

## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

**EQIA Title**

Bouverie Square and Town Centre Public Realm Folkestone A Brighter Future LUF2

**Responsible Officer**

KCC - GT TRA

### Type of Activity

**Service Change**

No

**Service Redesign**

No

**Project/Programme**

Project/Programme

**Commissioning/Procurement**

Commissioning/Procurement

**Strategy/Policy**

No

**Details of other Service Activity**

No

### Accountability and Responsibility

**Directorate**

Growth Environment and Transport

**Responsible Service**

Major Capital Programme Team

**Responsible Head of Service**

KCC - GT TRA

**Responsible Director**

KCC- GT TRA

### Aims and Objectives

**Project Background**

The 'Folkestone: A Brighter Future' (FABF) Improvement scheme aims to rejuvenate Folkestone through a number of different schemes. The schemes focus on improving the public realm and access to Folkestone through reconfiguring the road layout, improved pedestrian and cycle facilities and providing artistic interventions throughout.

This phase of the project includes moving the existing bus station from Bouverie Square onto the main carriageway on the south side of Middleburg Square. In the place of the current bus station at Bouverie square a new green space and park will be created to create an enhanced public experience and sense of place in the area. This will also create a better sense of arrival into the town centre improving the experience for both visitors and residents.

This element of the project also encompasses public realm improvements on Guildhall Street and Sandgate Road. These areas will benefit from a variety of public realm improvements.

**EQIA Overview**

On top of the benefits all users will experience, particular protected groups should experience additional benefits. The protected traits that should experience some improvements are:

- Age (improved public space will make a safer and easier pedestrian experience)

- Disability (improved public space will make a safer and easier pedestrian experience)
- Sex (improved public realm could increase sense of safety)
- Gender (improved public realm could increase sense of safety)
- Sexual orientation (improved public realm could increase sense of safety)
- Race (improved public realm could increase sense of safety)
- Religion (improved public realm could increase sense of safety)
- Pregnancy and Maternity (improved public realm should increase pedestrian safety)

However, some protected traits will be negatively affected during the construction phase.

- Age (Construction works and service changes may cause confusion, increase journey time and uneven surfaces could increase risk of tripping)
- Disability (Construction works and service changes may cause confusion, increase journey time, uneven surfaces could increase risk of tripping and unfamiliar routes may create difficulty for the visually impaired)
- Sex (Diversion routes not appropriately lit may affect a users feeling of safety)
- Gender (Diversion routes not appropriately lit may affect a users feeling of safety)
- Sexual Orientation (Diversion routes not appropriately lit may affect a users feeling of safety)
- Faith (Diversion routes not appropriately lit may affect a users feeling of safety)
- Race (diversion routes may be confusing for individuals with limited English fluency, diversion routes not properly lit may reduce the feeling of safety for ethnic minority individuals)
- Pregnancy (uneven surfaces may increase risk of tripping and bus relocation could increase walking distance)

Appropriate mitigations are provided below.

Outcome of EQIA: Continue

## Section B – Evidence

**Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?**

Yes

**It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?**

Yes

**Is there national evidence/data that you can use?**

Yes

**Have you consulted with stakeholders?**

Yes

**Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?**

KCC are the delivery partner for the transport and public realm elements of FABF; and as such are now developing the schemes from concept design through to delivery.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) began public consultation over a year ago as part of the development of the place Plan for Folkestone Town Centre. So far they have carried out extensive consultation with a full spectrum of stakeholders including delivery partners, businesses, community stakeholders and the wider public. More Recently during the development of the LUF application, We Made That ran a package of engagement to gain input. These included:

- 19 Workshops and Public Events
- 170 Detailed Conversations
- 168 Survey and Email Responses
- 361 Attended Public Events
- 645 Contacts Complied

There has also been discussion of the project at on-going meetings with stakeholders and project partners,

including presentations and discussions at regular forums in the district. These include the Folkestone Town Centre Partnership Board, including key stakeholders such as Southeastern, Stagecoach, Kent County Council, Creative Folkestone, etc, the Folkestone & Hythe Business Advisory Board which includes key business representative organisations such as the FSB and Kent Invicta Chamber, as well and key employers including Saga and Church & Dwight and numerous other smaller businesses operating in the district, the Folkestone Town Team and the Folkestone & Hythe Young Peoples Conversation forum. The feedback from this engagement has been used to shape the project designs.

There has been close working with local stakeholders and partners involved specifically with the projects throughout the development of this application. Members of Kent County Council’s highways team and Major Capital Programme Team have been on the Officer Steering Group for this application, there have been a number of meetings with Stagecoach on the new bus station design and with Creative Folkestone on inclusion of an artist commissioning strategy that relates to all elements of the project

Further consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken as the scheme progresses.

**Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?**

Yes

**Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?**

Yes

**Section C – Impact**

**Who may be impacted by the activity?**

**Service Users/clients**

Service users/clients

**Staff**

Staff/Volunteers

**Residents/Communities/Citizens**

Residents/communities/citizens

**Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?**

Yes

**Details of Positive Impacts**

In addition to the positive impacts identified for all residents and users of the scheme, specific positive impacts have been identified for the following protected characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Pregnancy and Maternity

**Age:**

Public spaces are frequently used by older people and young people. A well-produced public space will provide outdoor space with reduced fear of crime. Improvements to the public realm would improve the ability for young and old people to make independent journeys, increasing the confidence in which individuals can safely travel.

