
HIGHSTED ROAD PROPOSED FOOTWAY, SITTINGBOURNE

To: **Swale Joint Transportation Board**

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

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Electoral division: **Sittingbourne South**

Date: **7th September 2020**

Summary: This report summarises previous investigations and development work on proposals to install a footway on Highsted Road between its junctions with Farm Crescent and Swanstree Avenue.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and background

1.1 Highsted Road is a partly-residential road in Sittingbourne that links Swanstree Avenue with Bell Road. (The road is now divided by Swanstree Avenue and there is a length that continues south of this point, but this is not part of this proposal.) For most of its length, it is fronted by residential development with footways on both sides. However, the footway on the southwest side ends at the last property and on the northeast side ends just past Farm Crescent. The road also has vehicular entrances to the Sittingbourne Memorial Hospital site and Highsted Grammar School.

1.2 Kent County Council and local elected representatives have regularly received requests from residents and users of Highsted Road for a footway on this section. At present, pedestrians must either walk in the carriageway or take a much longer route via Brenchley Road and Bell Road or the Rectory Road estate.

1.3 Along the length of Highsted Road concerned, the highway verge on the west side is too narrow to accommodate a footway. On the east side, whereas there is a large grass verge, highway rights only exist over a narrow strip adjacent to the edge of carriageway.

1.4 In 2014, the County Council investigated two options to install a footway on one side of the road:

1.4.1 A footway on the west side adjacent to the carriageway. This option would have required the acquisition of a strip of school land, the removal of several mature trees and the relocation of the full length of security fencing.

An outline price was calculated at £108,000 at 2013/14 prices. The County Council did not progress this option as this was not affordable and the school was not willing to release any land in its ownership due to potential development opportunities. The school owns this land, and KCC is not the landlord in the case of this school's site and buildings.

1.4.2 Further discussions with KCC Education and Invicta Law took place during February to April 2020 to ascertain if some of the school field could be acquired via a compulsory purchase order (CPO). This was deemed not feasible. KCC should only use their CPO powers in locations where there is a proven road safety issue, supported by a pattern of injury related crashes, and our legal representative has advised that there is very little chance a CPO would be successful for this site. In addition to this the school field is already below the required size to meet Sports England requirements based on the number of pupils at the school.

1.4.3 A footway on the east side adjacent to the carriageway. This option would have required the acquisition of a strip comprising multiple parcels of land from residential properties in Haysel. Due to the configuration of the land parcels, if one or more parcels were unavailable, a continuous footway would not be possible. The County Council wrote to all homeowners concerned in 2014 asking whether (a) they supported the proposed footway and (b) if they were willing to dedicate their land to become highway maintainable at public expense. Some of the owners did not support the scheme or could not give unconditional assistance in relation to the scheme. Therefore, the County Council could not progress this option.

1.5 As any option requiring land outside of the existing highway is not available for the scheme, the County Council has now investigated whether there are options to provide a separate footway within the extent of the existing highway.

2.0 Current proposal

2.1 The existing carriageway between Farm Crescent and Swanstree Avenue varies in width between 5 and 6.5 metres. The preferred width of a footway is 1.8 metres and the absolute minimum acceptable would be 1.2 metres. However, depending on the speed and volume of adjacent traffic, a greater width may be appropriate for pedestrians to be safe and comfortable. Given the current relatively narrow carriageway, any reduction in width will prevent two-way flow of traffic on this length. For this reason, any conversion of carriageway to footway would necessitate the removal of traffic in one or both directions.

2.2 Collision data for Highsted Road and its junctions has been investigated. For the last three years for which data is available (to 30 September 2019), there have been no collisions recorded for Highsted Road itself nor its junction with Swanstree Avenue. There was one collision recorded at the junction of Highsted Road with Bell Road. Therefore, the collision data alone does not provide justification for making changes to the highway.

- 2.3 The County Council has developed a detailed design for one option for the new footway, following the JTB report in March 2019 this was the preferred option of the 3 possible solutions identified:

Southbound traffic only - This option allows general traffic to proceed from north-to-south between Farm Crescent and Swanstree Avenue. A new 2-metre-wide footway would be constructed on the eastern side of the road for the full length with the remaining road being at least 3.25 metres wide throughout. Copies of the detailed drawings can be seen in appendix 1. A cost estimate has been acquired of approximately £30,000, in addition to this a TRO would need to be written and advertised to make this section of the road one way. Currently no funding mechanism has been secured to develop this scheme any further.

- 2.4 The County Council previously undertook an Equalities Impact Assessment which identified two potentially negative impacts that could not be removed or mitigated:

2.4.1 Highsted Road has street lighting, but this length is not overlooked by any residential properties. Antisocial behaviour and fear of crime could discourage some from using this route outside of peak hours and at night, especially with reduced flows of vehicular traffic along the road. The option of allowing southbound traffic would be slightly better than closing Highstead Road to all vehicular traffic as it would retain a throughflow of vehicle movement throughout the day. Other than actions to encourage greater usage of the route throughout the day, there are no obvious options within the control of the highway authority to discourage antisocial behaviour and increase passive surveillance of the route as this would involve off-highway land use change.

