

Active Travel Team
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XXXX 20XX

Dear Active Travel Team,

Maidstone Borough Council Response to Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation (November 2023 to January 2024)

Thank you for the opportunity to take part in the Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) consultation. Please note that these comments should be read in conjunction with the comments submitted to the earlier stakeholder consultation in July 2023

To make a representation to the consultation the Council has reviewed the following local documents that it uses to guide walking and cycling infrastructure in the Borough:

- Maidstone Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted)
- Maidstone Local Plan Review 2021-2038 (at examination)
- Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031
- Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy 2011-2031
- Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-2031 (addendum 2023)

Upon review of the above documents and the proposed KCWIP Maidstone Borough Council has the following comments to make on the proposals in KCWIP consultation.

Cycle Routes

The Council is happy that a route has been identified within the Borough as a priority route (Route 14 – Maidstone to Sittingbourne). However, it questions that this is the right route to be the top priority for the Borough. The Council would like to see the addition of the following priority routes:

- Maidstone town centre to the rural service centres to the south of the borough (Staplehurst, Headcorn & Marden)

- The River Medway towpath between Allington lock and Barming Bridge
- A route between Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks railway stations using the footpath across the River Medway
- A route between Maidstone and Ashford along using the A20 corridor, that will then service the proposed Heathlands Garden Community.
- A cycle route on Hermitage Lane connecting housing sites together.
- A route between Maidstone town centre and the proposed Lidsing Garden community

Generally, the Council is concerned that the routes proposed do not service the planned growth within either the adopted Maidstone Local Plan 2011-2031 or the proposed Maidstone Local Plan Review, which is presently at an advanced stage of examination.

With regards to proposed route R14 Maidstone to Sittingbourne the Council does have the following detailed comments to make on the route plan:

- R14-01: The Council supports the upgrade to cycle parking at Maidstone East Railway Station
- R14-02: The Council feels that this proposal is unfeasible due to the poor maintenance of this section of County Road at present and the present road space available.
- R14-05: The Council questions the need to go via M20 junction 7 would it not be possible to go via Boxley Road and then Pilgrims Way this could potentially to a safer route and also easier to achieve.
- R14 -10: The Council believes that this is mislabelled and should refer to Cox Street rather than Broader Lane

Walking & Wheeling Zones

The Council is disappointed that the Staplehurst walking zone proposed in the earlier consultation did not make to through to a priority scheme and would like to see that scheme included.

As stated in our previous consultation the Council would still like Maidstone town centre to also be included as a priority walking and wheeling zone. This addition is to reflect the priority the Council has for better walking and wheeling connectivity across the River Medway and the status of the town centre as a broad location for growth in the adopted Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 and emerging Maidstone Local Plan Review.

Yours faithfully,

Cllr Cooper

**Deputy Leader of Maidstone Borough Council & Cabinet Member for Planning,
Infrastructure & Economic Development**