to national and local policies on flood risk:

If your Plan is proposing sites for development please check whether there are any areas of Flood Zones 2 or 3.

You can view a site's flood zone on the Flood Map for Planning on our website: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/

If the proposal is located within Flood Zone 2 or 3 you should consult the Flood Risk and Coastal Change pages of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG): http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/

Here you can determine whether the flood risk vulnerability of the proposed development and the flood zone are compatible.

We can provide any flooding information which we have available – such as predicted flood levels and historical flood data. Please note that there may be a charge for this information. Please contact our Customers and Engagement Team at ksle@environment-agency.gov.uk for further details.

Climate Change Allowances

Your Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should indicate the extent of flood zones with likely climate change. On 19 February 2016 (updated 27 May 2022), we published guidance for planners and developers on how to use climate change allowances: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances .

Flood Defences

Areas of your Plan area, or proposed sites, may be given protection by a flood defence/alleviation scheme. Where this is the case the Plan should acknowledge this and identify the level of protection provided (including any climate change allowance). It should be noted that flood defences are intended to protect

existing properties and are not to facilitate new development in areas that would otherwise be impacted by flooding. Any assessment of development behind flood defences should consider the impacts of a breach or overtopping. Where it is determined that new development should be behind a flood defence financial contributions may be sought to maintain or improve the structure.
No activities on site should preclude access to the flood defence from maintenance or prevent the future raising of flood defences. In some cases we hold technical drawings of flood defence structures which may be of use. To request these you should contact our Customers and Engagement Team at ksle@environment-agency.gov.uk

Ecology

Proximity to watercourse/ Ecology

Main rivers can be viewed on the Environment Agency's map:
https://environment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17cd53dfc524433980cc333726a56386
We normally require a buffer zone of 8 metres (fluvial) and 16 metres (tidal) between any new development and the top of the bank of the main river. The permanent retention of a continuous unobstructed area is an essential requirement for emergency access to the river for repairs to the bank and for future maintenance and/or improvement works. A buffer between new development and the river wall is also required to ensure no adverse loading which could impact the stability of the channel wall. This buffer zone will help provide more space for flood waters, provide improved habitat for local biodiversity and allows access for any maintenance requirements.
Where development is proposed next to the river we recommend that it includes a green buffer strip alongside the watercourse. Where such a buffer strip does not currently exist, we normally seek that it is established. This is a key way in which we carry out our legal duty to further and promote the ecological and landscape value of rivers and land associated with them. In urban areas, in particular, rivers have often been degraded by past development, and we expect that any new development should go some way to redress the balance.
The provision of green infrastructure, particularly along rivers, and the inclusion of sustainable drainage techniques can help reduce the risk of flooding. This can also provide recreational and wildlife benefits. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in the Plan will be encouraged. In accordance with national policy, any development proposal should avoid significant harm to biodiversity and seek to protect and enhance it; delivering biodiversity net gain. We would not support development proposals if there was shown to be a likely detrimental impact on the water environment.

Water Management and Groundwater Protection

Local level actions and decision making can help secure improvements to the water environment. This is widely known as the catchment-based approach and has been adopted to deliver requirements under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). It seeks to:

- deliver positive and sustained outcomes for the water environment by promoting a better understanding of the environment at a local level; and
- encourage local collaboration and more transparent decision-making when both planning and delivering activities to improve the water environment.

Plans provide an opportunity to deliver multi-functional benefits through linking development with enhancements to the water environment. Overall deterioration in water quality and promoting improvement in the ecological status of any water body. Actions to achieve this are listed in the Thames River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) and the South East River Basin Management Plan
https://www.gov.uk/search?q=River+Basin+Management+Plans
Where appropriate, a WFD Assessment (http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/water-supply-wastewater-and-water-quality/water-supply-wastewater-and-water-quality-considerations-for-planning-applications/) should assess any potential impacts on the watercourse and demonstrate that the required enhancements will be delivered. Any development that has the potential to cause deterioration in classification under WFD or that precludes the recommended actions from being delivered in the future is likely to be considered unacceptable to us.

Groundwater Quality

Development must not cause pollution to the water environment.

Aquifers and Source Protection Zones

Some of your local area, and specific potential site allocations, may be located upon or within aquifers and Source Protection Zones (link below). SPZ 1 is especially sensitive. You might consider these within your Plan and when allocating sites. The relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be seen with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection
To see if a proposed development is located within a Source Protection Zone, please use our online map:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spzs

Land Contamination

You must consider land contamination when preparing your plan. Managing it during development is key to addressing past contamination and preventing further impacts during development.

You can establish if a site may be contaminated in several ways. You may hold a register of sites it knows to be contaminated. A list of potentially contaminated sites can be accessed on the following link:
https://www.claire.co.uk/useful-government-legislation-and-guidance-by-country/76-key-documents/198-doe-industry-profiles
We recommend you contact your Local Authority's Environmental Health team who may hold records on known/potential land contamination. Please note our primary concern is with regards to water quality. Your Local Authority's Environmental Health team will advise you on issues related to human health.
Further information can be accessed on the following links:
Guiding principles for the Land Contamination
https://www.claire.co.uk/useful-government-legislation-and-guidance-by-country/192-guiding-principles-for-land-contamination-gplc
Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination:
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140328160926/http:/cdn.environment-agency.gov.uk/scho0804bibr-e-e.pdf
Approach to Groundwater Protection:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692989/Envirnment-Agency-approach-to-groundwater-protection.pdf

Surface water drainage

The inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should always be a consideration within any development to reduce the risk of surface water flooding on and off site. The Lead Local Flood Authority, is the main contact for SuDS issues. However, we have interest in SuDS from a groundwater protection perspective and those area of critical drainage.

The collection and dispersal of clean surface water to ground to recharge aquifer units and prevent localised drainage or surface systems flooding in heavy rainfall is encouraged. However, dispersal into the ground through soakaways or other infiltration systems requires a site-specific investigation and risk assessment. Generally, we would accept roof drainage going to soakaway (or other systems), but other surface drainage may need to go through treatment systems or to foul main, for instance vehicle parking. Infiltrating water has the potential to cause mobilisation of contaminants present in shallow soil/made ground which could ultimately cause pollution of underlying groundwater resources. Where contamination is known or suspected, remedial or other mitigating measures will likely be required so that it can be demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to Controlled Waters.
We advise applicants to follow our guidance – Groundwater Protection. This is a report that highlights the importance of groundwater and encourages industry and other organisations to act responsibly and improve their practices. This can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection
The design of the drainage systems should be in line with G1, G9, G12 and G13 position statements:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-position-statements

Infrastructure Delivery

We would recommend that environmental infrastructure, including habitat enhancements, water storage areas, and green space, is taken into account if the Plan looks to fund local infrastructure.

Environmental Permitting Regulations

To see if a proposed development requires an Environmental Permit under the Environment Permitting Regulations please refer to our website:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-an-environmental-permit

Under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016, a flood risk activity permit (FRAP) may be required for work:

- in, over or under a main river;
- within 8m of the bank of a main river, or 16m if it is a tidal main river;
- within 8m of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16m on a tidal main river.

