

A251/A2 Junction Improvement Scheme

Consultation Report



Public Consultation

4 August 2020 – 14 September 2020

Alternative Formats

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

From 4 August – 14 September 2020, Kent County Council consulted on proposals for junction improvements on the A2/A251 Faversham. This included the introduction of traffic signals and to further improve them by creating additional turning lanes on both roads for vehicles turning left. The improvements would include a push button pedestrian crossing. The proposal also includes the introduction of a 'left turn only' from the junction of Preston Grove on to the A2 Canterbury Road.

This proposal has been designed to accommodate planned housing growth in the area. This would also help to ease congestion and queuing on the A251 Ashford Road whilst improving turning onto the A2 Canterbury Road. The inclusion of a crossing within the scheme will also make it safer for pedestrians to cross.

The consultation was carried out at the detailed design stage to provide local residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback on the scheme before plans are finalised for construction.

1.2. Purpose of the Consultation

The purpose of the public consultation was to inform the public and stakeholder organisations about the proposed design in order to provide them with the opportunity to ‘Have their say’ and to help KCC gain feedback to inform changes or improvements to the scheme. The consultation gave the opportunity to:

- Understand why changes are being proposed for the A2/A25 junction.
- Consider the possible impacts and benefits of the proposed scheme
- Ask us questions and provide opportunity to share views on the proposals.

This public consultation offered the opportunity to open a dialogue with stakeholder organisations and the public so their comments and concerns could be incorporated into this report and the on-going work to finalise a scheme.

1.3. Purpose of this Report

This report presents the analysis and findings of the responses to the public consultation on the proposals. In addition the report summarises the consultation process and the engagement and promotional activities that took place. The report also states how the feedback will be used to progress the proposal and identifies the next steps in the project development process.

2. Consultation Process

This chapter outlines the process followed to deliver the consultation and details the activities and documentation developed to support the delivery of the consultation. The consultation was divided into the five stages shown in Figure 2.1. Detailed information on each section is given below.

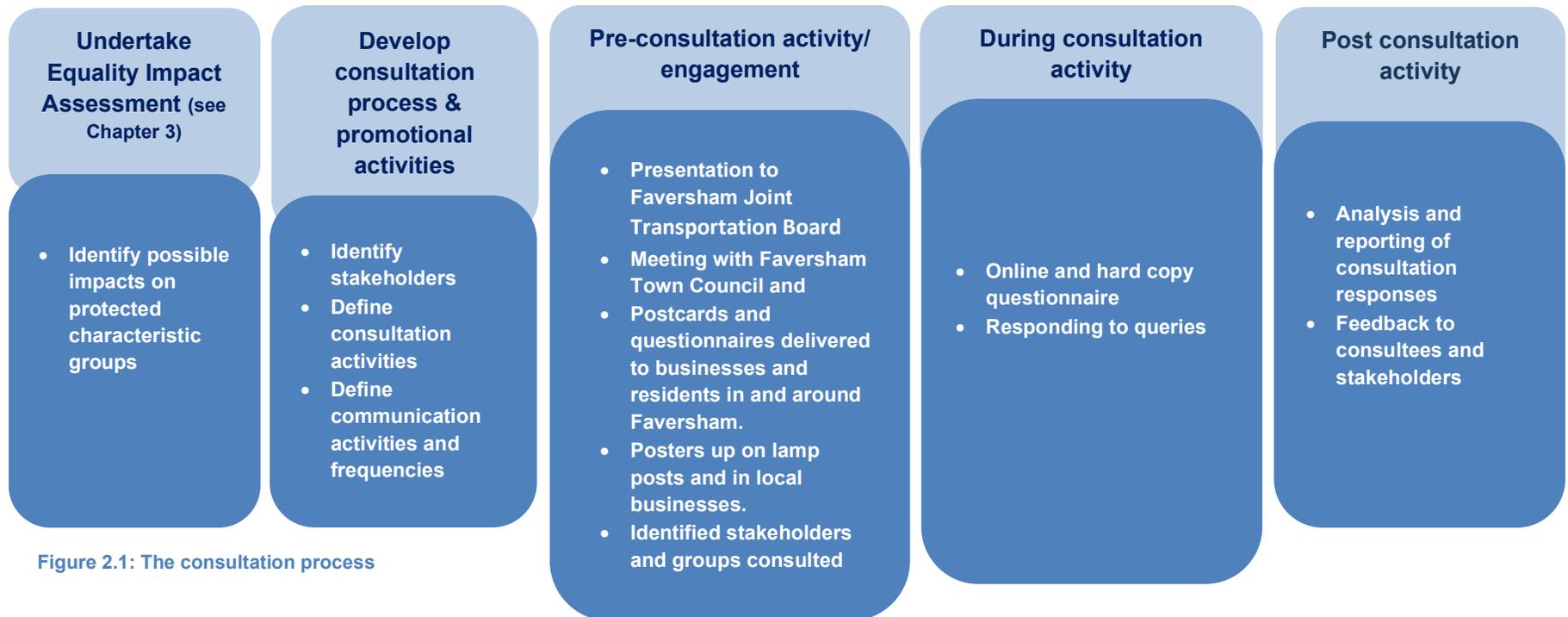


Figure 2.1: The consultation process

2.1. Promoting the Consultation

The consultation process was developed by KCC with the aim of involving residents, community groups and interested parties throughout the project to help develop the proposals, drawing on local knowledge and expertise.

