Sturry Link Road

Consultation booklet

Public consultation period:
26 July to 6 September 2017

Kent.gov.uk/Sturrylinkroad

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SOUTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

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Introduction

Welcome to Kent County Council's (KCC) public consultation on Sturry Link Road.

The proposed Sturry Link Road aims to reduce traffic through Sturry, ease congestion at the Sturry level crossing and cater for the extra traffic from the new housing proposed at Sturry, Broad Oak and beyond at Herne Bay. Sturry experiences high levels of traffic which combined with frequent operation of the level crossing can lead to severe congestion, making journey times unreliable. The proposed new road, with its dual role to serve new housing, provides the opportunity to deliver an alternative route for traffic to avoid the level crossing and help tackle and reduce traffic congestion in Sturry.

KCC's project team, working together in close liaison with Canterbury City Council (CCC) and organisations responsible for new housing at Sturry and Broad Oak, is preparing a detailed planning application to deliver the Sturry Link Road. This consultation is being carried out at the pre-planning stage to provide local residents and stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback on the scheme before plans are finalised for the planning application.

What else you need to know

In the wider context, new home allocations of around 15,600 have been identified in the Canterbury District Local Plan (Draft 2014) over the plan period of 2011 to 2031. This includes strategic allocations of land at Sturry and Broad Oak for 1,000 new homes. The Local Plan acknowledges and accepts that these new homes will create additional traffic and that, in accordance with the Local Plan policies, CCC will seek to implement a Sturry Link Road. KCC in conjunction with the developers of the Sturry Site will be planning and delivering the Sturry Link Road.

KCC believe the scheme offers a real opportunity to help reduce local congestion, provide more reliable journey times and improve road safety whilst serving the needs of new housing and we invite you to share your views with us.

This booklet helps to explain our proposals and how you can provide your feedback to this consultation. The booklet contains six key sections:


Indicative image

1. Update on local plans

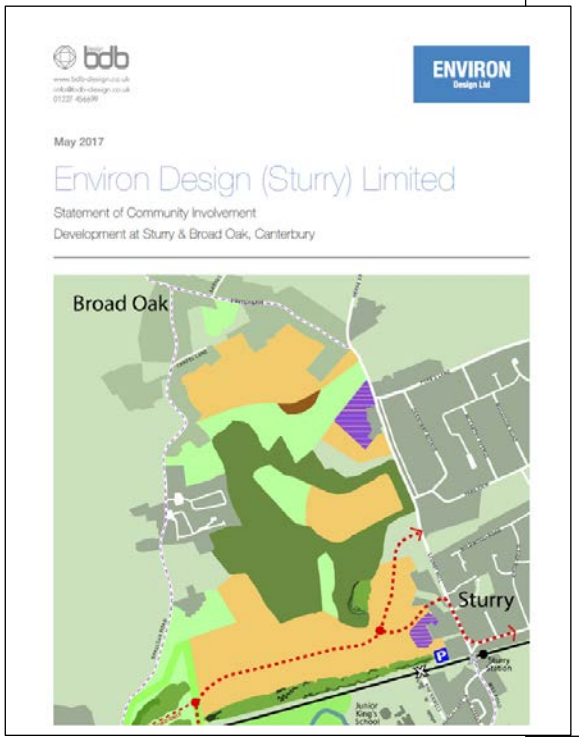
Sturry & Broad Oak housing sites

Plans for the development at Sturry & Broad Oak were presented at two local exhibition events (January and April 2017). This included Masterplan proposals and high level plans for the Link Road.

The Masterplan proposals will be subject to two separate planning applications and it is anticipated that these will run concurrently with the KCC Sturry Link Road planning application, likely for submission late this autumn.

The key messages presented at the exhibitions were:

- The sites have capacity for about 1,000 homes
- The scale of development creates a highly sustainable community
- Enables significant investment to be made in critical infrastructure, including the Sturry Link Road
- About half of the sites will remain as protected and managed woodland, buffer zones and open space
- Measures will be undertaken to enhance biodiversity, important flora and fauna
- Land is allocated for a full-size Primary School with funds to meet the first phase of construction



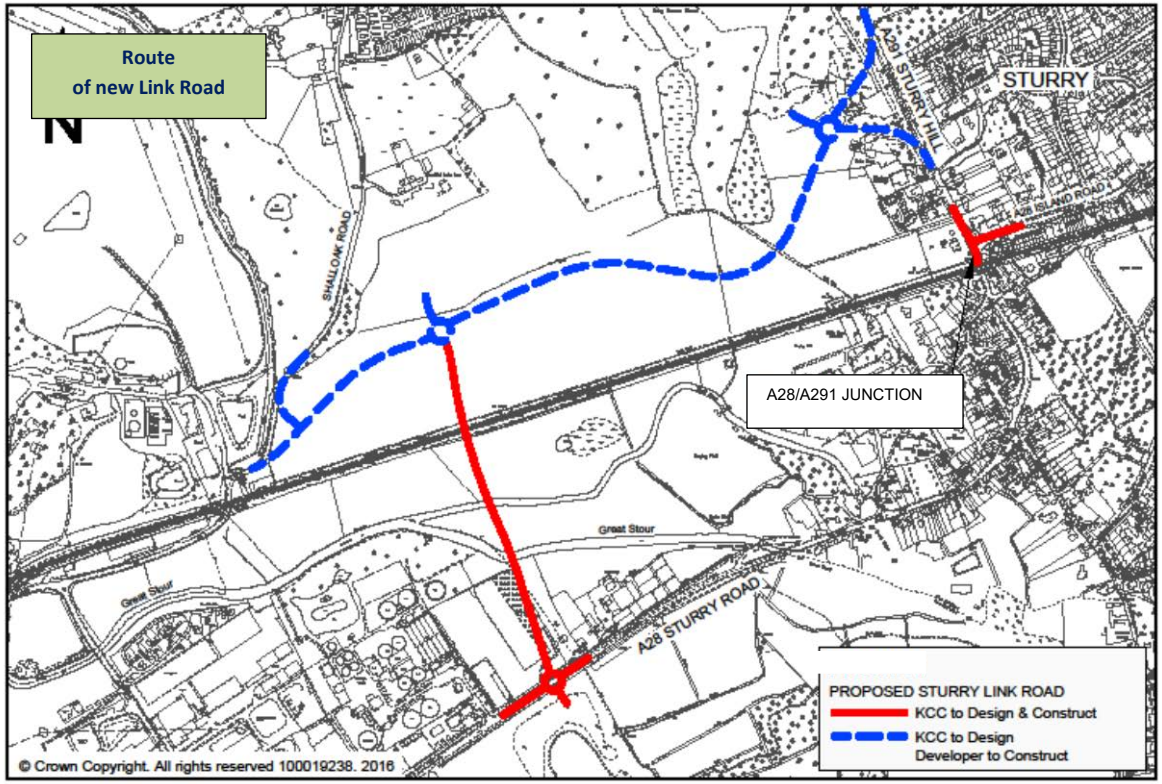
2. Scheme overview

Route corridor

The proposed new road will be located to the north and west of Sturry providing a new 1.5km route to link the A28 Sturry Road in the south to the A291 Sturry Hill in the east. A section of new road is also proposed to provide a direct link to Shalloak Road to the west.

The new road will follow an east to westerly route to the north of the Canterbury to Ramsgate railway line on land currently comprising a mixture of arable farming and rough grassland, before heading in a southerly direction to cross over the railway and the Great Stour to join the A28.

A key feature is the proposal for a 250m long continuous bridge structure (viaduct) spanning both the railway and both arms of the Great Stour (*see page 7).*



Factors that affect the choice of route are:

- The need to serve the proposed housing site and provide access to the road network *(see page 2)*
- How it impacts on the Great Stour flood plain *(see page 7)*
- Environmental constraints *(see pages 15 to 17)*

- The opportunity to connect to the A28 in the south through an area of open space between the Vikings Car Showroom and residential property *(see page 6)*
- Physical constraints including the need to bridge over the railway line and avoid National Grid proposals for a new 400Kv overhead power line (see page 16)

2. Scheme overview

A28/A291 Sturry Island/Sturry Hill junction

Major changes to the junction including changed priorities and some prohibited movements will be necessary to encourage maximum use of the Link Road by through traffic and reduce congestion when the level crossing barriers are down. Initial junction options have been identified and are presented in this consultation booklet (*pages 11 to 14)*.