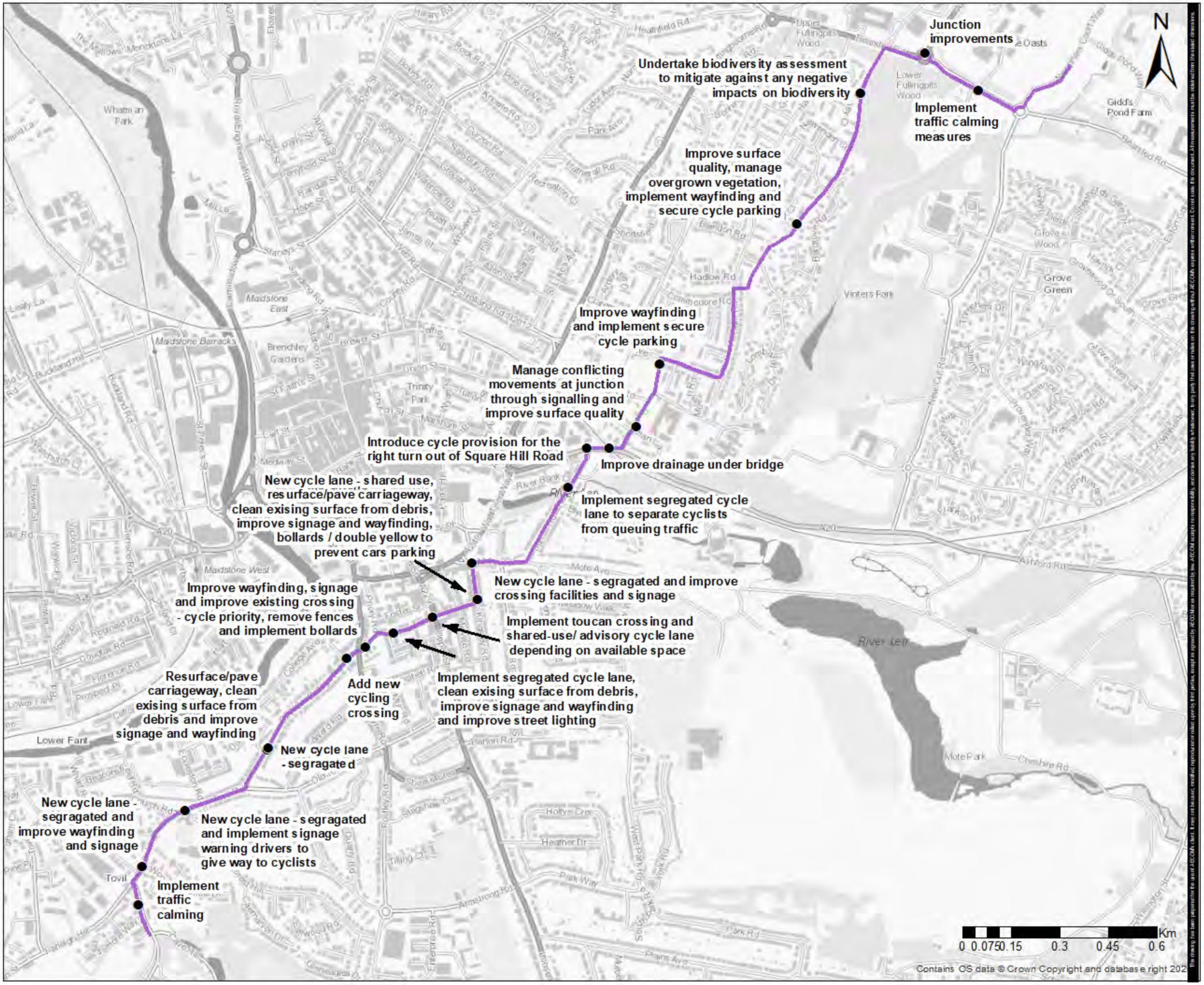
Flood risk activities can be classified as: exclusions, exemptions, standard rules or bespoke. These are associated with the level of risk the proposed works may pose to people, property and the environment. Local Authorities should advise developers to refer to the flood risk activity permit section of gov.uk for further information.

Please note

This document is a response to your Plan consultation and does not represent our final view in relation to any future planning application made in relation to any site.

AECOM Delivering a better world

Appendix F - Final Identified Cycling Routes and Improvements



AECOM

PROJECT

Maidstone Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

CLIENT

Maidstone Borough Council

CONSULTANT

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- Route 8 - Tovil to Maidstone Medical Campus
- Proposed Final Route 8 Improvements

NOTES

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- C09 - Tovil to North Shepway
- C09 - Tovil to North Shepway (Indicative Route via Planned Development)

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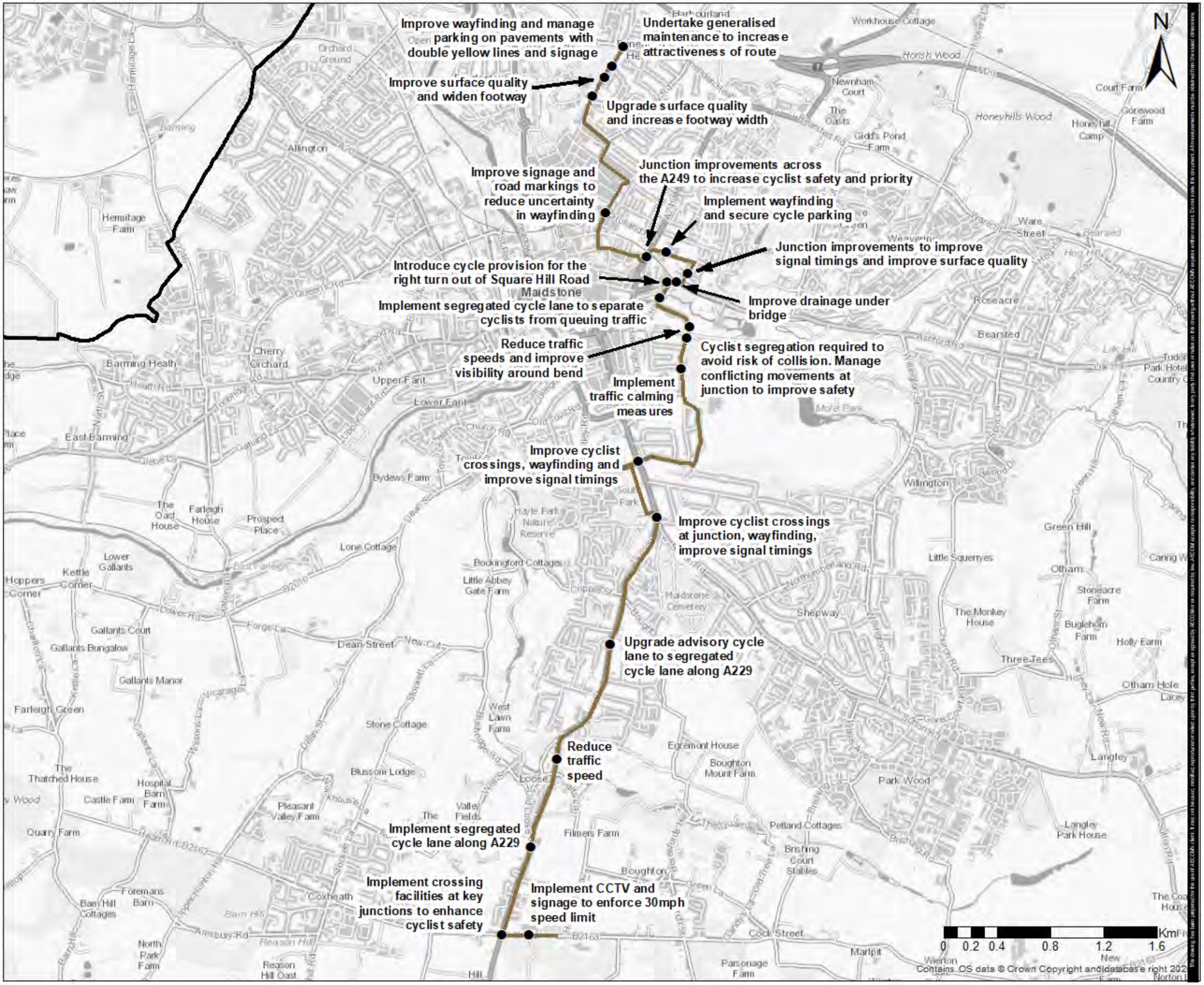
LEGEND

