



The ‘new normal’ for transport in Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre¹

In June 2017, the Town Forum’s Transport Working Group published “TOWARDS CHANGE”, an analysis of transport issues in Tunbridge Wells. Three years later, COVID-19 highlights the urgency of implementing the solutions proposed² and Government funding makes them achievable.

While the private car undoubtedly provides convenience, comfort and privacy for many, it causes pollution – sometimes severe – and the town’s infamous congestion for all. COVID-19 has highlighted the structural weakness of transport in the town. Responding effectively to the crisis has given urgency to the long-term ambition, expressed in County and Borough Council strategies, to rely more heavily on walking and cycling, particularly within town centres.

Large numbers of parked cars line our streets despite car parks with adequate capacity. The road structure with A roads delivering HGVs into a 19th century town centre brings motor traffic to a halt with relatively minor disruption. Our roads have been beyond effective operating capacity for motor vehicles for many years. COVID-19 adds to the problems as people need more space to move around on foot and limits the short-term role of public transport. The DfT has now published directions on how to meet the emergency needs and has **promised funding**.³

Without foreseeing the current crisis, the RTW Town Forum’s 2017 Vision document was prescient in recognising the need for change, if not the urgency:

[2017] “Solving the transport issue is a necessary precursor to further population growth; failure to provide a solution is likely to preclude the realisation of the predicted housing need. The Borough Council’s health obligations and the recent NICE consultation on air quality make clear the need to tackle road traffic issues. The root cause is that transport infrastructure has not, and in the historic centre of the town, cannot keep up with the increase in population and cars. As far as transport is concerned, the challenge for the local plan is to -

- 1. Build housing in areas where public and sustainable transport already exists or is easily accommodated.*
- 2. Radically reduce reliance on cars in both existing and new developments”*

The draft of the new Local Plan recognises these needs. Like its 2017 predecessor, this Transport Plan focusses on the need for Active Travel and on public transport, including new technology and recognises the need for new infrastructure to remove through traffic from the town centre.

¹ An update to the transport plan for Tunbridge Wells town centre, prepared in 2017 by the Transport Working Group of the RTW Town Forum

² The present text includes substantial elements of the 2017 report; unchanged text from 2017 is in italics.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-active-travel-fund-local-transport-authority-allocations/emergency-active-travel-fund-total-indicative-allocations>

Formed in 2005, the Town Forum is the voice of the 50,000 residents of Royal Tunbridge Wells on issues of common interest

Town Forum Management Group

Adrian Berendt (Chair); Alastair Tod (Deputy Chair); Don Sloan (Deputy Chair); Carolyn Gray (Culture, Leisure & Tourism); David Wakefield (Finance); Jane Fenwick (Transport); Marianne MacDonald (Wellbeing); Mark Booker (Strategic Planning); Michael Holman (Water in the Wells)

MAKING IT HAPPEN

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Between 2001 and 2011 a population increase of 10.3% was outstripped by a rise in car ownership of 14.7%, and this trend has continued. The Borough's projected population rise of a further 10% over the next decade is unsustainable without reducing reliance on the car. Active Travel must become the PREFERRED mode for all short journeys and be integrated into planning. Every new development project should be required to show how it increases Active Travel in the town. Notwithstanding the challenging topography, Tunbridge Wells is a good place to adopt Active Travel: most residents live within a short walk (or cycle) of the town centre; the Borough Council supports walking and cycling; and we have popular schools with high numbers of school age children.

COVID-19 has demonstrated the pent-up demand for walking and cycling when motor traffic is reduced; and e-bikes make cycling possible for more people. All that is needed is a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Tunbridge Wells can be an Active Travel beacon in Kent and the Town Forum is suggesting we are an early adopter to demonstrate how Active Travel can become the preferred mode of travel for short journeys in Kent's urban communities.