Existing and future traffic flows

Currently, around 21,000 vehicles per day (3.8% heavy goods vehicles) use the level crossing, a figure that has steadily increased by 7% over the past five years. It is predicted that over 50% of this traffic would divert to use the Link Road. The Link Road is predicted to carry around 30,000 vehicles per day by 2031.

Scheme Costs/funding

The total scheme costs for the section to be delivered by KCC including the alterations to the A28/A291 junction are expected to cost £29.6m. KCC have secured £5.9m of Government Funding for this section with the remainder being funded by Developer Contributions from sites allocated in the Local Plan.

Existing A28/A291 junction

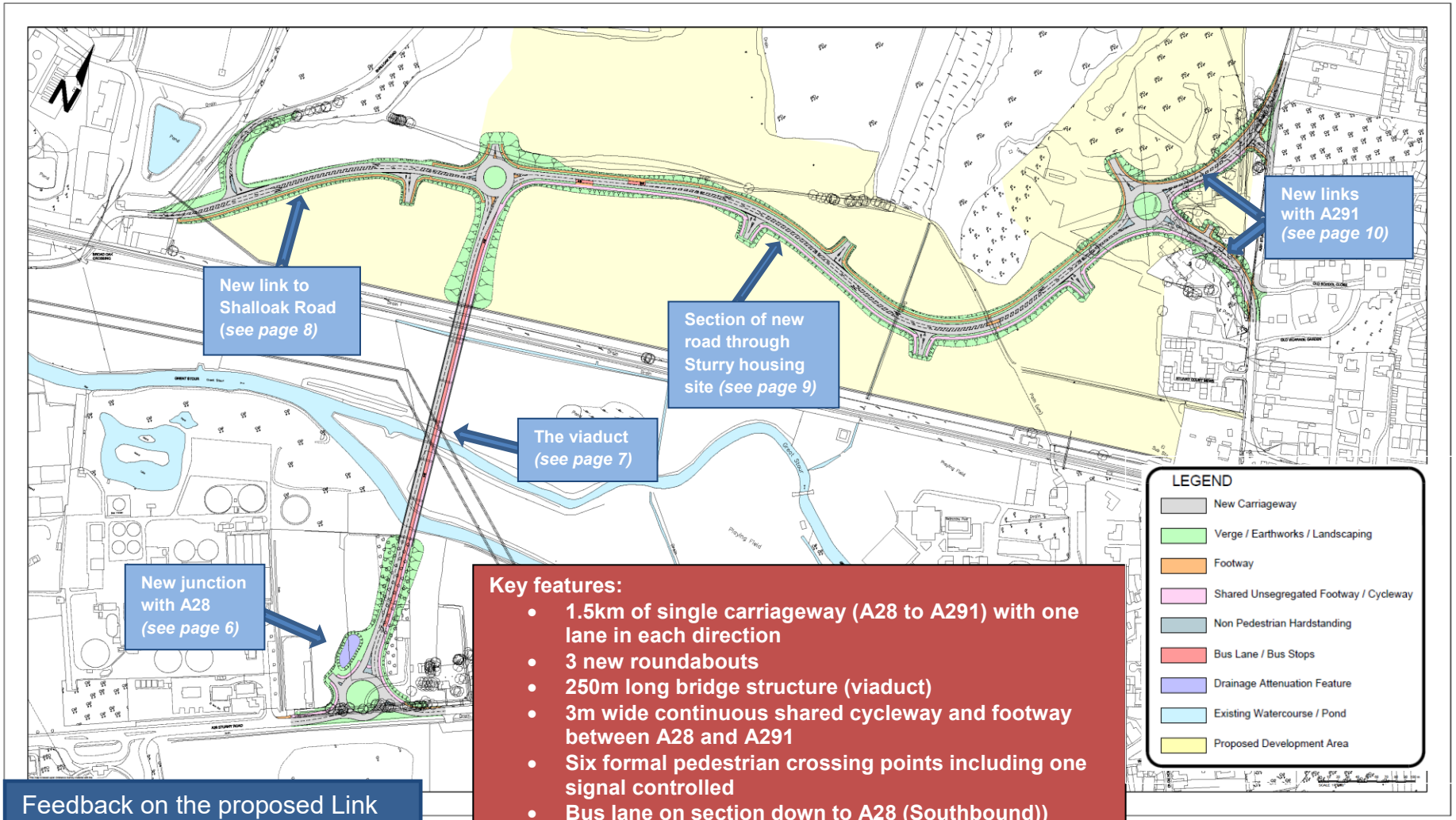
Scheme delivery

Developers for the Sturry and Broad Oak sites will deliver the Link Road section north of the railway *(blue dotted line on Plan on page 3)*. KCC will deliver the section from the A28 over the Great Stour and the railway as well as the required improvements to the A28/A291 junction.

Construction of the sections of Link Road would be co-ordinated and only a limited amount of housing, likely to be around 650, would be occupied before the construction of the Link Road would start.

It is hoped construction will start in 2019/20 and take 18 months. This will depend on KCC achieving planning permission and securing the land required between the A28 and the railway. Furthermore, it will depend on the Sturry and Broad Oak developers achieving planning consent for the housing development that would enable them to enter into the formal funding agreement.

3. Our proposals



Key features:

- **1.5km of single carriageway (A28 to A291) with one lane in each direction**
- **3 new roundabouts**
- **250m long bridge structure (viaduct)**
- **3m wide continuous shared cycleway and footway between A28 and A291**
- **Six formal pedestrian crossing points including one signal controlled**
- **Bus lane on section down to A28 (Southbound))**
- **30mph speed limit through new housing site**
- **40mph on section down to A28**
- **Street lighting provided, but not on viaduct**

Feedback on the proposed Link Road can be provided on **question 4 of the consultation questionnaire**.

3. Our proposals

New junction with A28

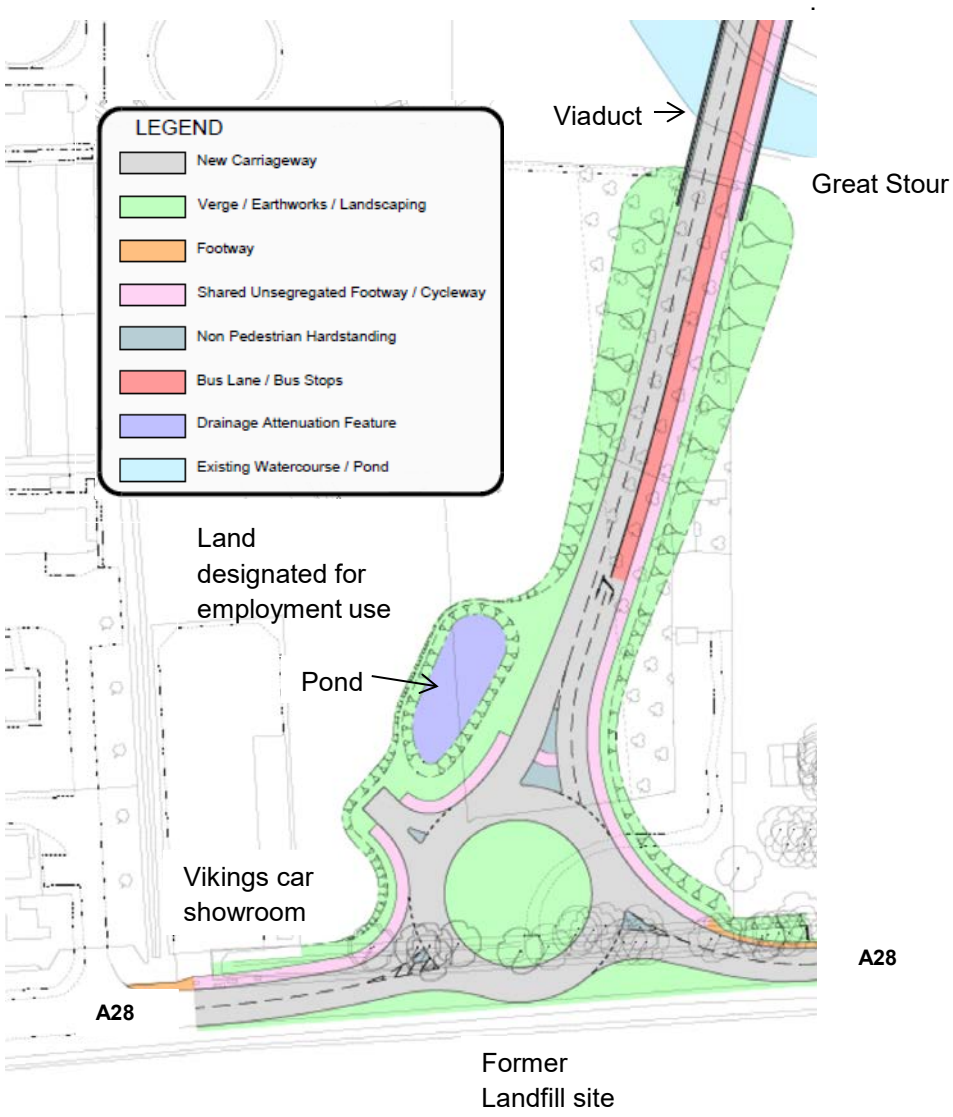
A roundabout is the preferred option to connect with the existing A28. Its size, 50m across, is designed to cater for predicted traffic flows and will include an access to land designated in the Canterbury City Council (CCC) Draft Local Plan for employment use.