- Study Area
- Route 10 - Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus

N

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 0.45 0.6 Km

NOTES



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LEGEND

- ▭ Study Area
- ▬ Route 11 - Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy
- ● Proposed Final Route 11 Improvements

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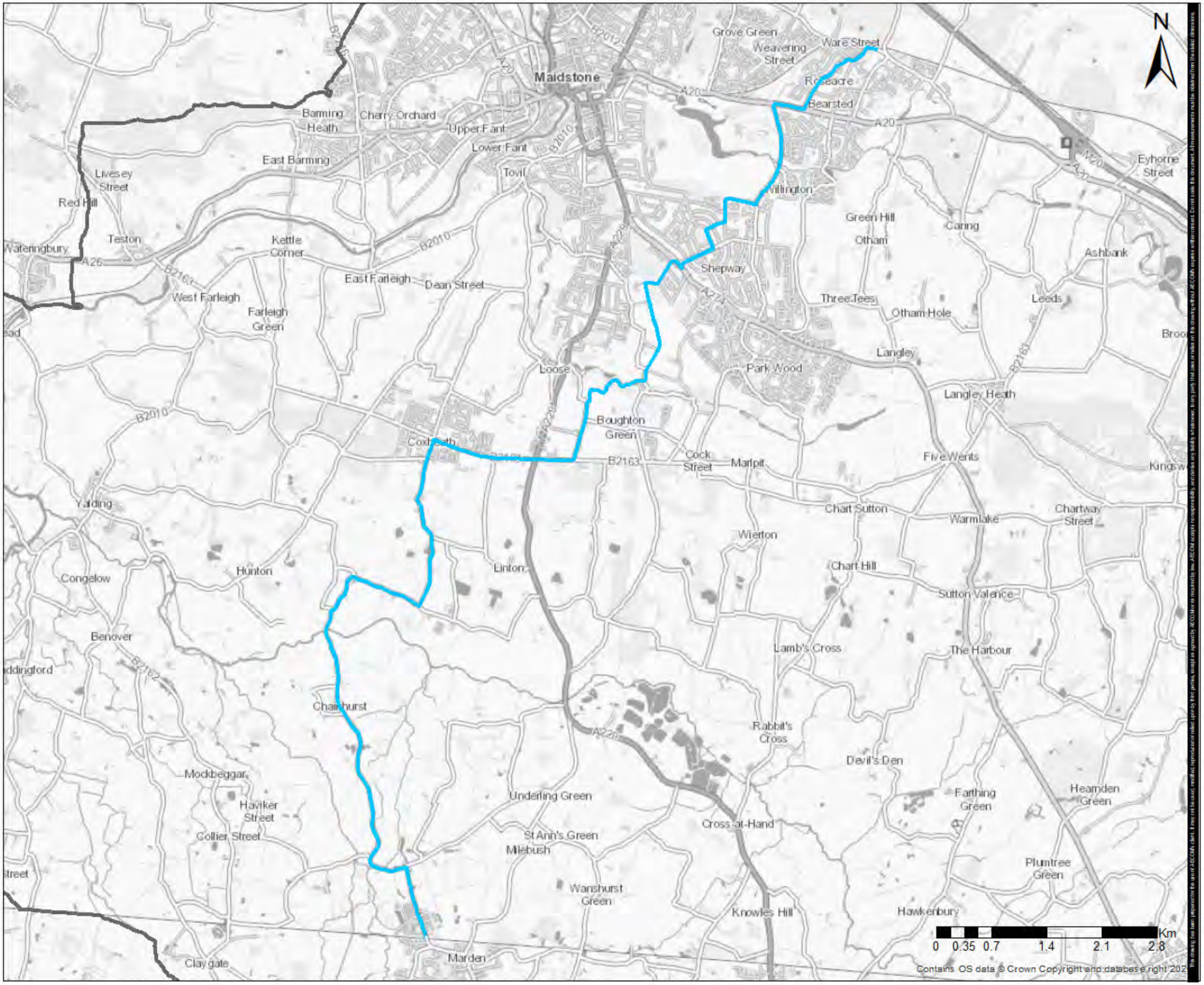

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LEGEND

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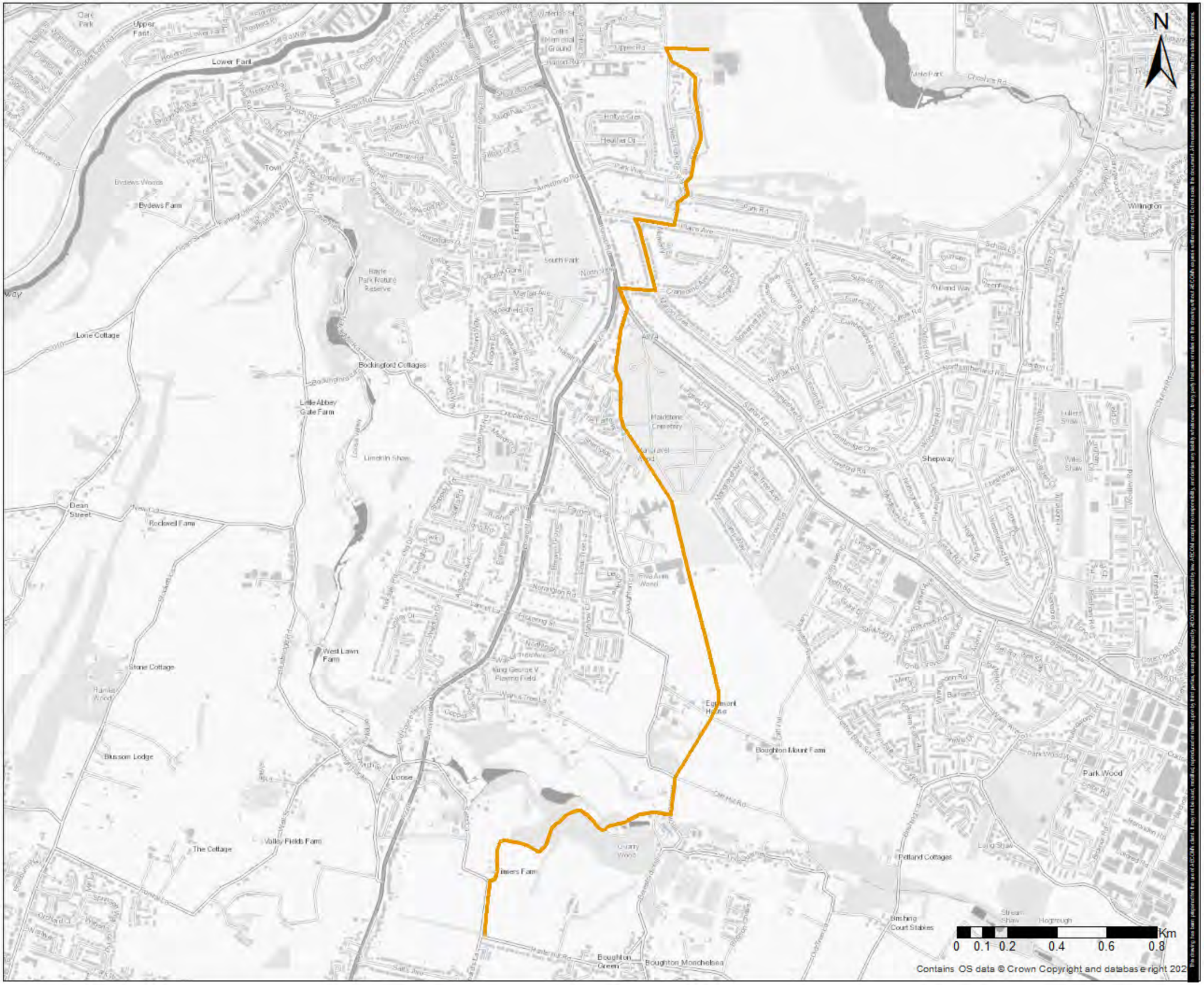
- C14 - Bearsted to Marden via Loose