The RTW Town Forum's Vision 2017 suggested a way forward. The Joint Transportation Board for TWBC has placed road safety at the top of the agenda. It should be a key priority of the Local Plan to reduce traffic levels to promote safe walking and cycling and improve the quality of life for current and future residents. Measures to reduce road danger are even more relevant today:

The following policy measures proposed in the 2017 Report remain relevant today:

- * *Extend the pedestrianised and shared space in the town centre where possible;*
- * *Adopt 20mph speed limits and traffic calming in all residential streets and the town centre;*
- * *Establish pedestrian refuges and crossings on main pedestrian routes;*
- * *Segregate routes for walking and cycling to work, schools and offices (and for leisure); and*
- * *Restrict access to residential streets for through traffic;*

Similarly, specific actions identified in 2017 are still appropriate:

1. *Classify streets and roads according to their purpose – as a place to 'be' or as a traffic conduit;*
2. *Activate the Town Forum's Green Network proposal for walking and cycling;*
3. *Require active travel plans for major economic developments;*
4. *Focus new development where transport infrastructure can be most easily provided; and*
5. *Limit urban sprawl to reduce need for transport infrastructure.*

Pedestrians

Royal Tunbridge Wells has beautiful Commons and other parks that are ideal for walking, but these are the exception and walking in the town needs to be made more attractive. The improvements to the public realm at Fiveways shared space show how people can go about their business freely and linger in cafes and seating to enjoy their outing. With the need for social distancing it is even more

important that outdoor space is available for cafes and bars. Add to this the potential for public art and water features and the effect could be transformative across the town.

Instead, access to the town centre is limited by traffic and parking, unsafe crossing points, multiple changes in level across kerbs, narrow pavements creating pinch points for people waiting for crossing lights, with 'A' board hazards and more on the pavements. Simple rethinking of the space and how people move around is the place to start. **Specific proposals are shown in Appendix 1.**

Pedestrianisation and shared space can be extended as opportunities arise. One such is the Amelia Scott Centre and Monson Road, for which the Transport Working Group has made proposals going beyond what has recently been adopted. **See details and sketch plan in Appendix 1a below**

Besides long-term improvement, many of these suggestions would support the Borough's response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Walking and cycling

COVID-19 has clearly demonstrated the extent to which freedom of movement into and within the town is not dependent on cars. As a transport solution, walking and cycling are not just 'healthy options', but a necessity to enable volumes of people to get into and around town with ease.

*At first sight Tunbridge Wells does not look a promising "cycling town". The hills in the centre of the town tend to discourage all but the toughest cyclist and the many narrow streets are a problem for the less confident. And yet, sixty cycle racks at the station are full by 8.15 am with later commuters forced to lash their bikes to trees or lampposts. Large numbers of local cyclists have turned out for "pro-cycling" rallies and the town has several cycle shops. However, it only has a few stretches of viable cycle tracks. The Town Forum's Green Network has proposed a network of quiet ways for cycling and walking and advocated 20mph on residential streets and in the town centre. The Town Forum also supports TWBC trialling the Department for Transport's Propensity for Cycling Tool, as a useful aid for determining which routes can achieve the greatest number of people cycling. The priority must be to make it safe for children to cycle or walk to school so that congestion due to the school run can be reduced. **Specific proposals are contained in Appendix 2 below.***

Buses

*The town has excellent bus services. The 281 service has been a great success and we need to emulate this success on other routes. We need a more vigorous effort to persuade people out of their cars. **An analysis of bus services was shown in Appendix 7 of the 2017 report.** However, dependence on buses is not a realistic response to Covid-19. While buses and trains remain a key transport solution, the need to socially distance on public transport means a fundamental reappraisal of routes and services for bus companies to continue to operate with a lower number of passengers. Consideration is needed for how social distancing in town will require the re-routing of some town centre bus services and relocation of bus-stops.*

Park and Ride

The current crisis means that park-and-ride is not an appropriate response to the current situation.