Promoting the Consultation

The following promotional activities were undertaken to support the delivery of the public consultation: Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic we were not able to carry out public exhibitions, which we normally do with these types of schemes. However, we ensured that the consultation was advertised by:

- Consultation poster displayed on site
- Inclusion on the Town Council's website.
- Page on KCC's Consultation Directory on Kent.gov.uk
- Delivered Consultation booklets and questionnaires to residents and Businesses with the consultation area.
- "Have your say" posters for the A251/A2 Faversham Highway Improvements Scheme placed on site.



Please note: materials are available for reference at kent.gov.uk/a251junctionimprovements

2.2. During Consultation Activities

Consultation Events

In normal circumstances we like to hold at least two drop in sessions within the consultation area, however due to COVID-19 this was not possible, therefore we encouraged residents and businesses to contact us directly to ask any questions that they had with regards to the scheme.

Consultation material

Over 800 hard copies of the consultation leaflet and questionnaire were distributed to residents and businesses within the consultation area.

- ✓ In total the Consultation leaflet was downloaded 310 times in PDF format and 20 times in Word format.
- ✓ The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) was downloaded 42 times in PDF format and 3 times in word format.
- ✓ Consultation scheme plan was downloaded 541 times.
- ✓ The Consultation poster as downloaded 46 times.
- ✓ The Consultation Questionnaire Word version was downloaded 15

Feedback mechanism

People were asked to provide feedback via a consultation questionnaire, which was available online and in a paper version. The paper version was delivered with a copy of the leaflet and advertised on our "have your say" posters situated on site.

3. Equality and Accessibility

3.1. Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

The EqIA provides a process to help us to understand how the proposals may affect people based on their protected characteristics (age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion / belief or none, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and carer's responsibilities).

An EqIA was completed prior to commencement of the consultation and was available as one of the consultation documents during the consultation at kent.gov.uk/a251junctionimprovements. This document was downloaded 42 times in PDF format and 3 times in Word format.

We will use the feedback gathered from the consultation to update the EqIA before the detailed design is finalised.

The following steps were defined in the Action Plan and additions were made as the project developed. All were taken to ensure the consultation was accessible to all:

- Due to the global pandemic and the UK being on lockdown public exhibitions were not carried out for this scheme. Copies of the consultation leaflet and questionnaire were available as hard copies to send to residents and businesses along with "have your say" posters located on site for those who wish to submit their say.

- All publicity material included a phone number and email address for people to request hard copies and alternative formats of the consultation material. Word versions of the Consultation booklet, EqIA and questionnaire were provided to ensure accessibility of documentation to consultees using audio transcription software.
- The poster was supplied to Faversham Town Council to advertise on their website

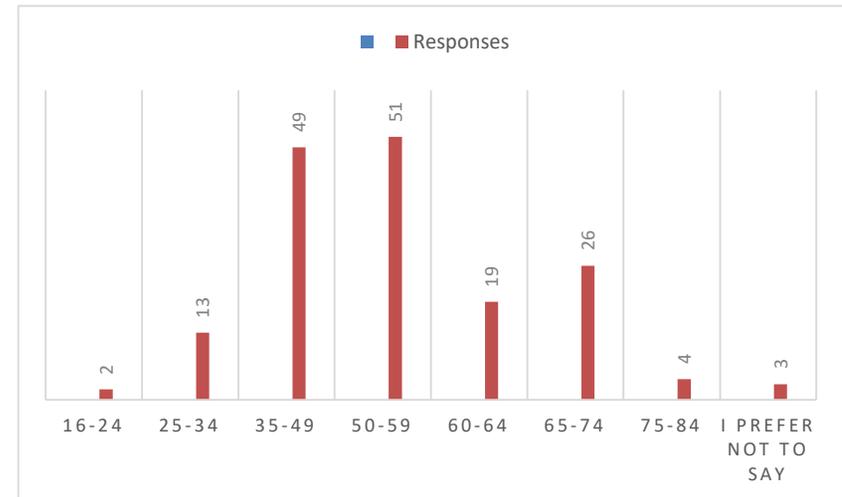
Equality analysis of the consultation data was undertaken (Chapter 5) to identify any new issues that would impact a particular protected characteristic group. The EqIA will be updated to consider outcomes of this consultation and will be available online at kent.gov.uk/a251junctionimprovements.