NOTES



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LEGEND

- Study Area
- Route 15 - Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway

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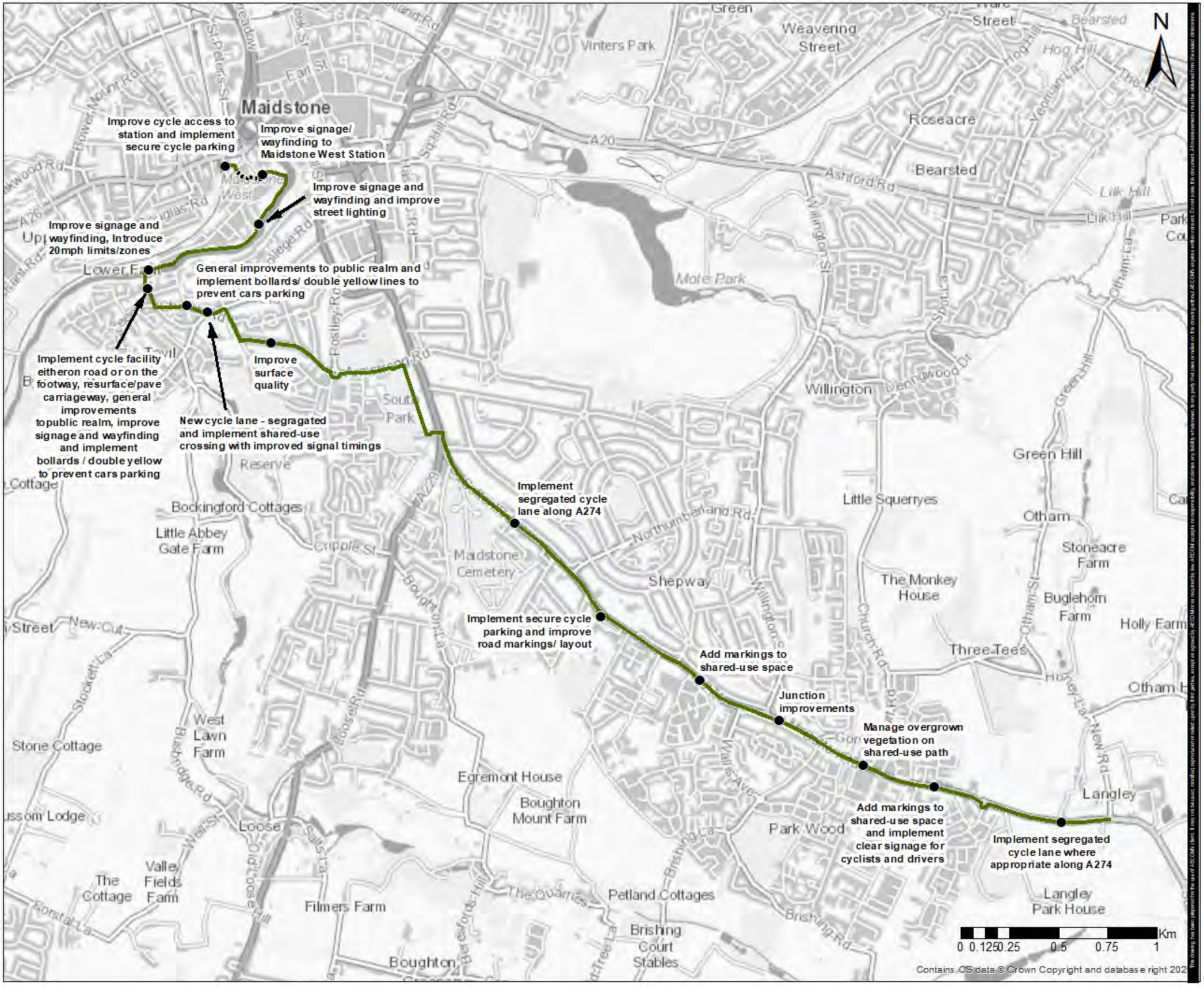

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- C16 - Langley to Maidstone Town Centre
- C16 - Langley to Maidstone Town Centre (Indicative Route via Planned Development)
- Proposed Final Route 16 Improvements

NOTES

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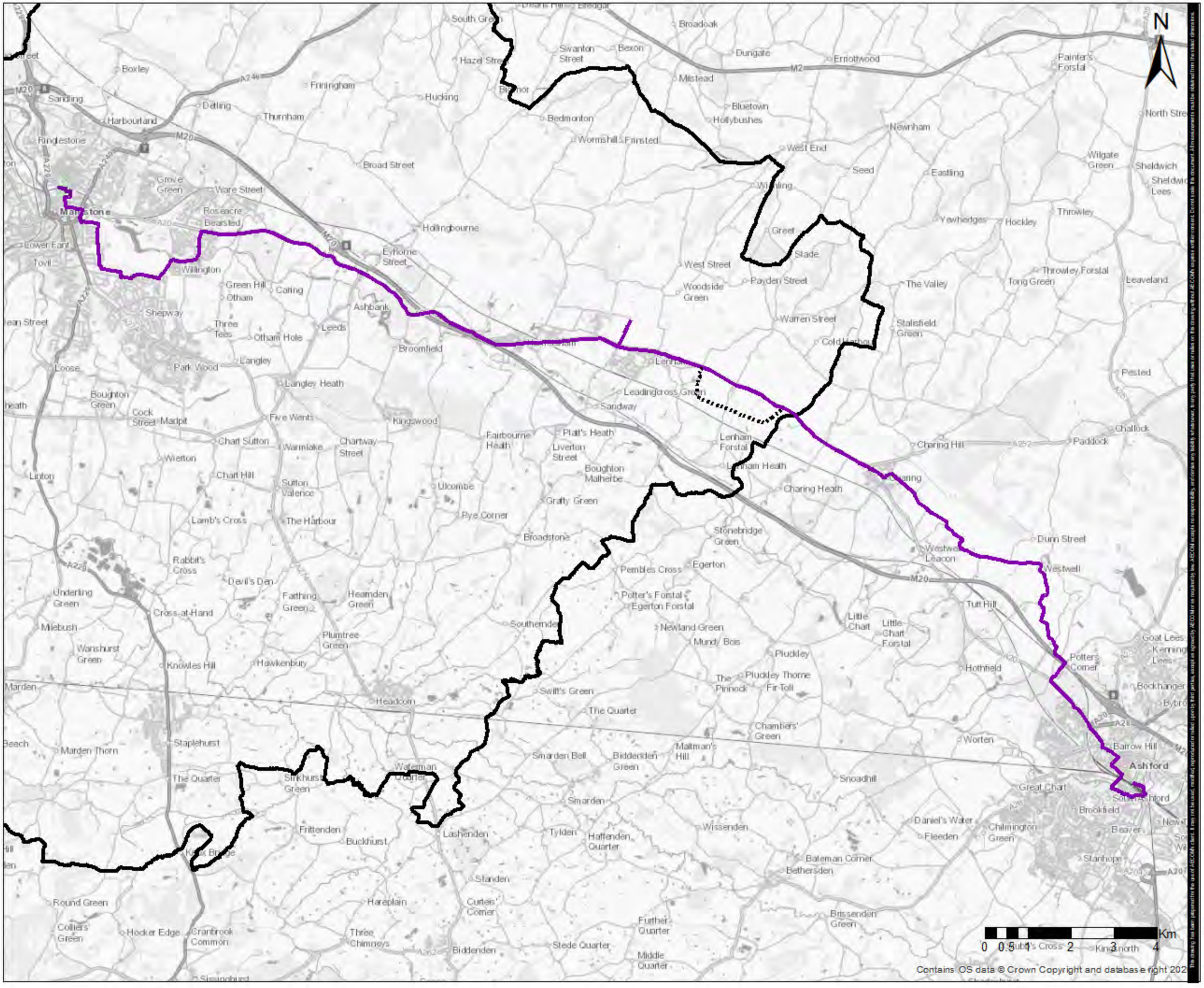
LEGEND

