Sandwich Town Review and Design – exhibition
Frequently Asked Questions

Below are a number of frequently asked questions relating to the public exhibition for the Sandwich Town Review, and our responses to them. We will update this document as needed.

The exhibition is open to the public Monday to Thursday 9:00-17:00 and Friday 9:00-16:30, and is located in the Guildhall entrance area until Friday 29th July. Alternatively, consultation material and the questionnaire are available online – kent.gov.uk/sandwichtownreview.

The consultation questionnaire closes for comments at midnight on Sunday 31st July.

Question 1:
I have heard that there are plans to close the toll bridge to vehicles. What does this proposal entail?

At this stage, several proposals have been made for the area surrounding the Barbican and toll bridge. A long-term view is required to respond to external changes, such as future tourism or potential further housing. We welcome comments on these proposals through the consultation.

During the first phase of the consultation process, it became clear that people found it difficult to move between the Quay and town centre. Several concepts have been explored to address this challenge without changes to traffic movement; this could be achieved through additional crossings and wider footpaths. These concepts could improve pedestrians connections, however they could impact traffic flow and result in additional traffic lights, signage, kerbs and road markings.

Additional parking for cars and coaches was suggested during the first stage of the consultation. Due to the lack of space within the town walls, a car park directly north of the river had been proposed. This could prevent the need for visitors to drive through Sandwich, reducing traffic within the medieval core and creating a new ‘front door’ to the town.

Initial proposals suggest that the town could consider trial closures of the toll bridge to vehicles at certain times. The bridge would not be fully closed; access for emergency vehicles and buses would be maintained. Initial feedback suggests that the bridge should remain open to vehicles at peak times, such as morning and evening commutes, as a possible first step.
Question 2:
I've heard conflicting information about improvements to the Breezy Corner junction – when will work begin?

Kent County Council is currently designing a scheme including pavement widening and bollard installation; this will be installed in the short-term. Additional proposals (as shown at the exhibition) could add to the short-term improvements if funding bids are successful. Efforts will be made to minimise disruption of any improvement works.

Question 3:
Will No Name Street be completely closed to traffic?

During initial conversations, many respondents have requested a safer connection between Market Street and the Cattle Market Car Park. Closing No Name Street to traffic is one of the options which will be explored through this consultation process.

Question 4:
There is currently a congestion problem on New Street outside the Guildhall, especially when buses are loading and cars are parked outside the shops. How will the redesign solve this issue?

Working with Stagecoach, a new bus stop arrangement has been proposed. Buses could park in a single line rather than the existing double-parking arrangement. On the other side of the road, a new loading area at pavement level could be built, with a 45 degree kerb. This would operate as a normal pavement except when loading vehicles are present, so that for the majority of the day the space for pedestrians would be significantly wider than now. The angle of the kerb prevents car access whilst large delivery vehicles could park and unload easily. The changes would reduce the width of the road to a single lane, making it much less likely that vehicles will stop here. 20 minute parking bays could be installed nearby in a safe location.

Question 5:
Are there any plans to increase the number of car parking spaces?

Due to the land constraints in Sandwich, it is not possible to significantly increase the number of car parking bays within the town centre. The Cattle Market Car Park could be re-designed to increase the number of parking bays within the existing space. A new long-stay car park for visitors and coaches could be built north of the river. The current proposals do not reduce the number of parking bays, and have the potential to increase them.
Question 6:
On the proposals, it is mentioned that transport specialists have tested the concepts. What does this testing entail?

The concepts have been produced in collaboration with transport specialists who have advised on the transport aspect of the proposed designs. At this stage in the development process, testing refers to checks that ensure the initial concepts meet accepted good practice on the design of streets in sensitive locations. Existing traffic counts, commissioned by Kent County Council, support the extensive knowledge of the consultants. It is recognised that the traffic counts can only be used indicatively and we will carry out further tests in the subsequent design stages to better understand the impact of the proposals.

Question 7:
On the consultation boards it mentioned ‘desire lines’. What does this mean?

A desire line, usually for pedestrians, represents the shortest and most easily navigated route between one place and another. In this context, we propose to improve the connection between the Guildhall and Market Street. To support this aim, the proposal suggests moving the existing zebra crossing to opposite No Name Street and increasing space for pedestrians. Currently, many people find it difficult to cross as pavements are narrow and visibility between drivers and pedestrians is poor.

Question 8:
The study is too narrow and should show how Sandwich could be ‘connected’ to the environmental assets beyond, why has this not been covered in detail?

We understand this point, but have to work within our original brief. However, our final report will reference further connections to help Sandwich achieve its potential – in terms of tourism (historical, cultural, and environmental).

Question 9:
I'm very interested in the Equal Priority Zone concept, what could this mean for the town and how could it be funded?

The Equal Priority Zone concept could make the town safer and more comfortable for pedestrians whilst continuing to allow access for vehicles. The concept aims to build mutual respect between all users. Sandwich is a perfect place to trial this initiative, the town walls create a series of gateways that could clearly mark the start of the zone. To enable a pilot scheme, Kent County Council would need to secure funding to formalise the entry gateways. The other five key proposals suggested in the consultation material could support this concept (if funding bids are successful).
Question 10:
On Market Street, apart from the proposal of a one-way system, what are the other suggested improvements?

A one-way system could prevent congestion at the junction. This could result in a more pedestrian friendly environment with clearer, more attractive connections to the Quay and Guildhall, in the form of surface materials and lighting.

Sandwich already hosts many events within the street, this could be further supported with tangible enhancements such as improved lighting, some planting and treatment of building frontages where necessary.

Improved access between Market Street and St. Peter’s Church has been requested during the early stages of the consultation. To celebrate this important historic building, including the new viewing platform and café, proposals could include improved paving, removed barriers and better lighting. The space surrounding the war memorial could be enhanced to reflect the importance of the monument.