3.0 Discussion and member comments

- 3.1 The local County Council Member is still keen to see a proposal explored for a new footway link along Highstead Road. No further consultation has taken place since the previous JTB report in March 2019. Previously option 1 (southbound traffic only) had the highest level of support from members of the public, but many residents stated their concern that the changes could result in congestion on other roads and junctions in the area. Some residents stated that the removal of their ability to drive in both directions along Highstead Road would not be acceptable to them.
- 3.2 Many respondents promoted the idea of acquiring land either to the east or west of the road as their preferred option. However, as outlined above, the County Council has investigated the option of acquiring land in detail and this has been discounted.
- 3.3 Due to concerns about displacement of traffic, and the lack of support during previous consultations, it is likely that this scheme will receive objections and

may be unpopular. No funding source has been identified to deliver any works in Highstead Road, so at this time this report is for information only.

4.0 Recommendation

Option 1 It is recommended that no further action is taken.

Option 2 It is recommended that a future funding bid is made via the Local Transport Plan allocation in the 2021/22 financial year to deliver the option detailed in this report. This would be dependent on a successful bid, and funding being available in the next financial year. A full public consultation will need to take place if funding is secured.

Contact Officer:	Ryan Shiel and Sarah Ellcock
Reporting to:	Tim Read – Head of Transportation

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Detailed drawings and plans

Background Papers

None

Appendix 1 – Detailed Drawings and Plans

Notes (all drawings).

- All dimensions are proposed and in metres unless otherwise stated.
- All setting out is to be agreed on site with the Engineer prior to commencement of works.
- All precast concrete (PCC) kerbing and edging shall be in accordance with BS7263, Part F.
- Any voids between new kerbs and existing carriageway shall be reinstated with 10mm AC 10 close surf.
- Surfaces between bituminous materials shall be saw cut to provide a clean vertical joint.
- Vertical faces of existing bituminous materials shall be primed with bitumen. Existing horizontal or inclined surfaces shall be tack coated in accordance with Appendix 7/4.
- New footway surfaces shall be laid with 1:40 crossfall towards carriageway unless otherwise stated with no point having a crossfall greater than 1:12.
- Existing surfaces overlaid shall be swept clean prior to overlay and sprayed with tack coat.
- All existing covers in areas to construction to be raised to suit new levels.
- All existing road markings that conflict with the proposed are to be removed.

General key

Existing lamp column to remain.

Site Clearance Key

Remove existing PCC kerb including bedding and backing and dispose of at Contractor's licensed tip. [c13 metres]

Remove existing PCC edging including bedding and backing and dispose of at Contractor's licensed tip. [c8 metres]

Excavate existing verge to 170mm below finished levels. [c27 square metres]

Drainage Key

Existing PCC trapped gully (to remain).

Existing PCC trapped gully to be removed and infilled or capped. [2No]

New PCC trapped gully with class D400 grate as KCC/8D/500/009.

Connection of 1500 pipe to existing PCC chamber with mass concrete surround.

AG Adjust gully grating and frame.

Kerbing / Footway Construction Key

Overlay footway or carriageway with A06 dense surf 100/150 20mm thick over AC10 regulating layer. Perimeter of surface course to be keyed into existing surface course to give a minimum layer thickness of 20mm. All joints to be saw cut. [c328 square metres]

Full footway construction Type A to KCC/1100/011/G. (Existing grass verge / unacceptable material to be excavated to a depth of 170mm below finished levels). [c28 square metres]

HB2 Proposed 125 x 255mm half battered kerbing (Type HB2). Variation B upstand 125mm to KCC/1100/001/D. [c167 metres]

EP Proposed 50 x 150mm PCC edging to KCC/1100/001/D. [c107 metres]

Existing buff PCC tactile paving slabs to be lifted and reset to new levels where necessary. Installed to KCC/1100/015. Blisters to align with tactile on opposite side of road. [c3 square metres]

Sign & Lines Key

(11) Non-illuminated traffic sign (refer to Sign Schedule).

(11) Illuminated traffic sign (refer to Sign Schedule).

Sign to be removed (refer to Sign Schedule).

Sign position and orientation.

(0257) Road marking TBRGD 2016 Diagram number.

Existing road marking to be removed by mechanical scabbling.