- Study Area
- C18 - Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre
- C18 - Lidsing to Maidstone Town Centre (Indicative Route via Planned Development)

NOTES



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LEGEND

- Study Area
- C19 - Ashford to Maidstone
- C19 - Ashford to Maidstone (Indicative Route via Planned Development)

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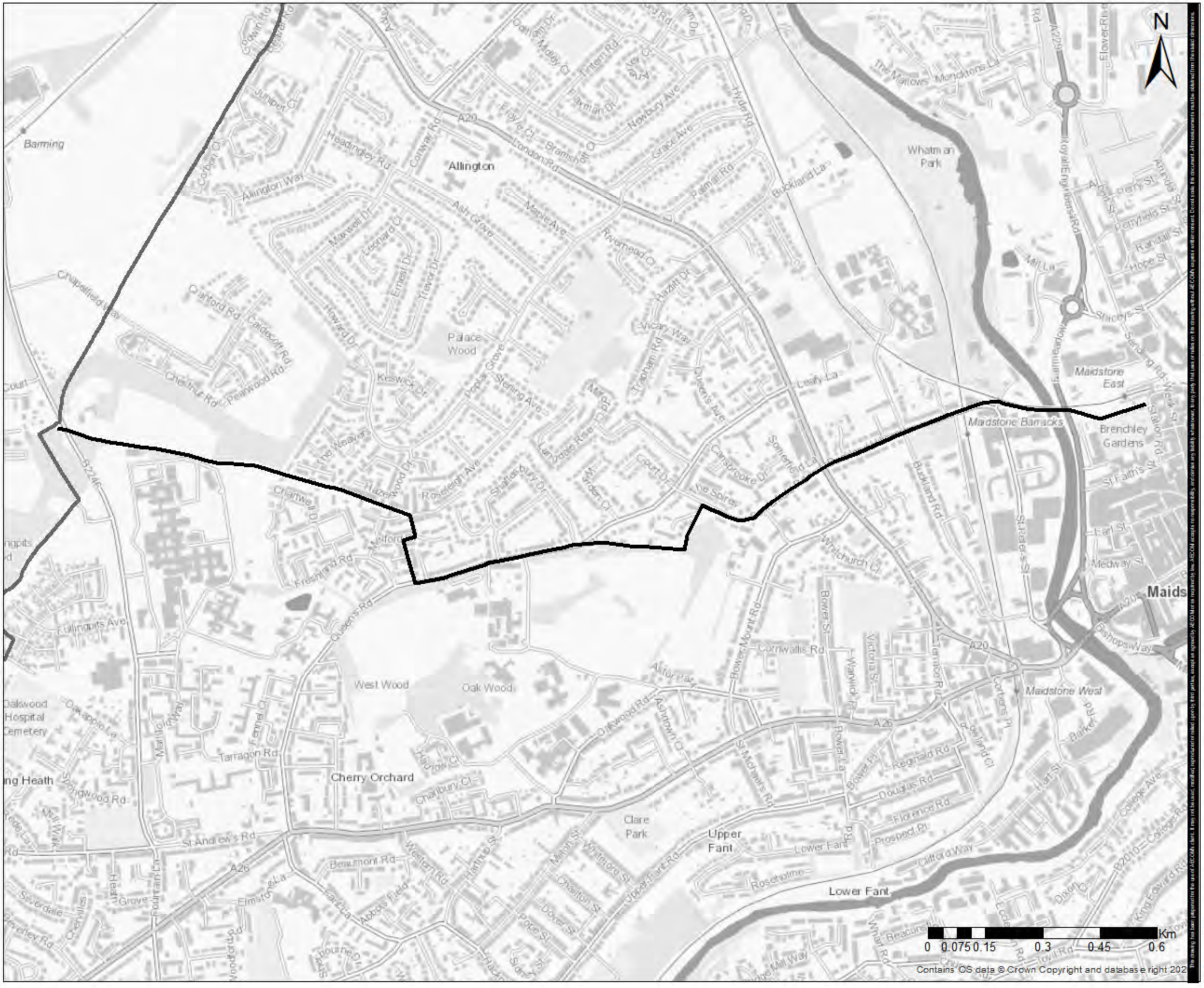
Appendix G - Final Identified Walking Routes and Improvements



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LEGEND

- ☐ Study Area
- — W01 - Barming to Maidstone East

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- W02 - Eclipse Park to Maidstone West
- Proposed Final Route 2 Improvements

Undertake localised resurfacing and wayfinding

Implement wayfinding

Upgrade footpaths which connect into Vinters Park and which connect residents to the proposed walking route

Add dropped kerbs and tactile paving

Add new pedestrian crossing

Maintenance required to on-street footway to improve links to wider network, remove barriers to make path entrance accessible and vegetation management

Add crossing facilities outside school

Add pedestrian crossing

Widen footways

Add additional crossing point, implement traffic calming measures and public realm improvements

Public realm improvements to link into the pedestrianised High Street area, pavement widening over Medway river and provide updated pedestrian priority crossings

Implement additional crossing point, public realm improvements and wayfinding to stations

Pedestrian crossing improvements to reduce pedestrian wait times, crossing distances, pedestrian priority and safety