New Vehicle Technology

At this point it is less clear how, or how quickly, new technology will develop. The latest indications are that full driverless technology is still some way off, but given the difficulties faced by bus and train operators, smaller vehicles individually carrying fewer people on dedicated routes may provide a medium-term solution. New technology will be important for Tunbridge Wells if it helps reduce congestion on main routes and in the inner town, and the town should be in the forefront of its development. **Comprehensive proposals were shown in Appendix 7 of the 2017 report.**

PROVIDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE

While the success of an Active Travel strategy depends on large numbers of individuals making choices to change their mode of travel, the need for new and improved infrastructure is nevertheless a priority, made more so by the growth of population planned for the Borough and neighbouring communities to the north (Tonbridge and Malling) and south (Weald).

It will be important to assess whether travel patterns change in the longer term following this crisis. Will more people work from home, at least part-time? Will there be greater demand for 'close-to-home' working? This could be an advantage for towns like Tunbridge Wells, if facilities can be provided. Travelling long distances for work may become less popular.

Roads for through and freight traffic

The major route through the town is currently the A264 to the east and the A26 to the south – Appendix 6. The existence of these and other A roads in the town centre reduces its attractiveness as a place to live and for the economy to thrive. Around a quarter of HGVs entering the town have a destination elsewhere⁴.

With major road infrastructure a distant prospect, a solution urgent since the need to accommodate HGVs prevents many of the measures needed to enable social distancing and implement Active Travel corridors. Ways need to be found to minimise traffic not serving Tunbridge Wells business and residents, especially HGVs along the A264(E)/A26(S) corridor.

Pinch Points

Strategies for walking and cycling will create modal shift, as may technological change. Meanwhile, some small infrastructure changes could be made, as highlighted in the A26/A264 Route Study in 2015. The cumulative effect of small changes in improving safety and amenity should not be overlooked.

While converting traffic lights to roundabouts often makes active travel more difficult, eliminating right turns and reducing access to residential areas can be beneficial to both motor traffic on key routes and to those on foot or on bikes. The North Farm changes which improved vehicle flow and reduced congestion made it more difficult for those on foot or on bikes and need revising. **Specific proposals are shown in Appendix 4 below.**

⁴ According to a survey carried out in 2016 for KCC

Roundabouts

In many towns, beautiful roundabouts establish civic pride at arrival points. The roundabouts in our town have been neglected. They need to have dramatic flower displays, public art, water features or other means of establishing the Arcadian brand of our town. They can be sponsored to provide funding. Enhancing the look of existing roundabouts is already in train with the help of sponsorship but converting traffic lights to roundabouts is less desirable now.

Parking

Free parking on residential roads and in the town centre is unsustainable. It adds to traffic congestion and pollution and is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Surveys show that 90% of cars entering the town in the morning stay in town for much of the day on-street or in Multi-storey Car Parks (MSCP). We suggest that following a few key Parking Principles could reduce congestion caused by parking and drivers looking for parking spaces.

- 1. Current and future changes to on-street parking should aim to reduce congestion and pollution, increase safety of all road users, enable active travel and the better use of public transport.*
- 2. There should be no or restricted parking and limited loading and unloading on through roads, on bus routes and on cycle routes (advisory and mandatory).*
- 3. Busy subsidiary roads should be limited to parking on one side only and regulated to control vehicle speed and improve traffic flow.*
- 4. An inner zone (marked in red on the map in Appendix 5) should be residents parking only and this includes all roads leading onto shared space, and all cul-de-sacs*
- 5. Residents parking zones could be aligned in relation to times of walking to town centre. Visitor parking should be limited when an MSCP is within 5-10 minutes' walk.*

*There should be more enforcement of parking on double yellow lines, on pavements and red bricks, and inconsiderate parking and overstaying. **Specific proposals are shown in Appendix 5 below***

These 2017 comments in this section are largely still relevant, although the emphasis needs to be on providing Active Travel Corridors and space to socially distance in the town centre. For example, either kerbside parking needs to be removed, where pavements are too narrow to socially distance, or traffic needs to be largely removed to enable the easier use of the road by pedestrians. Parked vehicles encroaching on the pavement where roads are too narrow remain a substantial problem.