4. Response Profile

This chapter summarises the number of consultation responses received and who responded to the consultation.

There were a total of 195 respondents to the consultation:

- Of the 195 responses to the consultation questionnaire
- 192 were received online and 3 were hard copy responses.



4.1. Respondent Demographics

The following section documents the demographics of the respondents. This data was collated using the 'About You' questions in the questionnaire.

4.1.1. Age

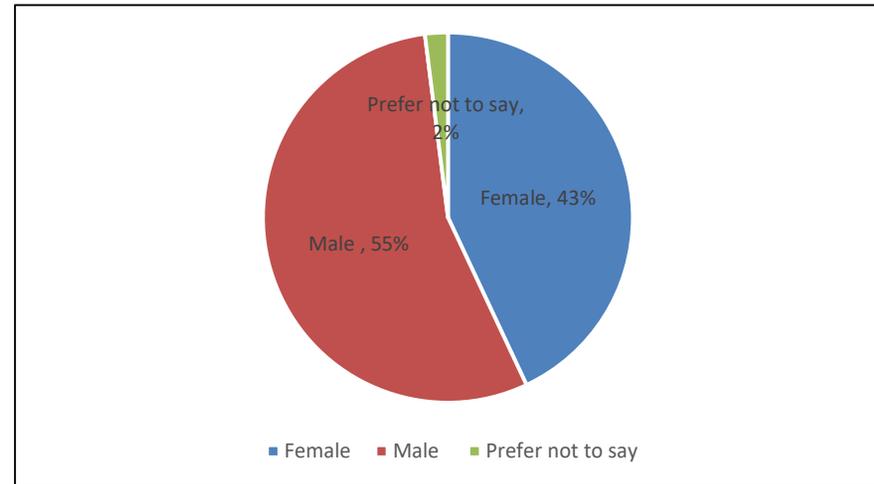
Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of respondents' age. A large proportion of respondents were aged between 35-49 year olds but also a large proportion were aged 50-59.

Please Note: sometimes the percentages of respondents agreeing or disagreeing with a proposal will not add up to 100%. This is because some of the figures have been automatically rounded up or down to the nearest percentage point. It is not a fault with the data.

4.1.2. Gender

- 55% of respondents were male
- 43% of respondents were female
- 2% of respondents preferred not to state their gender.

Results shown in pie chart.

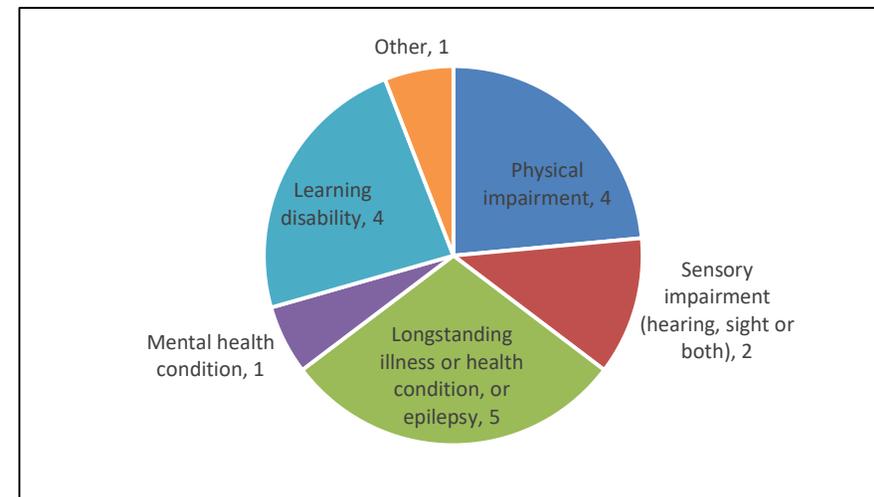


'Gender Respondents'

4.1.3. Disability

- 85% of respondents did not consider themselves having a disability
- 9% of respondents did consider themselves having a disability
- 6% preferred not to say.

Of those that stated they considered themselves having a disability, the impairments that affected each respondent are shown in the pie chart.

