

SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD	Agenda Item:
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Meeting Date	Monday 10 th June 2013
Report Title	Faversham Pedestrianisation Scheme
Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Wright
SMT Lead	Brian Planner
Head of Service	Brian Planner
Lead Officer	Brett O'Connell
Classification	Open

Recommendations	This is an update report
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Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1. This report provides a summary of recent investigations into the possibility of reversing the traffic flow in East Street/Preston Street in conjunction with the pedestrianisation scheme in Faversham Town Centre.

2 Background

- 2.1 Originally the central area of Faversham was pedestrianised only on Saturdays between 10am – 4pm and this closure to traffic had operated successfully for many years. On other days of the week traffic restrictions apply which limit access to disabled badge holders and deliveries. However, these restrictions are often ignored by drivers and following concerns raised at a Faversham Local Engagement Forum regarding possible conflict between vehicles and pedestrians it was agreed that the restrictions would be reviewed. A small working group consisting of local businesses, residents, disabled groups, Kent Highways, Borough Officers and Town, Borough, and County Councillors was formed to consider various options for the town centre and recommended that the possibility of an experimental Friday closure of the town centre be explored.
- 2.2 A consultation progressed with residents, businesses, visitors and statutory consultees in relation to the introduction of the extension of the pedestrianisation scheme to include Fridays. It was agreed that an experimental scheme commence on the 1st August 2012 and run for a trial period of nine months with a review after six months.
- 2.3 During this trial period a petition from town centre traders was received by this Transportation Board in December 2012 asking for the trial scheme to be abandoned. In considering the petition the Transportation Board decided to continue with the trial as planned with a review and full consultation after six months of operation.

- 2.4 The six month review of the scheme was undertaken and took the form of a consultation with residents, businesses, visitors and statutory consultees.

The consultation consisted of:

- Face to face consultation from a market stall on a Friday and Tuesday during January/February
 - Press release in local paper
 - Online consultation on the Swale Borough Council website
 - Details on the FEP website
 - A letter delivered personally to all surrounding business owners/managers with a face to face debate about the scheme where possible
- 2.5 The results from the six month review were submitted to the Joint Transportation Board in March 2013. The Board recommended that a small working group be established to progress with the option 3 in the report and as clarified below.
Option 3 - To address the concerns of traders in East Street and Preston Street and allow disabled access to part of the town centre the one-way road layout could be changed. Access to this area would operate in the same way as normal days of the week with access restricted to deliveries and disabled badge holders only during the restricted hours. The Market area could then be operated independently. All the roads in the town centre are would be closed to traffic on Saturdays as present.

3 Investigation into Traffic Flow Reversal

- 3.1 Following the recommendation made at the March JTB meeting, Officers looked into the possibility of altering the one-way system in East Street/Preston Street.
- 3.2 A meeting was held on the 26th March 2013 at the Guildhall in Faversham to discuss three options of traffic flow reversal. Attendees included various business owners in Preston Street, Councillors and a representative from a disabled group.
- 3.3 Attendees were shown plans of the three options. It was decided that proposal No. 3 would be the preferred layout as shown in Annex A. The proposal included the traffic flow to be reversed in East Street travelling one way in a westerly direction leading to Preston Street where the traffic would travel in a southerly direction as currently. Alterations to the traffic lights sequence and signing at the crossroads would be needed to further this option.
- 3.4 A site meeting with Kent County Council and the Police was held on the 29th April to discuss the proposals. Although no objections were received from the Police, Kent County Council were concerned that large HGV's may overrun the footway when negotiating the junction of East Street and Preston Street. Kent County Council ran modelling software to simulate a large articulated HGV negotiating this area and the results showed the footway would be overrun at certain points.

- 3.5 Following the site meeting, Kent County Council also modelled a large articulated HGV travelling in the opposite direction travelling north up Preston Street and west into East Street to see if footway overrun would still occur. The results showed that the overrun would still occur with a large HGV vehicle at the junction with Preston Street and East Street. However, the size of the modelled HGV in the simulation may be based on a larger HGV than currently used for deliveries by businesses in the area.
- 3.6 It was confirmed at an early stage that the Iceland shop were likely to use the largest delivery vehicles in this area in the form of a non-rigid HGV. Weekly deliveries are made to this shop.
- 3.7 At the time of writing this report arrangements are trying to be made to remove the bollards on the mini-roundabout at the junction with East Street and Preston Street so that a test run with the Iceland delivery HGV can be undertaken and monitored closely to see whether the HGV does actually overrun the footway.
- 3.8 The scheme can only be implemented if the issue of HGV access can be resolved and a further update will be made at the meeting.

4 Appendices

- 4.1 Annex A – Proposal No. 3 plan

5 Background Papers

None