APPENDIX 1 - PEDESTRIANS:

The Urban Design Framework SPD shows some of the main pedestrian routes within and to and from the town centre (see below). By ensuring these routes are free flowing, level and easy to navigate, a pedestrian enabled environment can be built up. With an increasingly elderly population walking surfaces are needed with minimal climbing of kerbs to make a pedestrian friendly environment. But this is also a benefit for the disabled, families with buggies, and general users. Clear level pathways on key routes should be the framework on which to add to establish pedestrian priority and a welcoming town centre for many local improvements.

Establishing pedestrian priority will assist in traffic calming and speed control. Reducing the speed limit to 20mph can remove the need for most light controlled crossings. Shared space shows how

well level and semi-formal crossings work and how calmed traffic enables people to move more freely.

The Town Forum’s Green Network map shows concentric rings around the town centre:

1. **Within the first circle of 1-mile radius** lie some tens of thousands of inhabitants. Any normally healthy adult should find it quicker to walk rather than drive, considering the time needed to drive, park and then walk to their destination.
2. **Within the second circle of 1- 1.25 miles (2km)** walking remains competitive with driving and cycling begins to become competitive with walking on overall time.
3. **Within the third circle of 1.25 -2 miles**, energy used, and time taken to walk (about 30 minutes) compares to a 10-15 minute cycle ride.
4. **Within the fourth circle of 2-3 miles** incorporating more distant households in Tunbridge Wells, Southborough, Bidborough, Rusthall, Langton Green and most of Pembury. Depending on topography and fitness, a 3-mile journey can be covered by bicycle in 15-25 minutes. Over these distances there should be a realistic prospect of appreciable modal shift to cycling for work, school and other journeys with adequate routes, physically segregated if on the main road.

Covid-19 brings this into sharp focus. A complete review is needed of how those on foot access the town centre, particularly across the A26, to show the relevance of the Town Forum’s Green Network report.

[Left] The **Urban Design SPD⁵ Fig 5.2 Section Movement Framework – Pedestrian** - Highlights the key walking routes within and to and from the town centre and provides a framework for improving flow around the town centre. However, getting to the town centre safely is currently not easy as the Town Forum’s Green Network Report reveals.

The Town Forum’s Green Network’s ‘Proposed new, relocated or enhanced pedestrian crossings’ showed how the flow and safety of pedestrians across the town could be improved. These include:

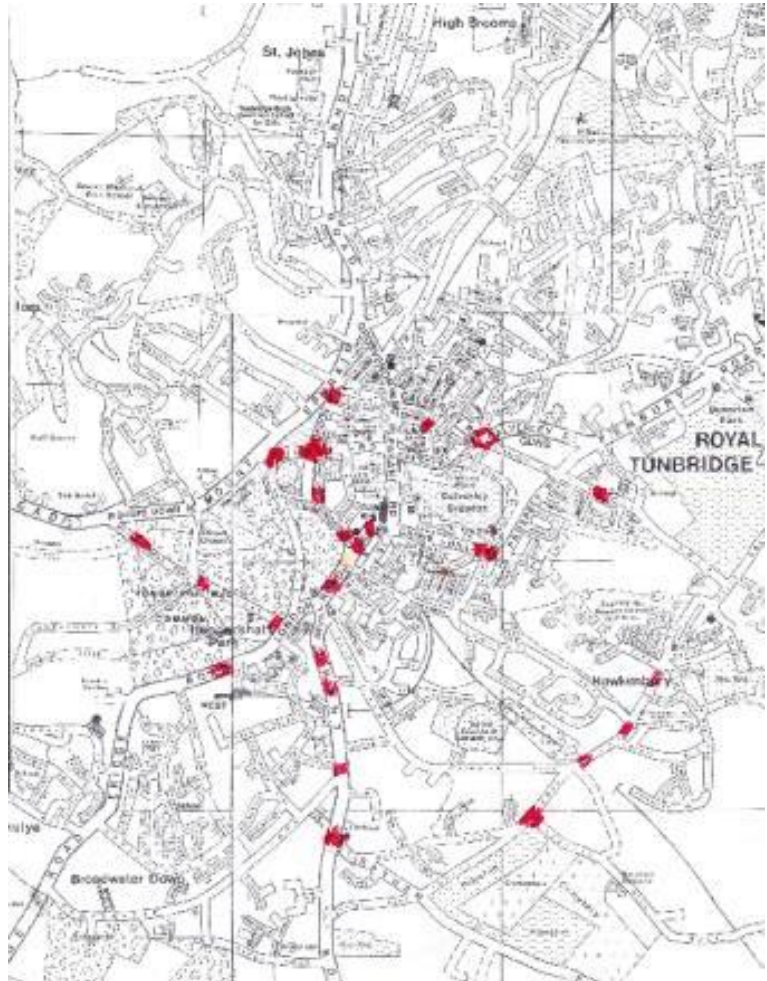
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- **Mount Ephraim / Lime Hill Road:** Controlled crossing to connect the network of streets on either side.