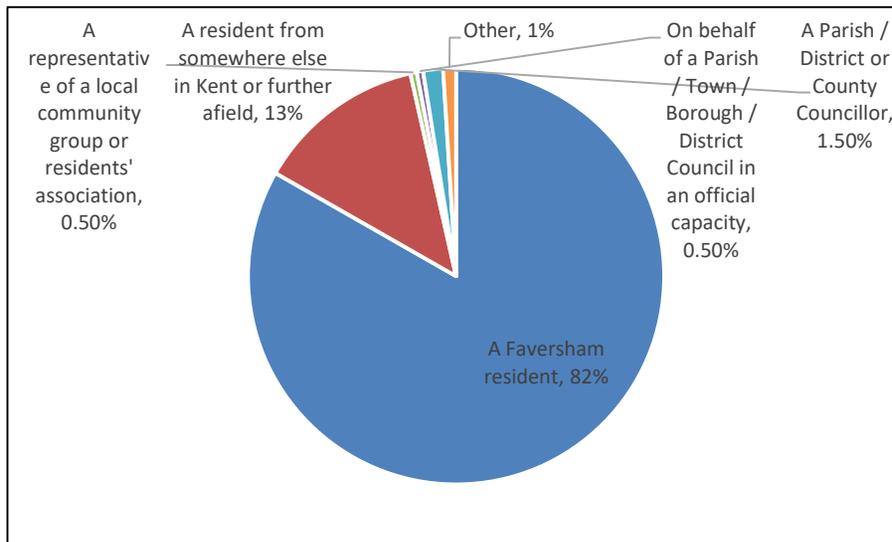


'Disability impairments'

4.2. Respondent Groups

Q1. Are you responding as...?

The 195 questionnaire responses were analysed together to give an overall picture of the attitude towards the proposals.



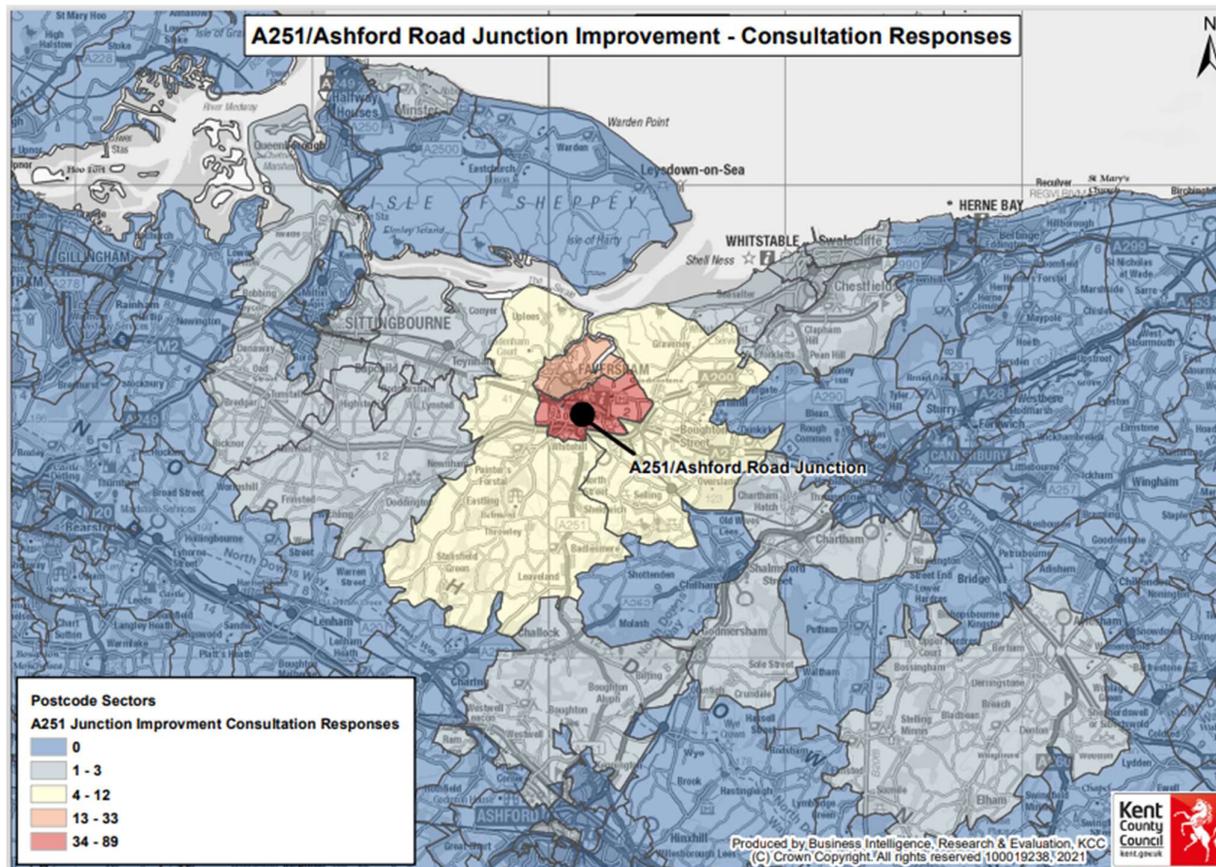
Q1a. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation (local community group, residents association, Council, local business owner, charity, voluntary or community sector organisation)?

This question was answered 2 times.

4.3. Respondent locations

Q2. Please tell us your postcode?