Footway widening and implement double yellow lines to manage parking on footways

Km
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4

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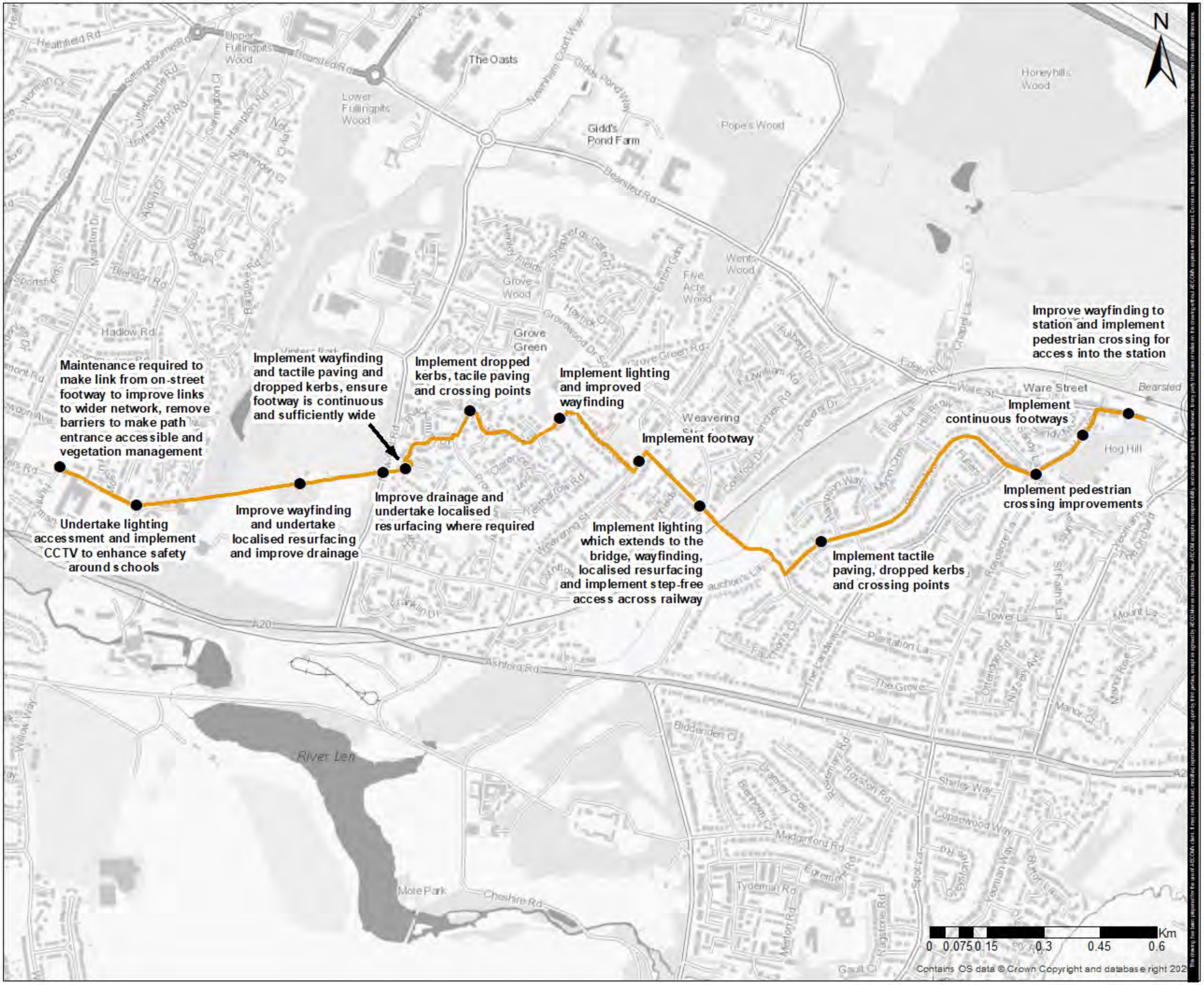
LEGEND

- Study Area
- W03 - Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School
- W03 - Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School (Indicative Route via Planned Development)

NOTES



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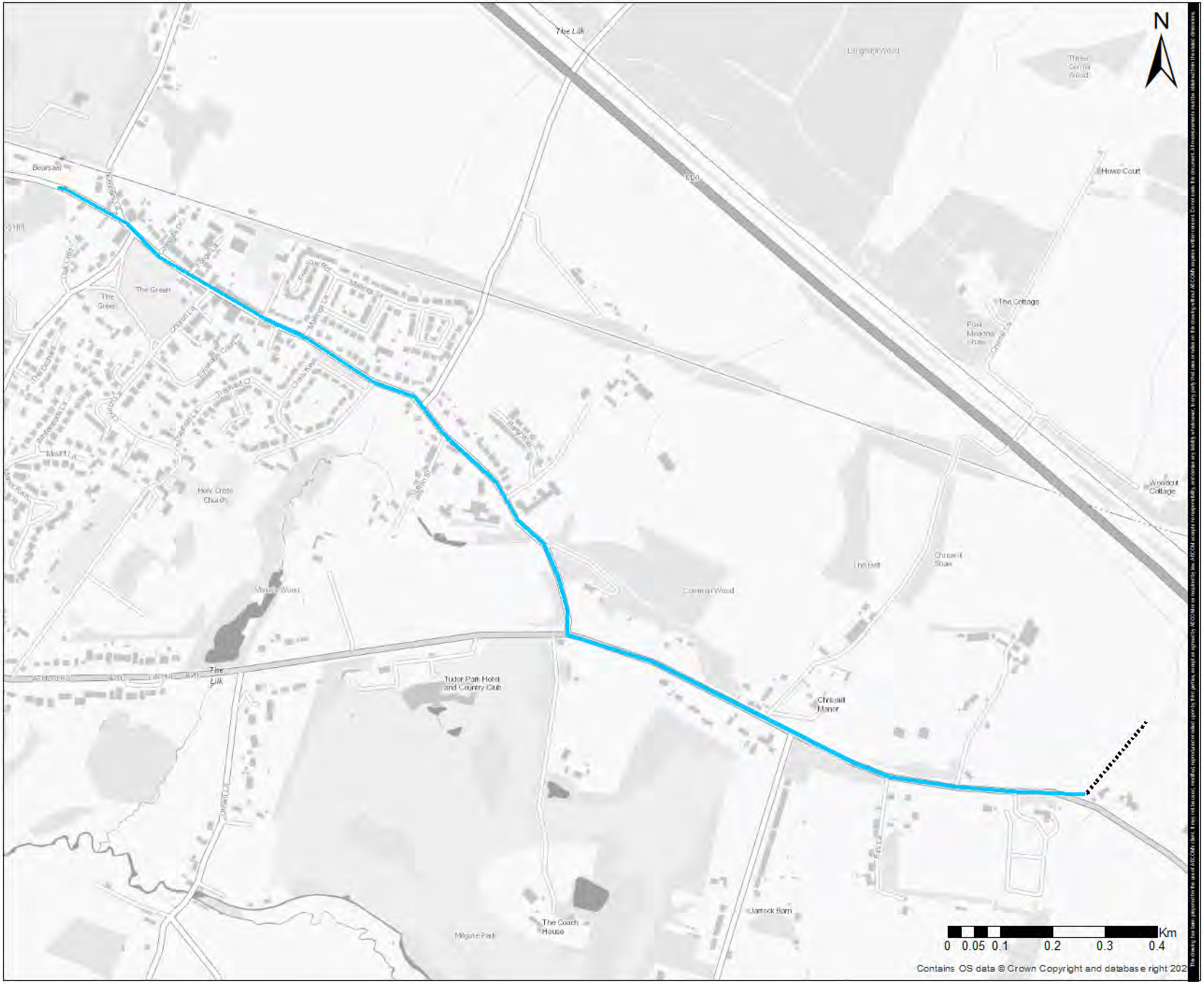
LEGEND