⁵ We note that the Urban Design Framework SPD remains a Draft and needs revised

- **Church Road junction:** Introduce pedestrian phase to enable safe access to cross to Tunbridge Wells Commons and residential streets to the west.
- **Mt Edgcumbe Road:** Relocate existing traffic island from below the junction with Inner London Road to the north of the junction with Mt Edgcumbe Road; provides a safer sight line and better connectivity with the Common.
- **Vale Road:** Relocate existing traffic island from its poor sight line on a blind bend adjacent to the Vale Road junction further north by Vale Avenue, with changes to the footpath emerging from the Common.
- **Major York's Road.** A controlled crossing on Major York's Road⁶, and an improved footway link to the existing pedestrian crossing at Castle Road opposite the Pantiles. (Scheduled for 2017/18)
- **Brighton Lake:** A safe crossing point from Nevill Terrace to allow safe access to the lake, the bus stop and footpaths across the Common.



A264

- Zebra crossing or traffic island connecting the footpaths on both sides of Church Road where it forks to Mt Ephraim to serve an important pedestrian route from the bottom of the town to Mt Ephraim via the Commons, including Castle Street.
- **Carrs Corner / Calverley Park Gardens:** Solutions to the pedestrian safety concerns⁷.
- **Rusthall Common near St. Paul's Church:** High levels of vehicle and pedestrian traffic requires a safe crossing point to access the bus stops and residential streets nearby.

Other

- **A267 Frant Road:** pedestrian crossings required to enable safe access to the Mead school and residential communities in the Broadwater Down area. Crossing points near Rodmell Road (for the school), Broadwater Down, and Birling Road needed.

⁶ Now complete

⁷ Possible solutions agreed in March 2018, but not yet finalised or funded.

- **Major York's Road:** Pedestrian crossing needed at the junction of Nevill Park and Fir Tree Road to link footpaths and green routes across the Commons.
- **Vale Road:** Relocation of zebra crossing at the old Vale Road Post office to near the station access road and the railway bridge or other road management measures to allow for safe access to the railway station and from the High Street to the retail unit (now Range).
- **B2023 Grove Hill Road:** A zebra crossing near the Claremont Road junction to allow safe access from the town centre to Claremont Primary School and the network of streets.
- **Bayhall Road:** Zebra crossings across Bayhall Road to provide safe access to Dunorlan Park via the entrances near to Camden Park and Croft Lodge.
- **Forest Road:** With many houses and a new school in Hawkenbury and Benhall Mill Road areas, safe crossings points with pedestrian and cycle priority are needed at several locations for residents and school children to access the town centre, schools and work.
- **Monson Road** from the rear entrance to Crescent Road car park: create a pedestrian only Monson Road from Mount Pleasant (the Amelia Scott Centre) to Monson Way (beside Blacks), with shared space for access only from there to the junction with Calverley Road/Camden Road.