The roundabout would be constructed entirely on land to the north of the A28 to avoid the former landfill site on the south, ensuring it remains undisturbed, which is preferable due to the unknown soil conditions. The roundabout and its approaches will be lit with 10m high columns and LED lanterns and be subject to a 40mph speed limit.

Surface water from the new road will initially outfall to a new pond to the north of the roundabout for storage before discharging into existing drainage ditch along the A28 at a controlled rate as determined by the River Stour Internal Drainage Board.

Existing cycle facilities on A28 will connect to a shared cycleway and footway on the east side of the Link Road that skirts around the northern side of the roundabout

From north of the roundabout the Link Road will gradually rise on embankment up to a height of around 5m before continuing on the viaduct.



3. Our proposals

The viaduct

The viaduct is a six span 250m long structure spanning both arms of the Great Stour and the railway.

The design aims to be as slender as possible using curved steel beams supported on piers located to limit flood risk and impacts to ecology and rail infrastructure.

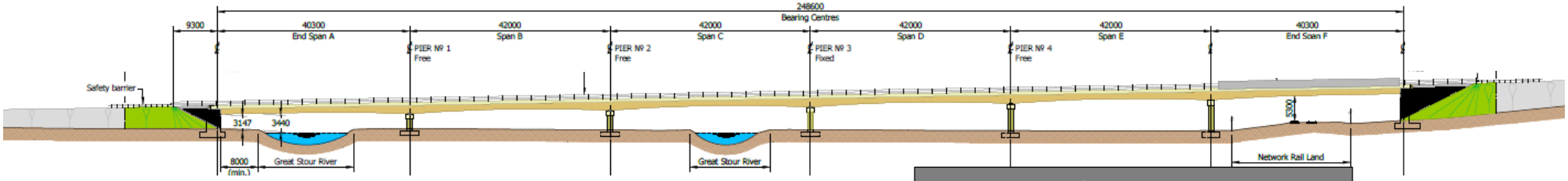
It stands at a height of 5.3m above the railway, sloping gradually down on approach to the A28 and will be about 3m above the bank of the southern arm of the Great Stour.

Indicative view looking south across railway

Indicative view looking north across River Stour

We are proposing one continuous structure rather than three separate bridges because ground conditions are poor and to maintain the integrity of the flood plain. The viaduct will provide a simpler and more open structure and minimise impact on wildlife.

The viaduct will involve extensive foundation piling works and pre-manufacture of long steel beams transported to the site by road and lifted into place by mobile crane.



Side elevation of the viaduct looking west

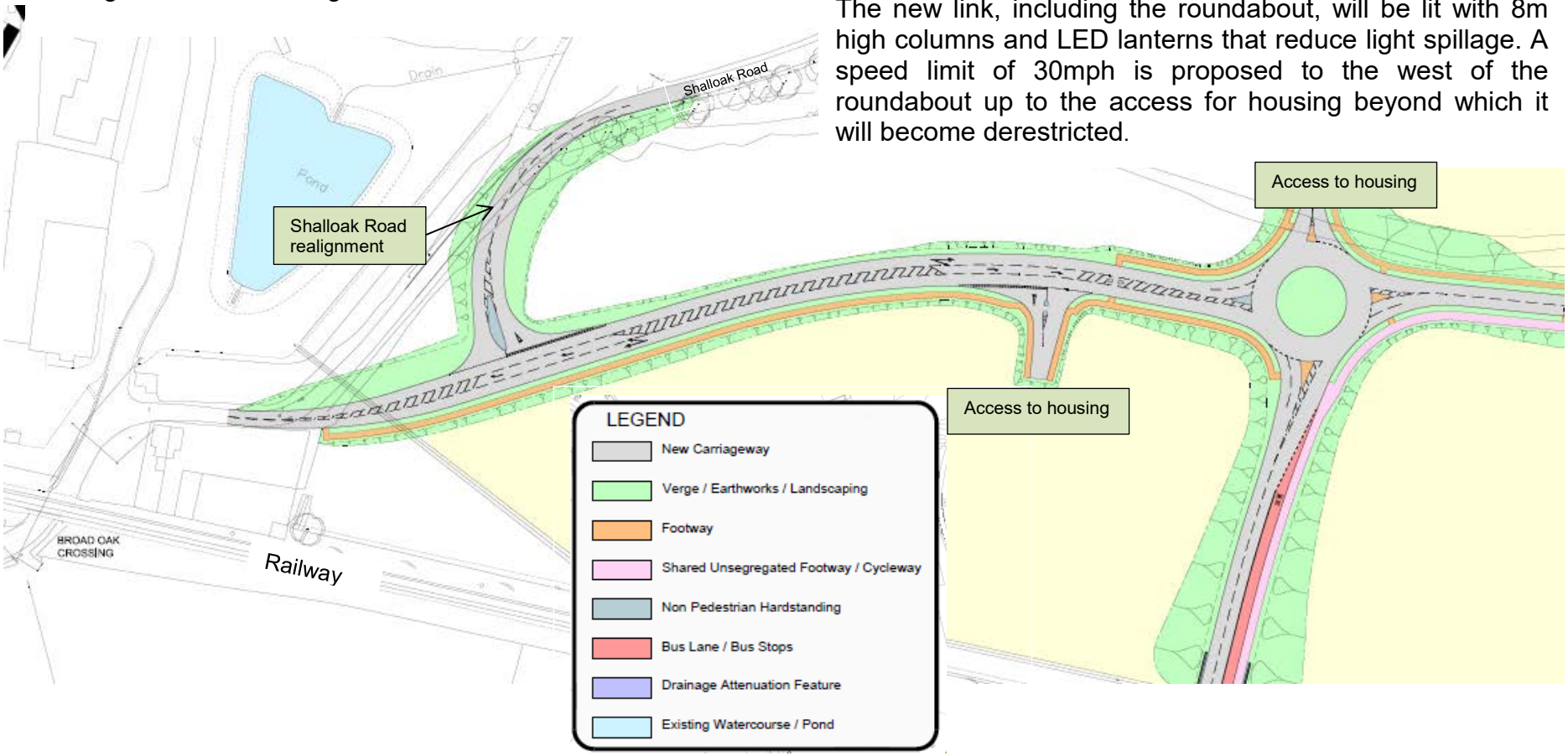
3. Our proposals

New link to Shalloak Road

The provision of this link will offer road users a wider choice of access to and from Canterbury City centre. It will also serve to reduce the tendency for vehicles to use Shalloak Road as a 'rat-run' to and from the north through Broad Oak Village.