- Study Area
- W04 - Weavering to Bearsted
- Proposed Final Route 4 Improvements

NOTES



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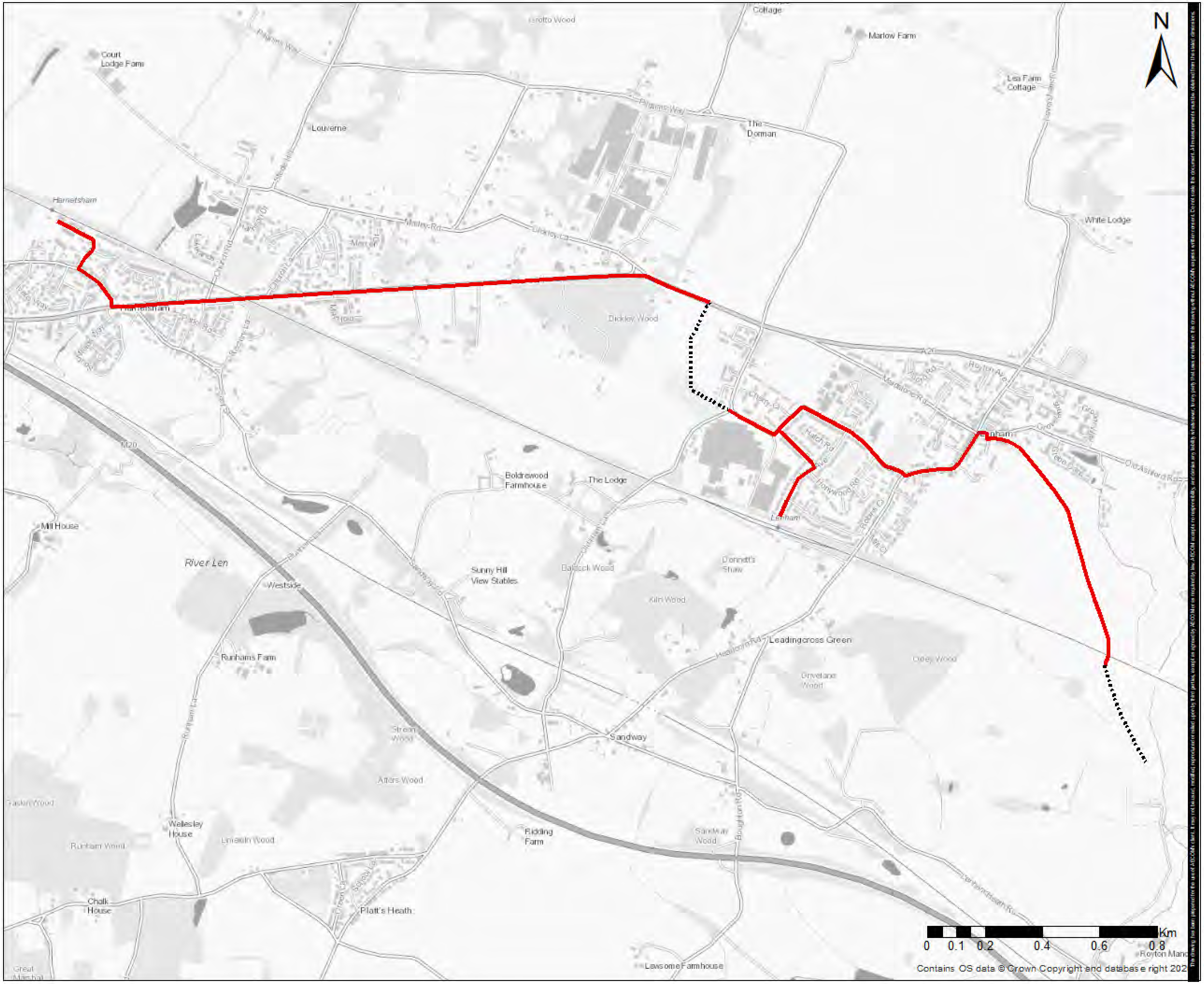
LEGEND

- Study Area
- W05 - Bearsted Employment Site to Station
- W05 - Bearsted Employment Site to Station (Indicative Route via Planned Development)

NOTES



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LEGEND

Study Area
W06 - Harrietsham to Lenham
W06 - Harrietsham to Lenham (Indcative Route via Planned Development)

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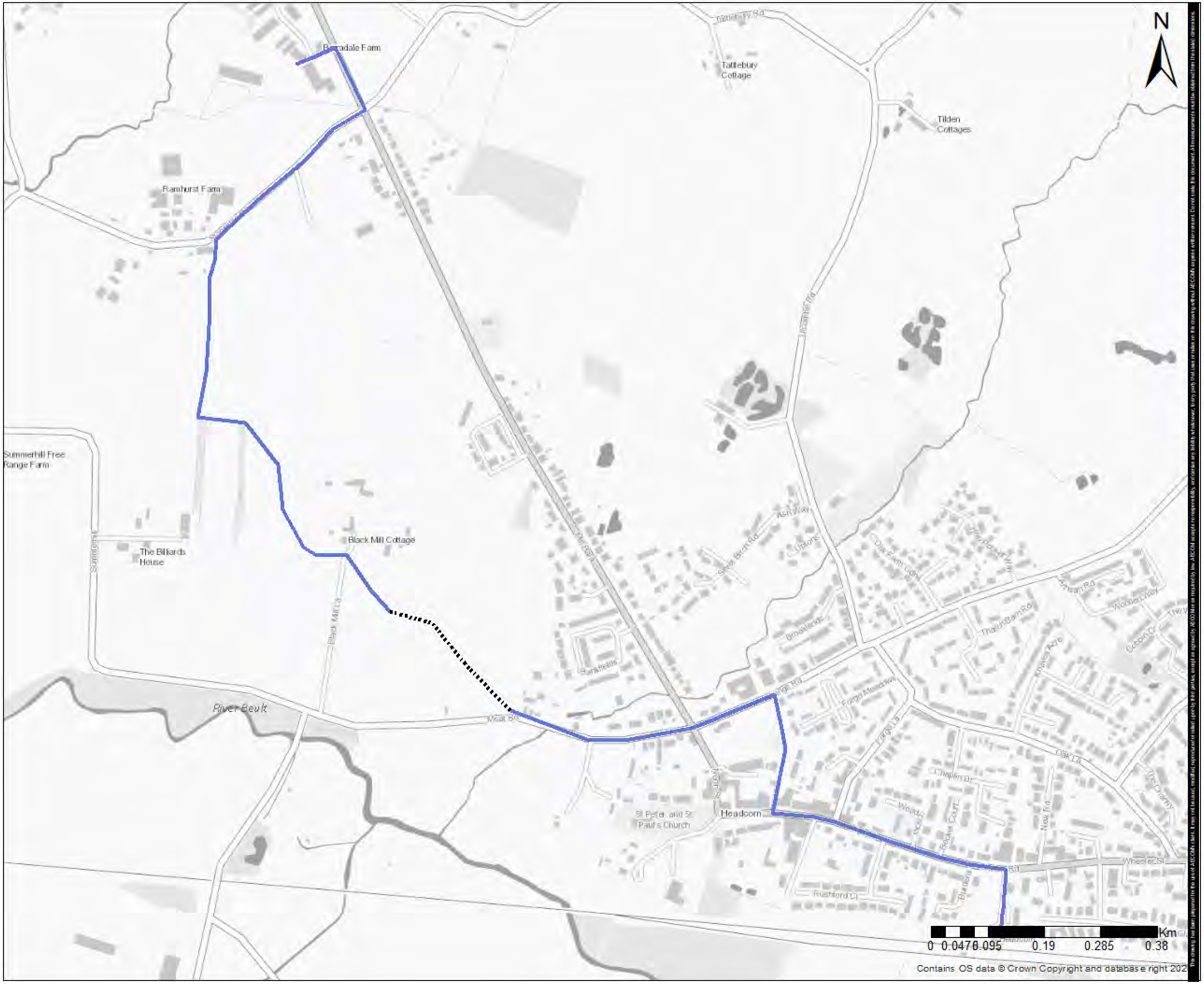