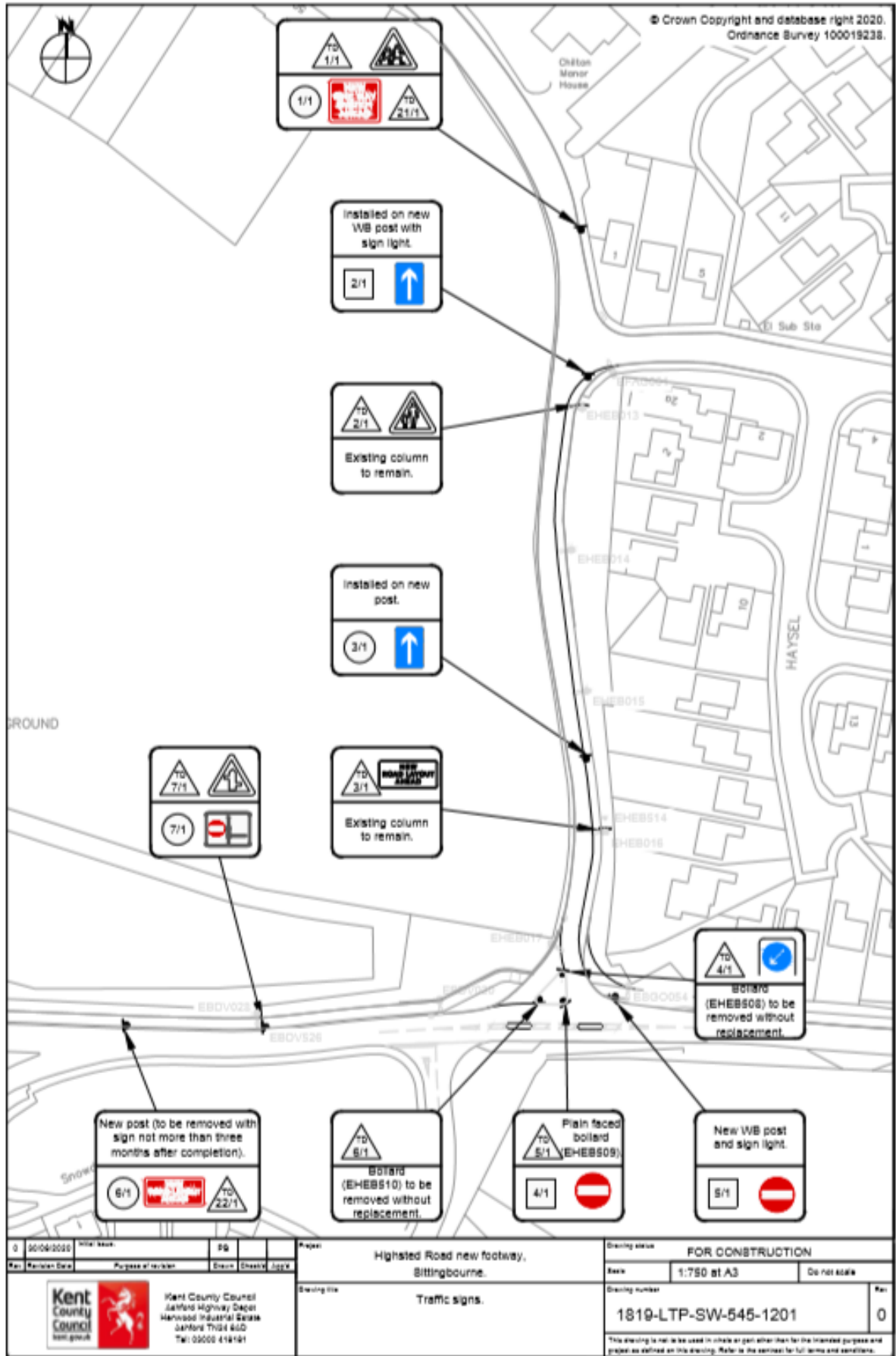
Proposed road marking in white thermoplastic screed with applied solid glass bead.

Existing road marking (for information only). Some existing markings have been omitted for clarity.

Location plan (1:2000).

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0	20/04/2020	Final Issue	Pg	1	Project	Highsted Road new footway, Bittingbourne.	Drawing status	FOR CONSTRUCTION	
Rev	Revision Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Drawing title	Location plan and notes.	Scale	1:2000 at A3	Do not scale
				Kent County Council Salford Highway Dept Harwood Industrial Estate Salford TR14 4UD Tel: 02000 416161		Drawing number	1819-LTP-SW-545-0030		Rev
							0		
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0	00/09/2020	Final Issue	PG		Project	Hightsted Road new footway, Bittingbourne.		Drawing status	FOR CONSTRUCTION	
Rev	Revision Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Appr'd	Drawing title	Kerbs, footways and paved areas: Sheet 2 of 2.	Scale	1:150 at A3	Do not scale
		Kent County Council Jarford Highway Depot Harwood Industrial Estate Jarford TR14 6JD Tel: 02000 419191			Drawing number 1819-LTP-SW-545-1102	Rev 0				
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