Two give-way 'T' junctions provide access to new housing and Shalloak Road, both with central right turn lanes to protect turning vehicles without impeding the general flow of traffic.

The new link, including the roundabout, will be lit with 8m high columns and LED lanterns that reduce light spillage. A speed limit of 30mph is proposed to the west of the roundabout up to the access for housing beyond which it will become derestricted.



3. Our proposals

New link through Sturry housing site

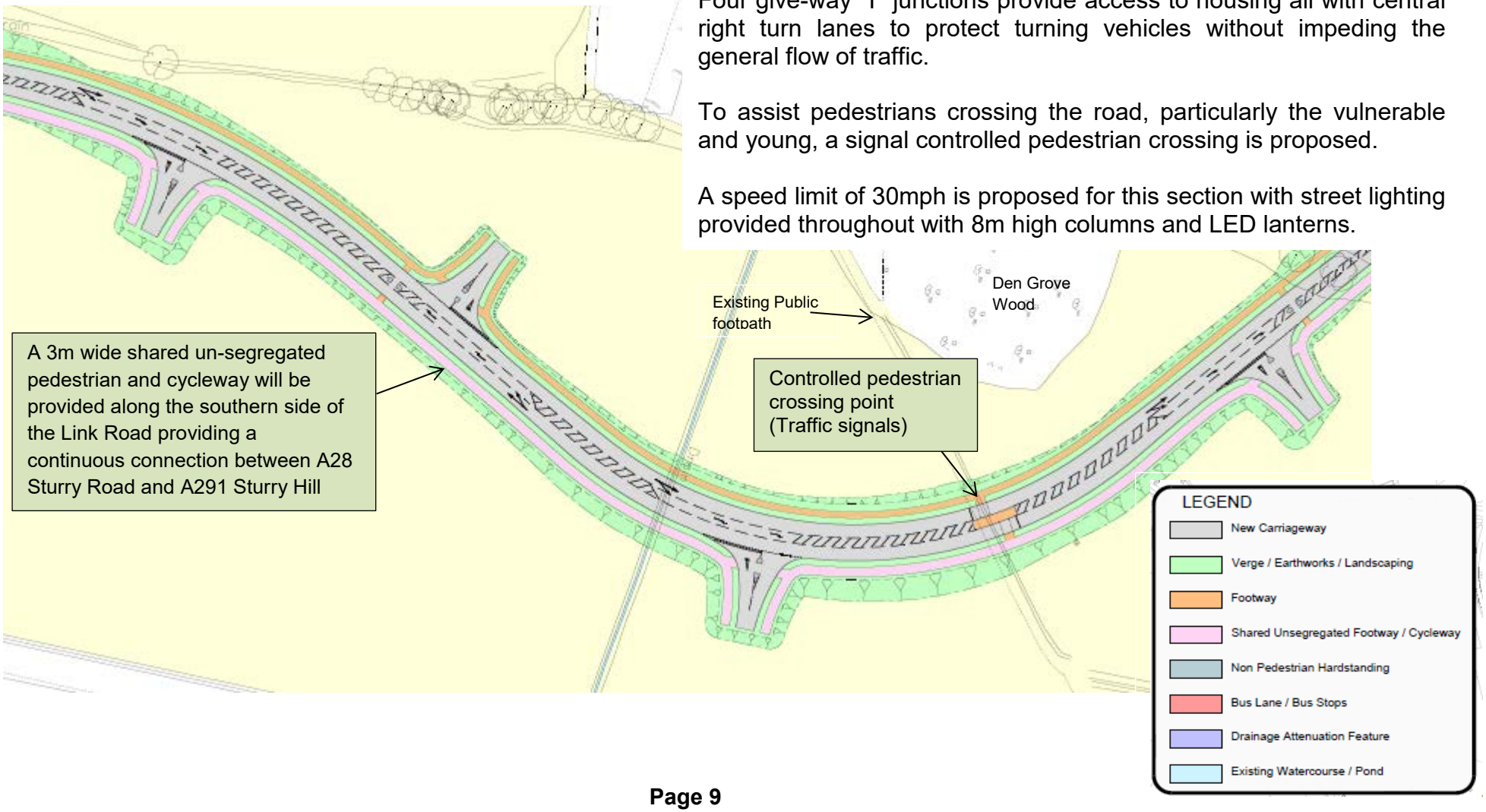
Located centrally within the housing site the Link Road will be a single carriageway – one lane in each direction – widened to incorporate central right turning lanes at the various access points to new housing.

The route curves gently southwards to avoid Den Grove Wood, an area of ancient woodland, before returning in a north-easterly direction towards the new roundabout that connects with the A291.

Four give-way 'T' junctions provide access to housing all with central right turn lanes to protect turning vehicles without impeding the general flow of traffic.

To assist pedestrians crossing the road, particularly the vulnerable and young, a signal controlled pedestrian crossing is proposed.

A speed limit of 30mph is proposed for this section with street lighting provided throughout with 8m high columns and LED lanterns.

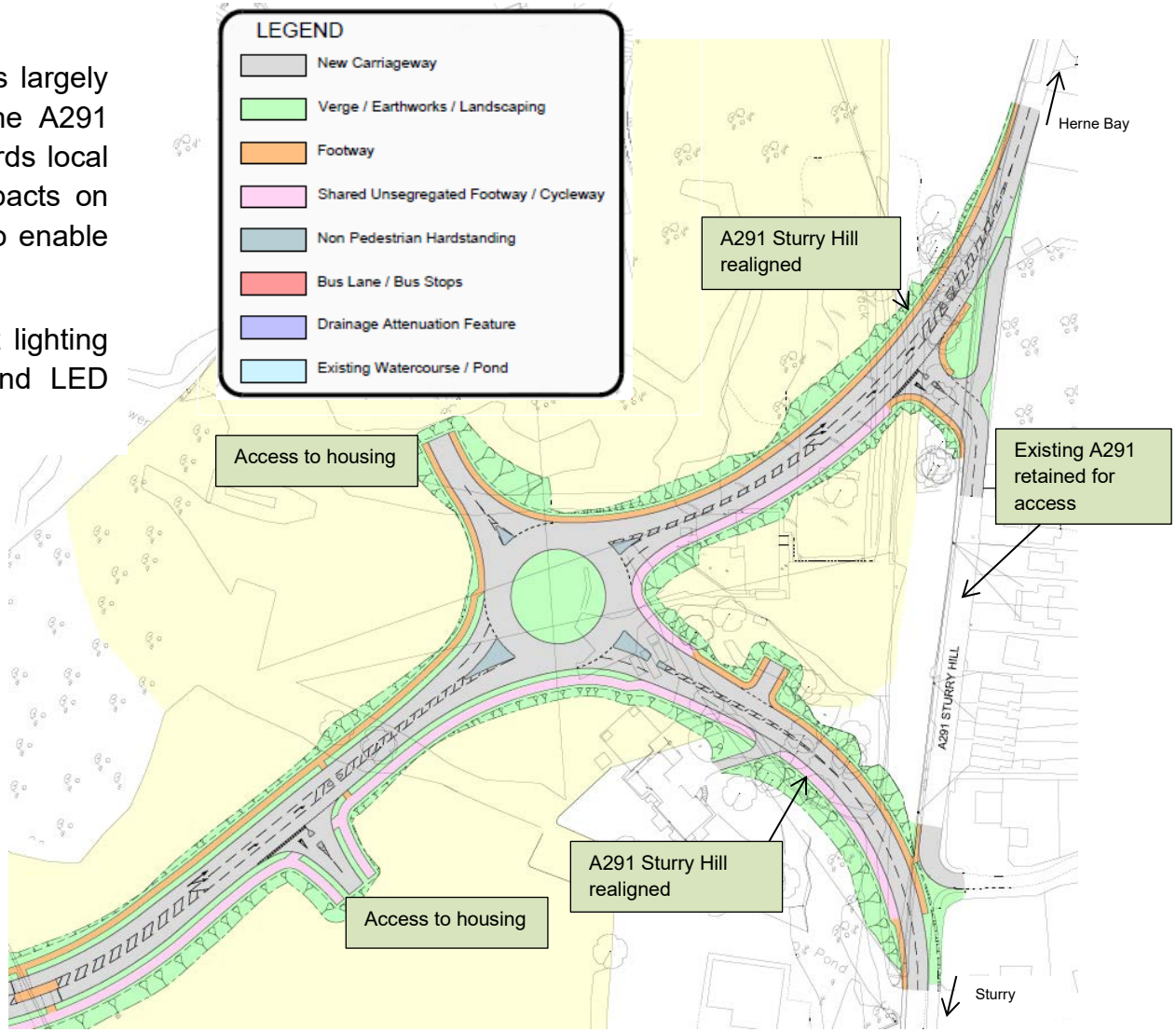


3. Our Proposals

New links to A291 Sturry Hill

The desire to minimise impact on woodland has largely driven the road layout where it connects to the A291 Sturry Hill. A new roundabout, 45m across, affords local realignments of the A291 whilst minimising impacts on the adjacent woodland. The roundabout will also enable good access to new housing.