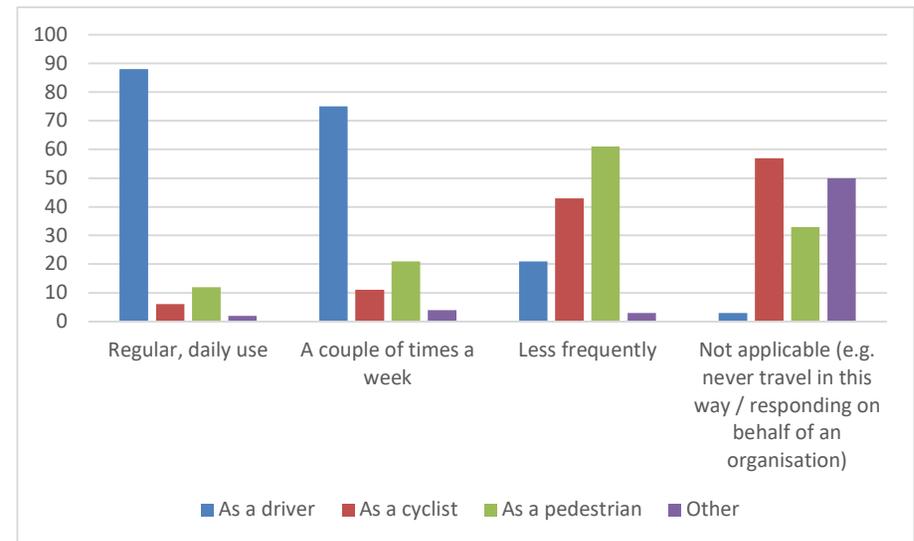
The responses to the questionnaire were mapped to show where the respondents live. This was based on the postcodes given. The picture maps the postcodes of people responding to the questionnaire. These results show us that the vast majority of the people who took part in the consultation live in and around Faversham.



Consultation Results:

4.4 Q3. Please tell us how you use the junction on the A251 Ashford Road and the A2 Canterbury Road in Faversham?

	Regular, daily use	A couple of times a week	Less frequently	Not applicable (e.g. never travel in this way / responding on behalf of an organisation)
As a driver	88	75	21	3
As a cyclist	6	11	43	57
As a pedestrian	12	21	61	33
Other	2	4	3	50



4.5. Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the A251/A2Junction Improvement Scheme?

There were 195 responses to this question

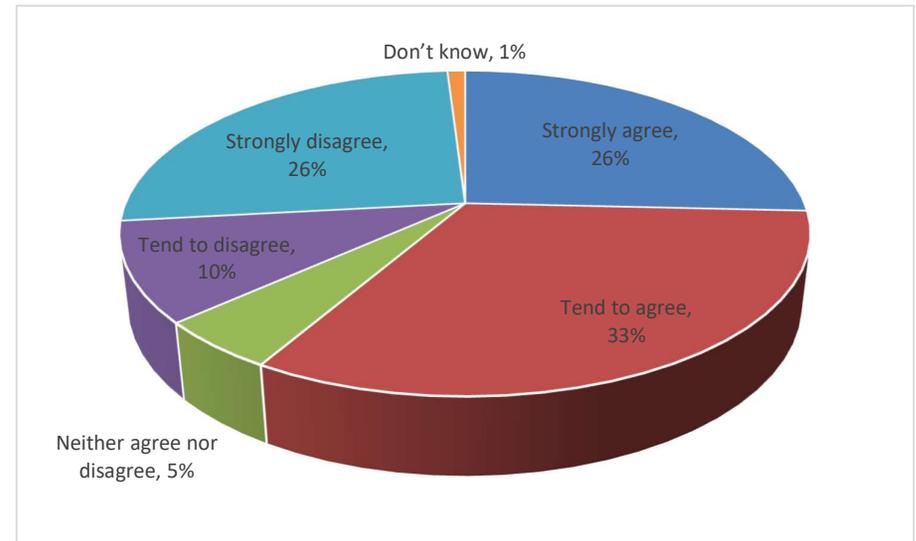
26% of respondents agreed

33% of respondents tend to agree

10% of respondents tend to disagree

26% of respondents disagreed

5% of respondents either did not know or did not agree nor disagree



"We need cycle facilities"

"Consideration needs to be given for traffic build up."

4.6 Q4a. Comments?

There were 182 responses to this question

17% of respondents had concerns at the cycle facilities had not been considered within the scheme.

2% of respondents were concerned that road users would use the side roads as a rat run to avoid queuing.

16% of respondents thought that a roundabout would be more beneficial in this area than a signalised junction.

5% of respondents thought that the design was poor and that issues would continue after the scheme had been implemented.

6% of respondents think that additional pedestrian crossings(near the school) and footways need to be provided

31% of respondents were general comments in favour of the scheme.