The improved public spaces provided by Bouverie Square along with town centre public realm will make people of all ages feel a greater sense of civic pride. This will also create a green space for people of all ages to enjoy in the town.

**Disability:**

The design will incorporate facilities accessible to disabled people. A well-produced public space will provide outdoor space with reduced fear of crime. Improvements to the public realm would improve the ability for people to make independent journeys, increasing the confidence in which individuals can safely travel.

Public realm improvements in the town centre will create a better ease of access for those with disabilities. Designs will be inclusive and conform to meet accessibility requirements and best practices.

**Sex, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Race and Religion:**

Public realm improvements could improve feeling of safety for women, transgender and non-binary individuals, ethnic minorities and people of different faiths who could be subject to hate crimes.

**Pregnancy and Maternity:**

Public realm improvements and the reconfiguration of the gyratory system should improve safety for pedestrians particularly pregnant women and parents with young children/pushchairs.

**Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions**

**19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age**

**Are there negative impacts for age?**

Yes

**Details of negative impacts for Age**

Relocation of bus stops could lead to confusion for regular current users or increase the distance required between the bus stop and town centre.

Construction will result in temporary closures of footpaths for users, this may result in uneven footway surfaces which could affect young and older pedestrians and increase risk of tripping.

Pedestrians and road users may have to find alternative and more lengthy routes to access services (such as hospital, schools, public transport etc.).

Noise disruption from the construction works could cause anxiety and confusion for some people.

If access to services and access to transport is disrupted it could disproportionately impact elderly people’s health and wellbeing as they may stop attending social groups, being active or attending health appointments

**Mitigating Actions for Age**

A safety audit will be completed at the design and construction stage. NMU audits will be undertaken to ensure due consideration is given to all road users.

Access to services kept clear with ramps where required

The design will meet all statutory requirements including the Equality Act 2010, with all good practices in mind.

Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of service changes, construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the footway safely during the construction works as well as access the bus during and after the changes.

Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulations

**Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age**

KCC

**20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability**

**Are there negative impacts for Disability?**

Yes

<b>Details of Negative Impacts for Disability</b>
<p>Relocation of bus stops could lead to confusion and increase the distance individuals are required to travel between the town centre and bus stops.</p> <p>Construction will result in temporary closures of footpaths, for road users including pedestrians &amp; cyclists. This may temporarily disrupt access to essential services for disability groups meaning alternative routes may be required. Construction works can cause major obstructions on key walking routes and unexpected changes to the 'landscape' for visually impaired people. Road works could lead to uneven surfaces increasing risk of tripping.</p> <p>Construction works can be sprawling and noisy – causing confusion and anxiety for some people with disabilities.</p>
<b>Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
<p>A safety audit will be completed at the design and construction stage. NMU audits will be undertaken to ensure due consideration is given to all road users.</p> <p>The design will meet all statutory requirements including the Equality Act 2010, with all good practices in mind.</p> <p>Ensure designs are carried out in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which gives guidance based on current legislation for non-motorised users (NMU) and those with disabilities. The design will meet recommended guidance from the Department for Transport on inclusive mobility, the Kent Design Guide and associated standard details.</p> <p>The need for the scheme has been identified assessment by KCC in partnership with local District development and transport strategies.</p> <p>Risk assessment to be completed for affected groups prior to construction.</p> <p>Public engagement, notices, letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of service changes, construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the footway and busses safely during and after the construction works.</p> <p>Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulations with access to services kept clear with ramps where required.</p>
<b>Responsible Officer for Disability</b>
KCC
<b>21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sex</b>
Yes
<b>Details of negative impacts for Sex</b>
During construction, women may feel unsafe using diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites due to fear of crime.
<b>Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<p>Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure residents can access and use the station safely during the construction works.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.</p>
<b>Responsible Officer for Sex</b>
KCC
<b>22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>

Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
During construction, individuals that identify as women may feel unsafe using diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites due to fear of crime.
<b>Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure residents can access and use the walkway safely during the construction works. Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
KCC
<b>23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Race</b>
Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Race</b>
During construction, communication barriers could cause confusion and anxiety for some ethnic groups in relation to the construction works due to the potential for a language barrier. Ethnic minority individuals may feel unsafe using diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites due to fear of crime.
<b>Mitigating actions for Race</b>
Public engagement materials during construction to be available in alternative languages on request. Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure residents can access and use the walkway safely during the construction works. Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race</b>
KCC
<b>24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Individuals of different faiths may feel unsafe using diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites due to fear of crime.
<b>Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure residents can access and use the walkway safely during the construction works. Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief</b>
KCC
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites may make users feel uncomfortable due to the fear of crime.

<b>Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure residents can access and use the walkway safely during the construction works. Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
KCC
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
There is a possible increased risk of falls during work if pregnant women are walking unfamiliar routes. Unfamiliar routes could prove difficult for individuals travelling with young children or pushchairs. Increased distance between the bus stops and town centre could cause difficulty.
<b>Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulations. Diversion routes to be lit and well signed with ramped access to services as required.  Public engagement, leaflets and letter drops will occur to ensure individuals are aware of bus stop changes.
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
KCC
<b>27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Yes
<b>Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Diversions and major construction works may impact on travel plans if works are not known about in advance. Construction works and changes to the site area could affect planning for independent travel with client groups.
<b>Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the footway safely during the construction works.
<b>Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities</b>
KCC