A speed limit of 30mph is proposed with street lighting provided throughout with 8m high columns and LED lanterns.



3. Our proposals

Proposed alterations to the Junction at the Sturry Level crossing (A28/A291)

The current A28/A291 junction is a key access route for traffic travelling to and from Canterbury. At peak times, the junction and surrounding roads become heavily congested, particularly with frequent operation of the level crossing.

The new viaduct over the railway will provide scope for traffic to avoid using the level crossing however the existing junction arrangement, if left unchanged, will not encourage traffic on the A28 to reassign to use the Link Road.

Reassignment of traffic to the proposed Link Road and reducing congestion in the local area are our key aims in altering the junction. We are therefore proposing major junction alterations that will encourage this reassignment and, in addition:

- reduce congestion when the level crossing barriers are down
- improve its layout to become more efficient
- provide better, more formal, pedestrian facilities

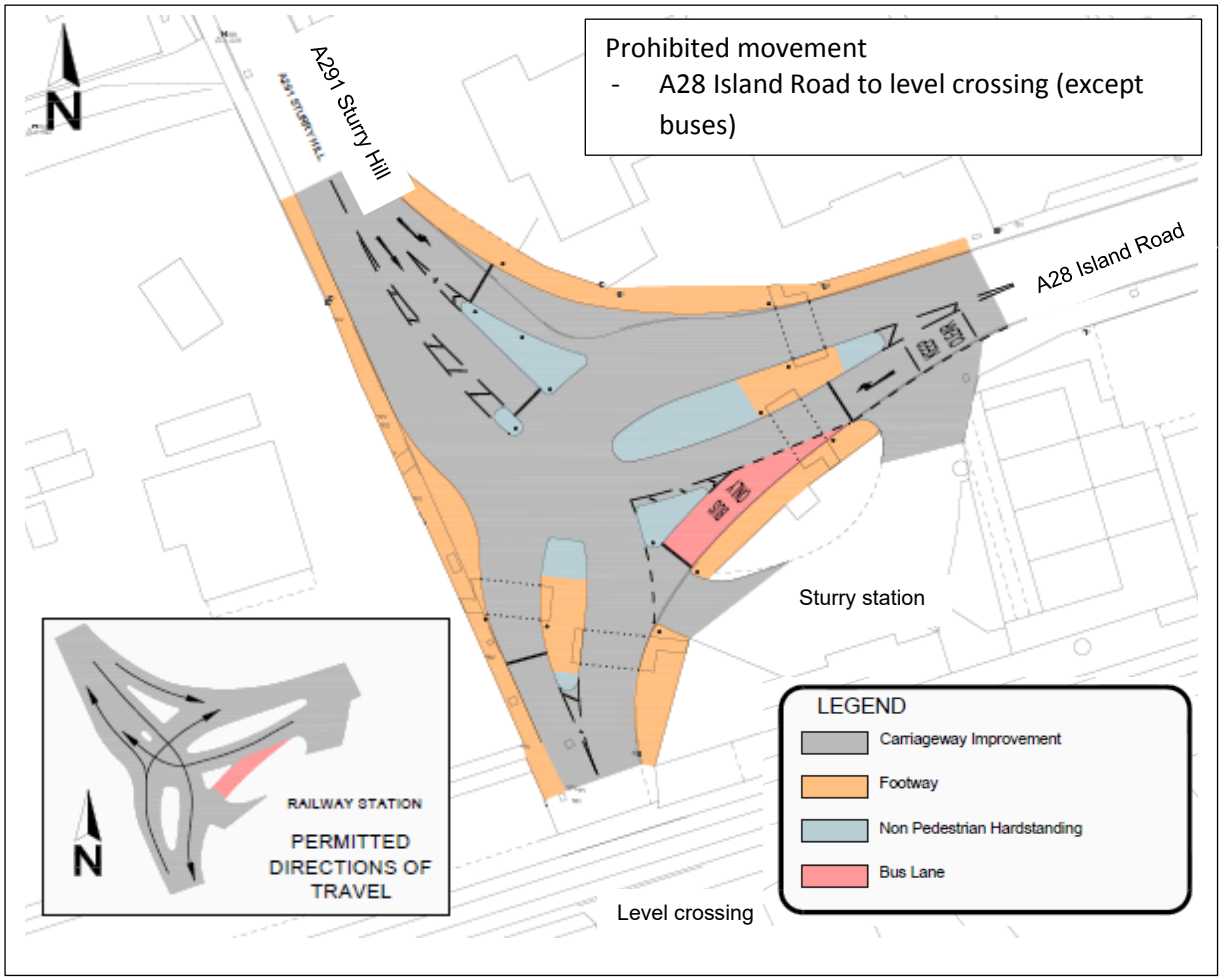
Following an assessment of junction options, three were selected based on their engineering feasibility and achieving the above aims. Each option includes for some prohibited movements and it is this which is key to achieving these aims.

Outline designs for the three junction options are provided on the following pages and we welcome your views on these in response to **question 5 of the consultation questionnaire**.

3. Our proposals

A28/A291 Junction – OPTION 1

Traffic signal controlled (with restricted movement)



Below is an indication of the changes in traffic flows expected over the next fifteen years as a result of the junction alterations shown opposite:

- Between 70 to 85% reduction in traffic on the level crossing, depending on the time of day.
- Around two to three times more traffic on A291 Sturry Hill
- Traffic levels on Island Road unchanged