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- W07 - Headcorn Town Centre
- W07 - Headcorn Town Centre (Indicaitve Route via Planned Development)

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- W08 - Coxheath to Shepway

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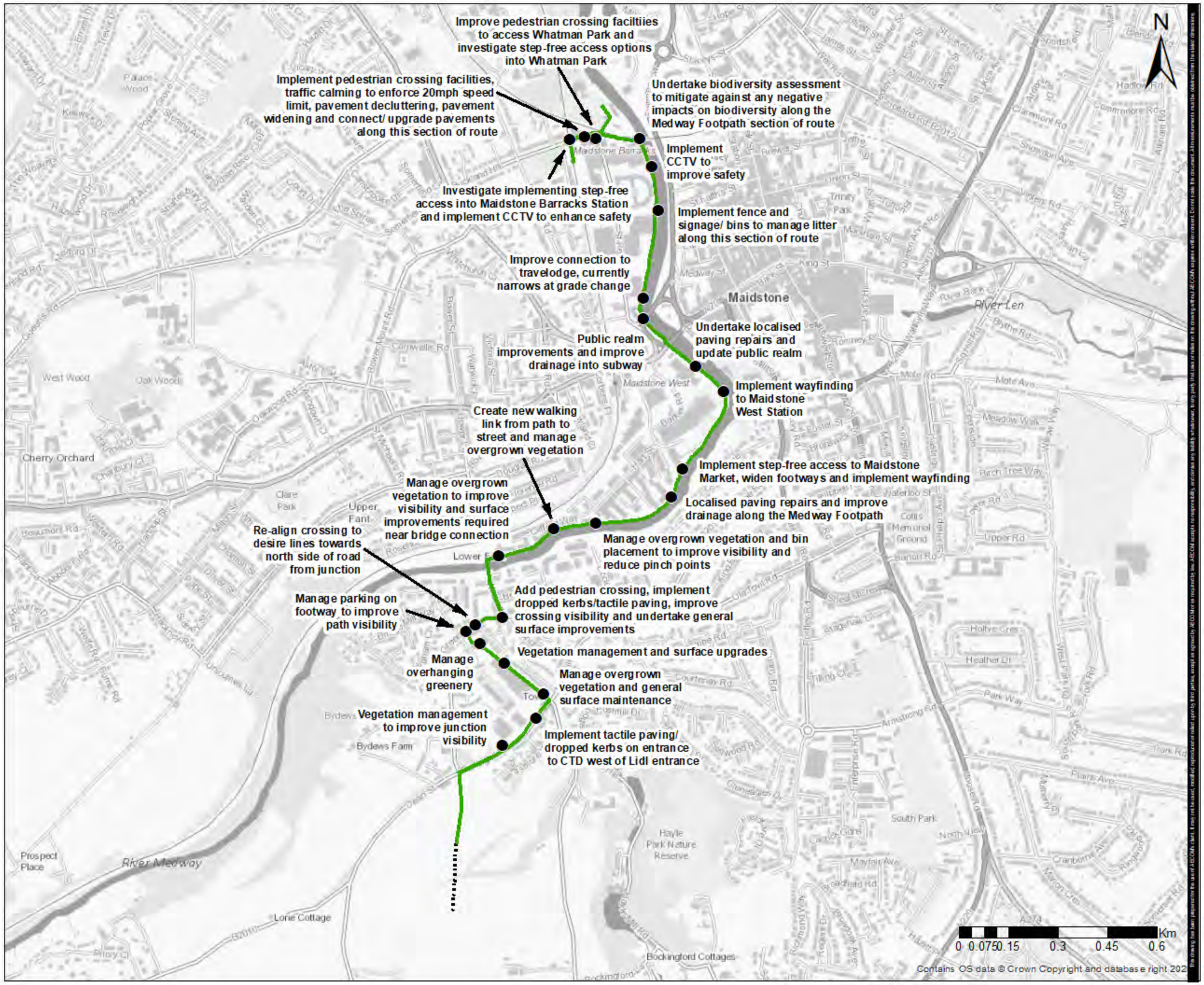

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LEGEND

- Study Area
- W09 - Tovil to Maidstone Barracks
- W09 - Tovil to Maidstone Barracks (Indicative Route via Planned Development)
- Proposed Final Route 9 Improvements

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Appendix H - Route Prioritisation and Costs

Cycling Route Prioritisation Scoring

Route		Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth						Deliverability	Overall Score	Ranking
ID	Route	PCT Value (Go-Dutch scenario - Highest Value)	Network Gap	Population Density	Housing allocation	Employment Density	Employment/ Mixed Use allocation	Public Support		
C08	Route 8 - Tovil to Maidstone Medical Campus	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	16.0	1
C16	Route 16 - Langley to Maidstone Town Centre	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	15.0	2
C11	Route 11 - Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy	3.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	14.0	3
C10	Route 10 - Downswood to Maidstone Medical Campus	2.0	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	13.0	4
C18	Route 18 - Lidsing Garden Community to Maidstone Town Centre	3.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	13.0	4
C09	Route 9 - Tovil to North Shepway	3.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	12.0	6
C14	Route 14 - Bearsted to Marden	3.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	2.0	12.0	6
C15	Route 15 - Boughton Monchelsea to Shepway	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	11.0	8

Walking and Wheeling Route Prioritisation Scoring

Route		Connectivity/ Supporting Strategic Growth							Deliverability	Overall Score	Ranking
ID	Route	PT Connection - Rail	Additional Connections (Bus Stops, Severance, Greenspace)	Education	Population Density	Housing allocation	Employment Density	Employment/ Mixed Use allocation	Public Support		
W02	Route 2 - Bearsted to Maidstone West	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	18.0	1
W04	Route 4 - Weavering to Bearsted	1.0	3.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	16.0	2
W09	Route 9 - Tovil to Maidstone Barracks	3.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	15.5	3
W01	Route 1 - Barming to Maidstone East	2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	3.0	15.5	3
W03	Route 3 - Invicta Park to Maidstone Grammar School	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	2.0	15.0	5
W06	Route 6 - Harrietsham to Lenham Growth Site	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	11.0	6
W08	Route 8 - Coxheath to Shepway	0.0	2.5	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	9.5	7
W05	Route 5 - Bearsted Employment Site to Bearsted Station	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	9.0	8
W07	Route 7 - Headcorn	1.0	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	8.5	9

Cycling and Walking and Wheeling Route Intervention Costs

Cycling Route Improvement Costs				
Name	Min Cost	Max Cost	Average Cost	Rank
C08 - Route 8 - Tovil to Maidstone Medical Campus	£6,503,000.00	£14,153,600.00	£10,328,300.00	1
C11 - Route 11 - Peneden Heath to Cornwallis Academy	£4,750,000.00	£9,665,800.00	£7,207,900.00	2
C16 - Route 16 - Langley to Maidstone Town Centre	£3,360,800.00	£7,639,000.00	£5,499,900.00	3

Walking Route Improvement Costs				
Name	Min Cost	Max Cost	Average Cost	Rank
W02 - Route 2 - Bearsted to Maidstone West	£1,223,100.00	£1,580,600.00	£1,401,850.00	1
W04 - Route 4 - Weavering to Bearsted	£616,400.00	£789,800.00	£703,100.00	3
W09 - Route 9 - Tovil to Maidstone Barracks	£844,900.00	£1,121,400.00	£983,150.00	2

N.B. No cost has been included for bioviersity assessments since this is variable at this stage