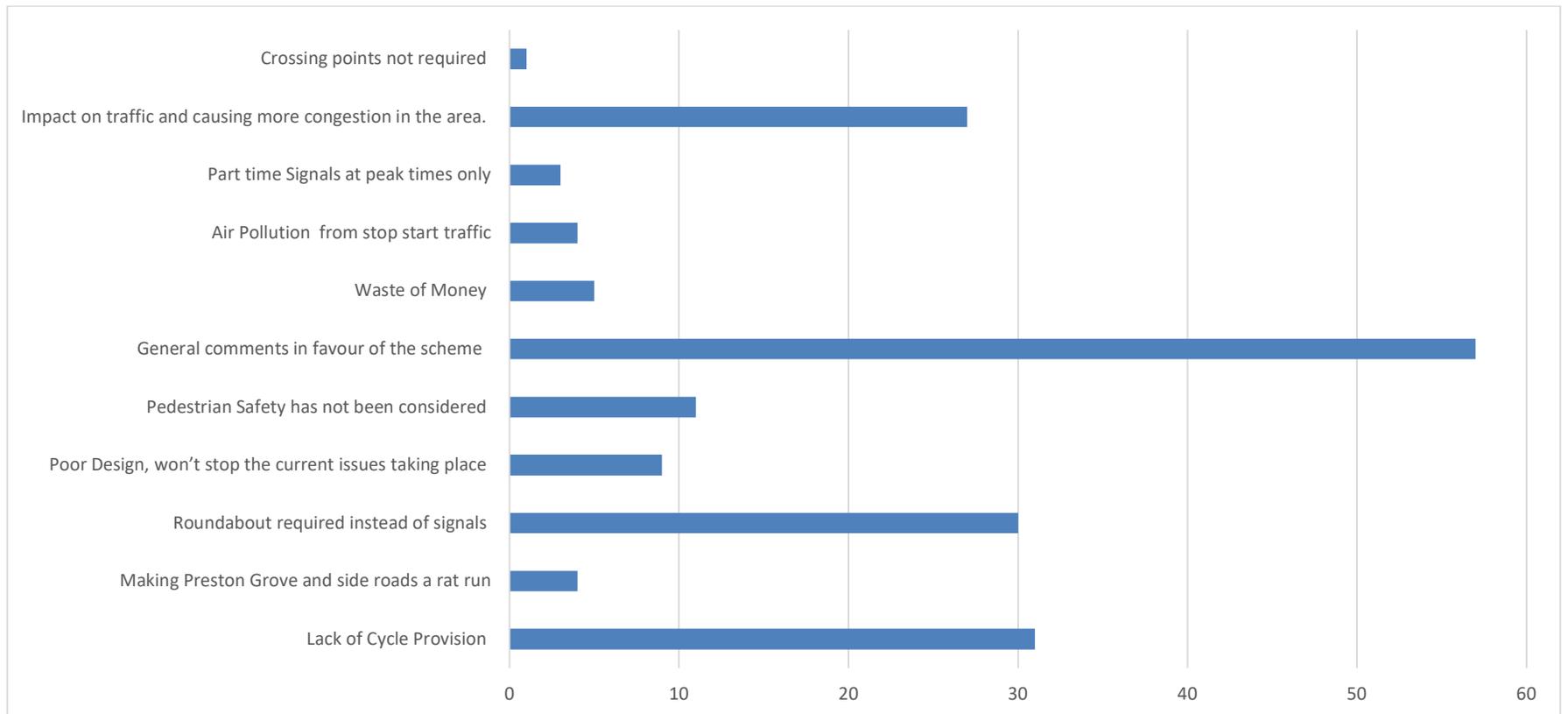
3% of respondents stated that the scheme was a waste of money and time.

2% of the respondents stated that air pollution would increase with stopping and starting engines.

2% of the respondents stated that the issues only took place at peak hours, therefore the signals were not required 24/7

15% of the respondents stated that the introduction of the scheme would cause tailbacks and congestion along the A2 and A251

Theme of comments	Number of comments
Lack of Cycle Provision	31
Making Preston Grove and side roads a rat run	4
Roundabout required instead of signals	30
Poor Design, won't stop the current issues taking place	9
Pedestrian Safety has not been considered	11
General comments in favour of the scheme	57
Waste of Money	5
Air Pollution from stop start traffic	4
Part time Signals at peak times only	3
Impact on traffic and causing more congestion in the area.	27
Crossing points not required	1



4.7 Q5. Are there any other improvements to the design that you would like to see?

A total of 190 responses were received to this question, 140 Yes and 50 No .

4.8 Q5a. Please tell us your suggestions on improvements.

There were 139 responses to this question

24% of respondents suggested the incorporation of a cycle lane along the A2

9% of respondents suggested more pedestrian crossing facilities in the area., especially near the school.

3% of respondents suggested additional footways need to be considered along the A2

23% of respondents suggested that a roundabout should be considered instead of a signalised junction.

7% of respondents were general comments in favour of the scheme.