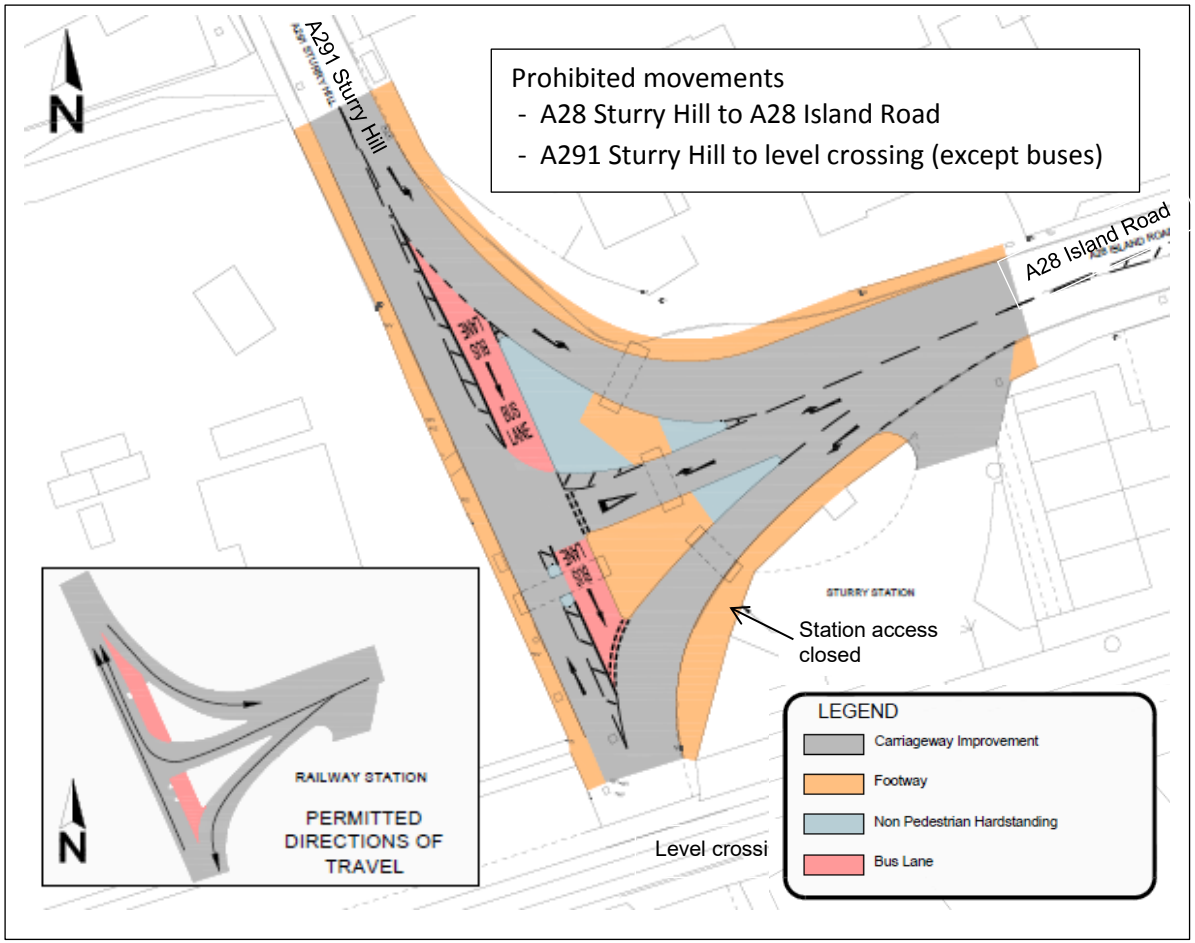
Other key observations include:

- Access to Sturry (south) from A28 Island Road can be gained via a 'u' turn at the new roundabout on Sturry Hill to the north, an overall distance of 0.6km, or via the Link Road and back onto the A28 to the west of Sturry
- Congestion will be eased during operation of the level crossing with traffic on the A28 Island Road to A291 Sturry Hill able to flow freely to the A28 Island Road
- Traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossings provided

3. Our proposals

A28/A291 Junction – OPTION 2

Give-way junction (with restricted movement)



As for Option 1, traffic flow changes are predicted as follows:

- Around 50% reduction in traffic on the level crossing
- Between two to three times increase in traffic on A291 Sturry Hill
- Around 10 to 40% increase in traffic on A28 Island Road

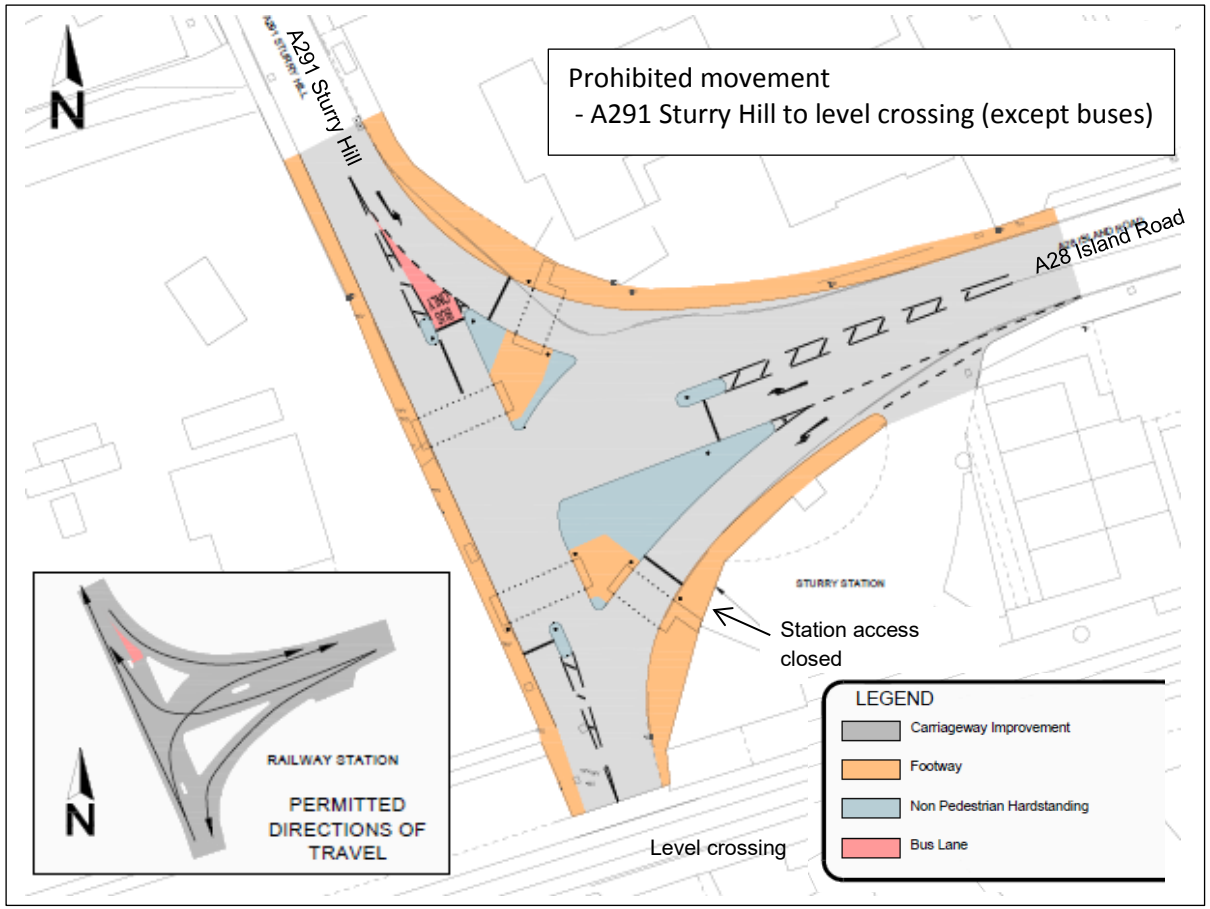
Other key observations include:

- Access to A28 Island Road from south of the level crossing can be gained via a 'u' turn at the new roundabout on Sturry Hill to the north, an overall distance of 0.6km, or via the Link Road to the west of Sturry and onto the A291 Sturry Hill
- Congestion will be eased during operation of the level crossing with traffic on the A291 Sturry Hill able to flow freely to A28 Island Road
- Uncontrolled pedestrian crossings provided

3. Our proposals

A28/A291 Junction – OPTION 3

Traffic signal controlled (with restricted movement)



As for Options 1 & 2, traffic flow changes are predicted as follows:

- Around 50% reduction in traffic on the level crossing
- A doubling of traffic on the A291 Sturry Hill
- Around 40% increase in traffic on A28 Island road

Other key observations include:

- Access to Sturry, south of level crossing, for traffic on the A291 can be gained via the Link Road and joining the A28 to the west of Sturry
- Congestion will be eased during operation of the level crossing with traffic on the A291 Sturry Hill able to flow freely to A28 Island Road
- Traffic signal controlled pedestrian crossings provided

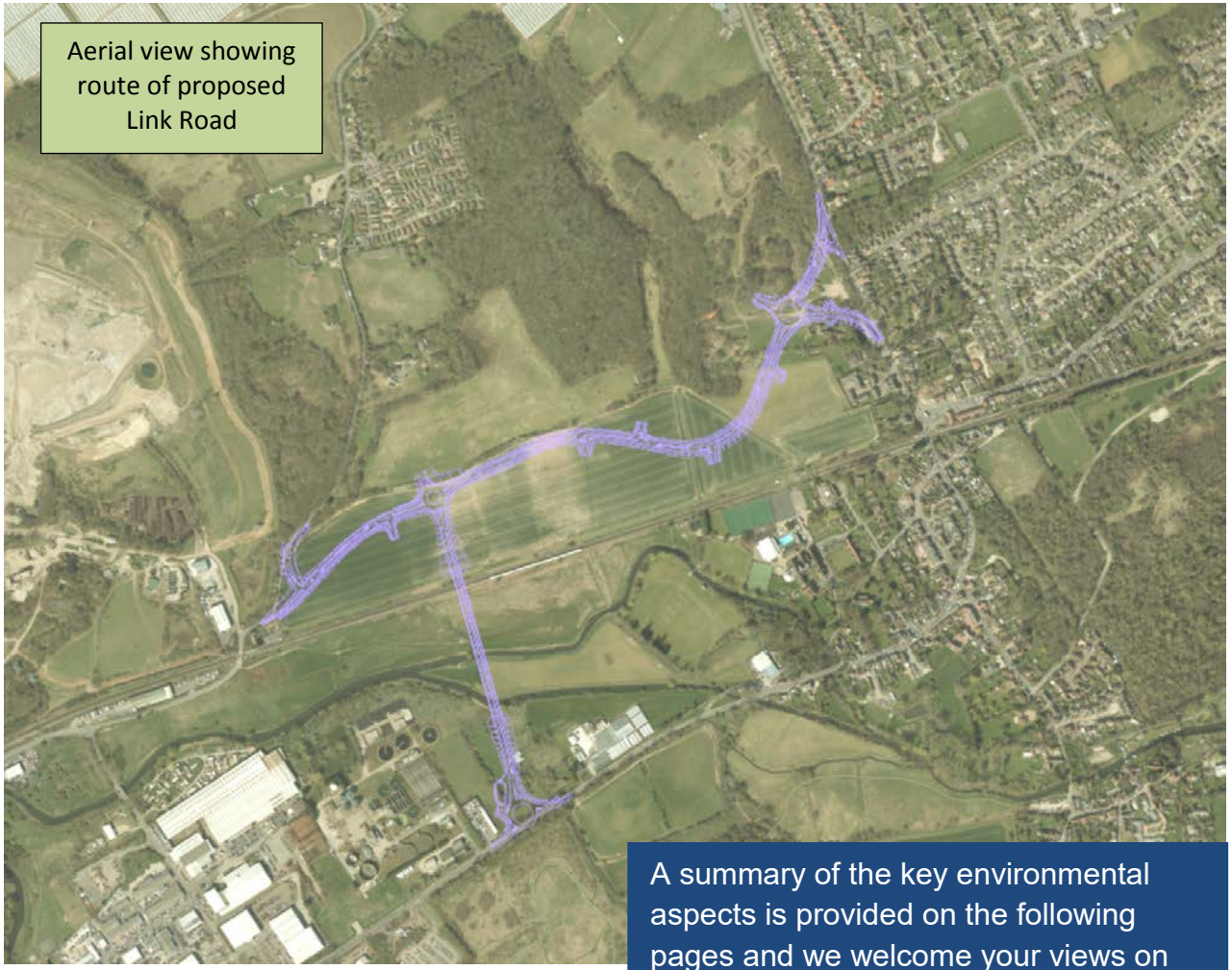
4. The Environment

Impact on the Environment

The area around Sturry is environmentally important. There are several environmental features that may be affected by the proposed road:

- Great Stour and its flood plain
- Public Rights of Ways
- Sturry Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Den Grove Wood, an area of ancient woodland
- The A527 Great Stour Ashford to Fordwich Local Wildlife Site
- Sturry Conservation Area

Extensive environmental surveys are being undertaken by both KCC and the developers. The assessment of the impacts of the Link Road and any necessary mitigation will be presented in an Environmental Statement to support the planning application.



A summary of the key environmental aspects is provided on the following pages and we welcome your views on these in response to **question 6 of the consultation questionnaire**.

4. The Environment

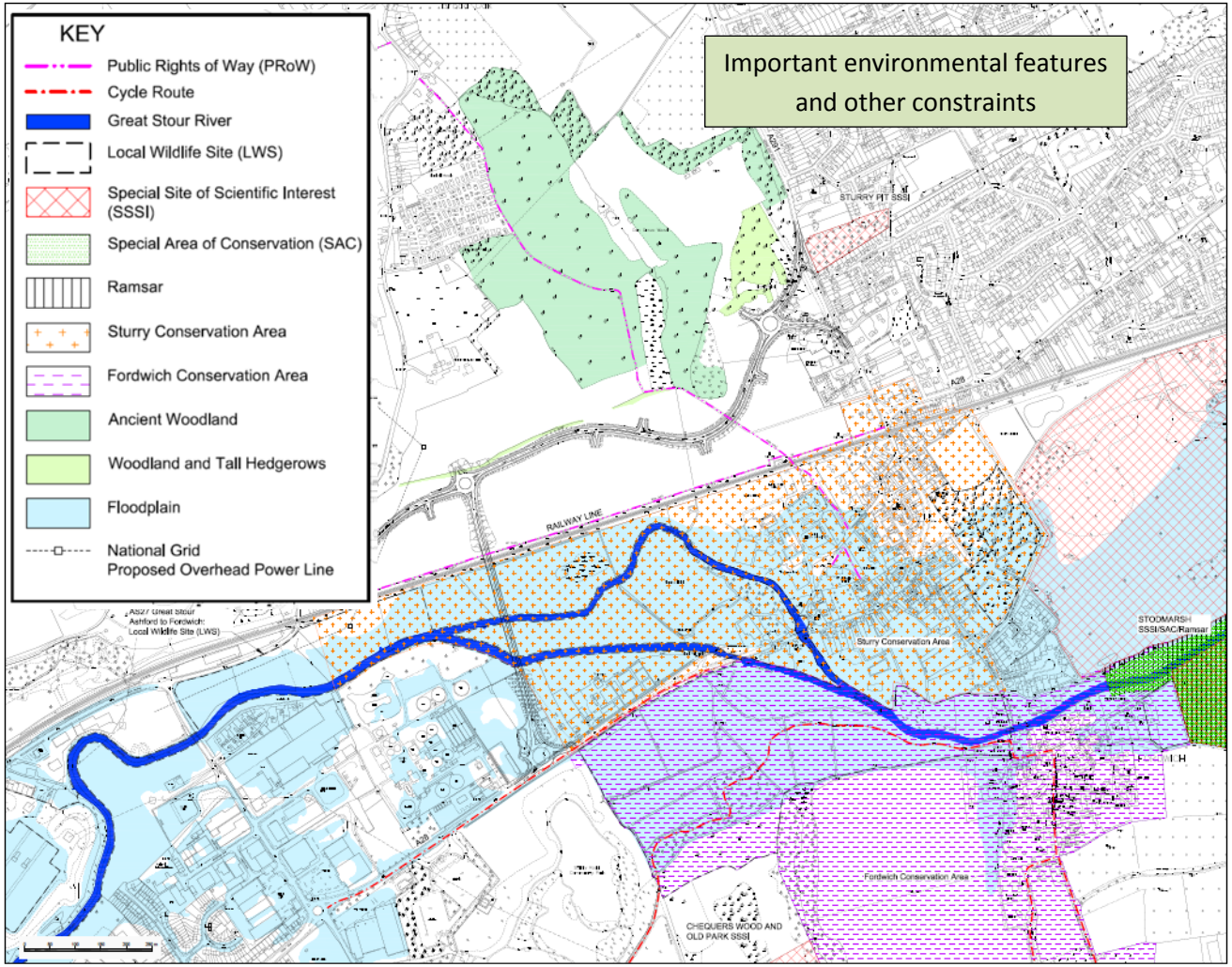
Ecology and Nature Conservation

The Great Stour corridor supports a variety of protected wildlife. Surveys have identified the following protected species:

- Desmoulin's whorl snail
- Bats
- Otter

There is potential for the scheme to impact these species therefore further assessment, survey information and an Ecological Impact Assessment will be included within the Environmental Statement submitted as part of the planning application. This will include ways to minimise and, where possible, enhance and create new wildlife habitats.