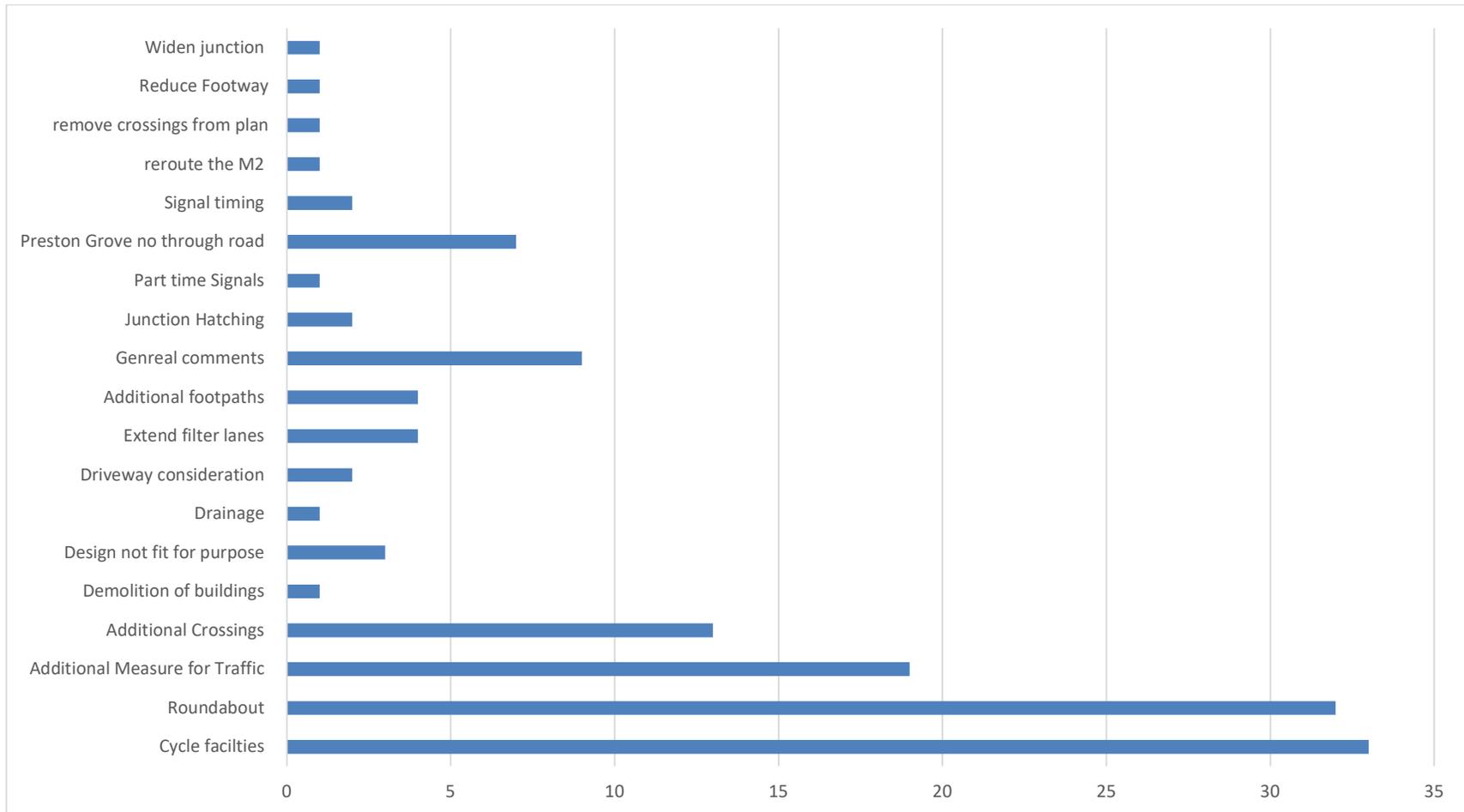
13% of the respondents suggested additional measures to assist traffic, creating longer filter lanes and introducing measures near the Mews to ease congestion along the route.

1% of the respondents suggested additional landscaping in the area.

4% of the respondents suggested making Preston Grove a no through road.