The Link Road has been designed to avoid or minimise direct impacts on key environmental areas including the Den Grove Wood ancient woodland and the Great Stour and its flood plain. Having the Link Road on a viaduct over the River Stour will minimise the effects on the river banks, local habitat and maintain the continuity of the flood plain. Otters will continue to be able to move freely along the river bank.



4. The Environment

People and Community

All Public Rights of Way will be maintained. The new road will include a shared cycleway and pedestrian footway along its entire length between A28 Canterbury - Sturry Road and A291 Sturry Hill. Some local bus services will use the new road to give more reliable journeys and avoid the severe congestion often experienced at the Sturry level crossing. Traffic levels will significantly reduce through Sturry, south of the level crossing, with likely benefits in traffic noise and air quality.

Water Environment

Road drainage will be managed and collected into settlement ponds giving a controlled flow of water and improvement in the quality of water discharged into the Great Stour. The ponds will have an additional benefit by providing new habitat for aquatic plants and animals. Pollution interceptors will be provided to help prevent the discharge of harmful contaminants into the river.

A full flood modelling exercise has concluded that the impact on flood levels will be negligible.

Landscape

Sturry is designated as an Area of High Landscape Value, part of it as Green Gap and lies within the Sturry Conservation Area. The Link Road will potentially have a significant impact on the landscape because of the scale of the road project with several junctions and a viaduct. Unfortunately there will be some loss of trees and vegetation. Visual effects could also be significant given the proximity of footpaths and residential properties.

A detailed assessment of both landscape and visual effects will be undertaken, and the Link Road designed with new planting to help the road to integrate into the surrounding landscape.

The landscape and visual character through the new development site will change due to the change in use. This will be managed through the planning application for the development site.

Noise

As with air quality, a detailed assessment for noise will be undertaken and the severity in both the long term and during the construction phase considered. Mitigation by the use of low noise surfacing and a 30mph speed limit through the new housing will help to reduce noise levels.

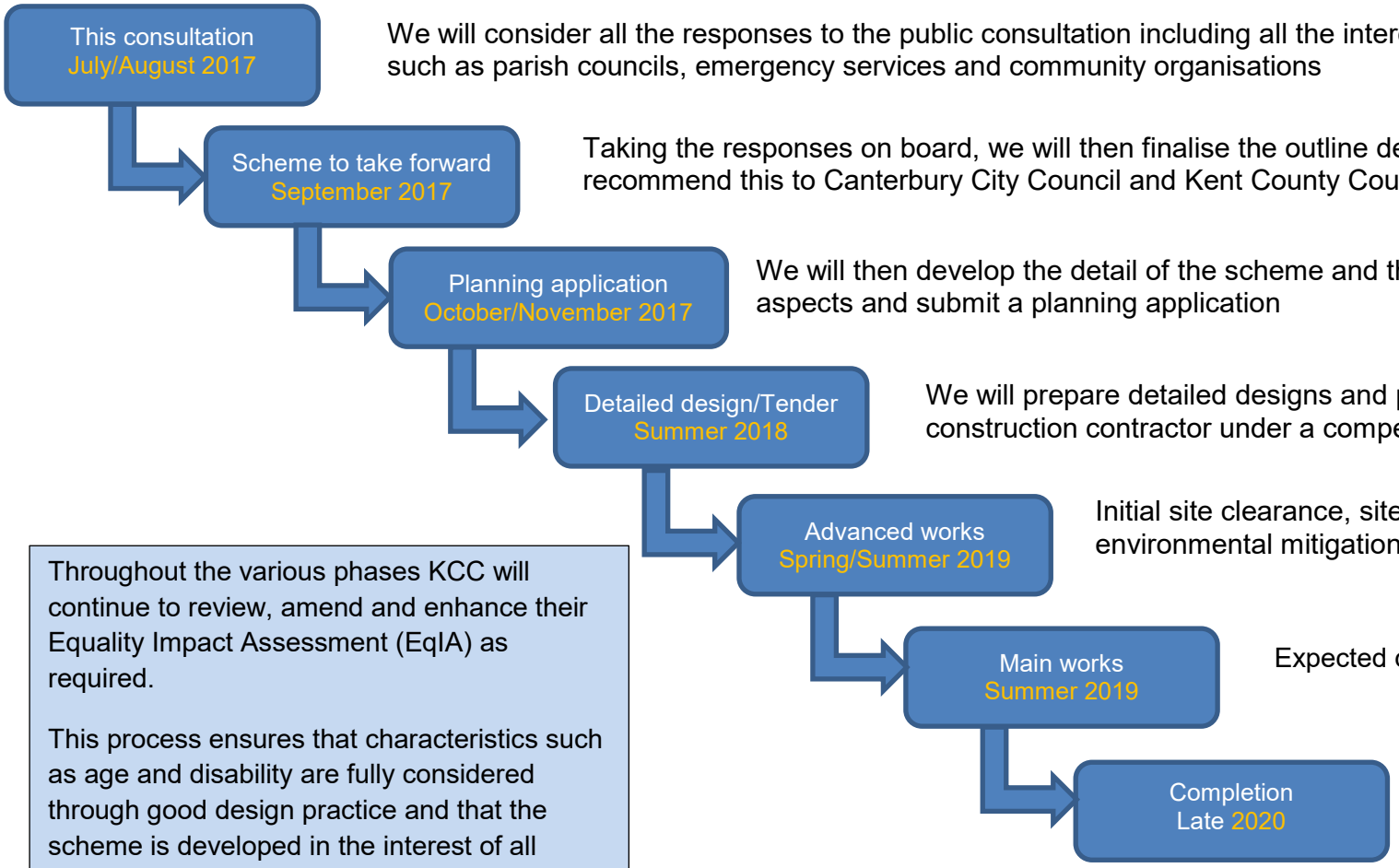
Air quality

The Link Road will change traffic flows around Sturry as well as providing access to new housing developments. A detailed air quality assessment will be undertaken but an initial study of the air quality effects of the Link Road and the new housing suggests that air quality is likely to remain below threshold levels that would otherwise require mitigation. The construction contract will be required to minimise construction dust.

Cultural Heritage

There are a number of listed buildings in close proximity to the scheme. The effect on the setting of these listed buildings and the effect on the conservation area will be fully considered throughout the environmental assessment process. Where significant effects arise, mitigation measures such as landscaping will be developed to minimise the impacts. Any impacts on below ground features along the scheme footprint will be managed, where necessary, before construction through a process of targeted excavation and recording.

5. What next?



Throughout the various phases KCC will continue to review, amend and enhance their Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) as required.

This process ensures that characteristics such as age and disability are fully considered through good design practice and that the scheme is developed in the interest of all users.

A copy of the current EqIA and all consultation documents can be found online at: kent.gov.uk/Sturrylinkroad

6. Have your say

Your feedback is essential to help us shape our proposal prior to submission of a planning application and ensure it best suits the needs of your local community and local businesses.

Whether you support the proposal or have concerns about it, we want to hear your comments and views.

You can provide your views by taking part in our online engagement forum 'StickyWorld' or completing the consultation questionnaire which is available:

- Online at **kent.gov.uk/sturrylinkroad**
- By emailing **sturrylinkroad@kent.gov.uk** for a paper copy
- At the consultation events listed on this page

Want more information?

We also have three consultation events taking place in Sturry where you can drop in and talk to our team.

Consultation Event Venue	Date	Time
Broad Oak Village Hall Shalloak Road, Canterbury CT2 0QH	1 August 2017	2pm to 8pm
Sturry Social Centre Mill Road, Sturry, Canterbury CT2 0AN	2 August 2017	2pm to 8pm
Sturry Social Centre Mill Road, Sturry, Canterbury CT2 0AN	31 August 2017	2pm to 8pm

Visit the scheme website at: kent.gov.uk/sturrylinkroad

Email us: sturrylinkroad@kent.gov.uk

Write to us at:
Sturry Link Road Public Consultation
Kent County Council
1st Floor, Invicta House
Maidstone
ME14 1XX

Please provide your comments by 6th September 2017.

Alternative formats:
For any alternative formats of the consultation material, please email **alternative formats@kent.gov.uk** or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

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