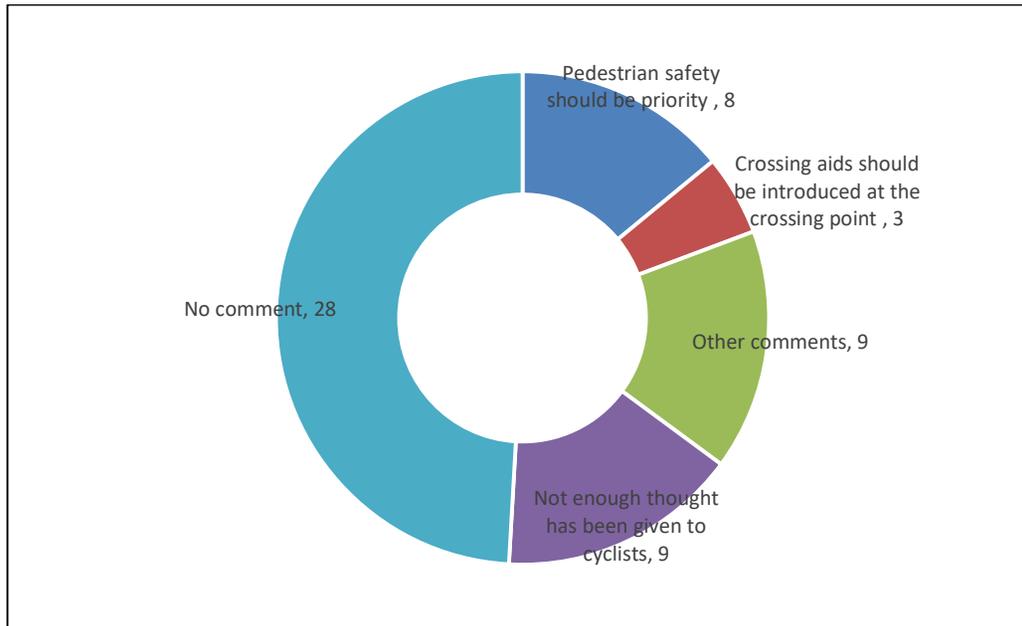
Cycle facilities	33
Roundabout	32
Additional Measure for Traffic	19
Additional Crossings	13
Demolition of buildings	1
Design not fit for purpose	3
Drainage	1
Driveway consideration	1
Extend filter lanes	4
Additional footpaths	4
General comments	9
Junction Hatching	2
Part time Signals	1
Preston Grove no through road	6
Signal timing	2
reroute the M2	1
remove crossings from plan	1
Reduce Footway	1
Widen junction	1
Landscaping	2

**Two of the responses received were not providing a suggestion on what was needed.*



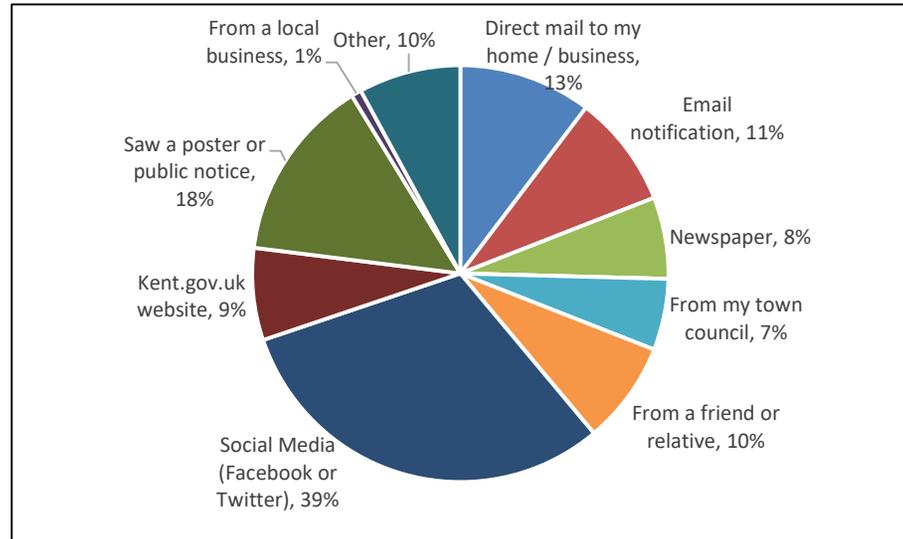
4.9 Q6 We have completed an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for the proposals put forward in this consultation.
There were 57 responses to this question,

Theme of comments	Number of comments
Pedestrian safety should be priority	8
Crossing aids should be introduced at the crossing point	3
Other comments	9
Not enough thought has been given to cyclists	9
No comment	28



4.10 Q7 How did you find out about this consultation?

Direct mail to my home / business	24
Email notification	21
Newspaper	16
From the school	0
From my town council	13
From a friend or relative	19
Social Media (Facebook or Twitter)	74
Kent.gov.uk website	18
Saw a poster or public notice	34
From a local business	1
Other	19



5.9 Equality and diversity feedback

We analysed the feedback to see if it identified any specific potential impacts or issues for people because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion / belief or none, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and carer's responsibilities). The following issues were identified for people with a disability:

An assessment was carried out in this location and it was found that due to the SGN easement located on Abbey School land that we could only introduce a 2.5m wide shared footway/Cycleway within this area. As this is under the minimum requirement for a shared use footpath, we are unable to introduce this facility.

Next Steps

Following the feedback from this consultation, the design team will be carefully considering points raised to establish whether further design changes are appropriate.

The Swale JTB will consider the finalised designs in March 2021 and the report will recommend progressing to construction. There are ecology issues to deal with in February due to the potential for nesting birds from March onwards. The JTB chairman and local councillors are aware of the final scheme and the need to remove vegetation prior to the JTB report.

This report is available on our website kent.gov.uk/a251junctionimprovements we will send a notification to those who have provided contact details throughout the process, including stakeholder organisations.