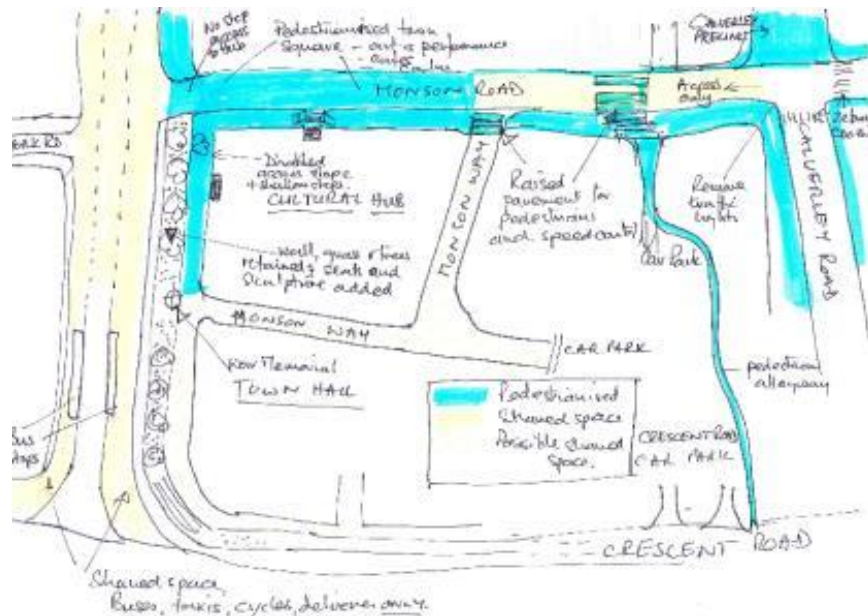
APPENDIX 1a THE AMELIA SCOTT / WAR MEMORIAL

In 2017 we wrote as follows: *Since the opening of Fiveways and the removal of most traffic, the level of traffic along Monson Road has significantly reduced. However, the junction with Mount Pleasant has created a hazardous road crossing for pedestrians. The traffic island is inadequate for the number of pedestrians, who must turn behind them to see the oncoming northbound traffic turning into their path.*

It is not important for traffic to use Monson Road to access Camden Road when they can do so from Calverley Road or Lansdowne Road. Pedestrianising this part of Monson Road will not materially affect other roads and junctions and will benefit people accessing the Hub and create a new ‘town square’ location. The sketch [following] shows how this area could look.

Written just as the changes to the highway layout were being discussed, this section is still relevant. Indeed, the changes carried out have, in some respects, made things worse. E.g., not only was “**the existing traffic island on Monson Road inadequate**” – see below, it has now been removed, meaning that vehicles sweep round even faster. Further the enhancements which the Town Forum proposed in 2017 would enable the hospitality businesses to make immediate use of the vehicle-free space created. In 2017 we continued:

1. A Town Square: The current plan fails to create a Town Square where people can meet and events happen, since it remains open to traffic. We strongly argue for the ‘town square’ to be a dedicated pedestrian space.



2. Monson Road (west): Closing Monson Road from Mount Pleasant to Monson Way (and possibly to the Town Hall) to traffic will:

- Display the frontage of the architecturally important Adult Education Centre to best advantage;
- Create a café-based street scene that has been successful elsewhere in the town;
- Enable art works and performance events to be staged;
- Create a continuous pathway from Fiveways to give safe and easy access to the Hub via the Adult Ed main entrance, via the slope and gradual steps to the Library entrance, or both.
- Provide a gathering place with seating and artwork on the existing lawn and hard standing, thus creating a busy and visible entrance to the new centre.
- Enhance the street scene with the retention of the line of trees and the historic wall and enhanced planting and sculpture

3. Monson Road (east): *Ultimately Monson Road could be pedestrianised to the junction with Calverley Road, linking up with Calverley Precinct. If this were not possible immediately:*

- *Change Monson Road to shared space from Calverley Road as far as Monson Way with access limited to loading and unloading for shops, adult education, offices, Assembly Hall and flats.*
- *The loop road could be retained in the short term depending on future use of Town Hall but in future access could be changed to shared space to provide a pedestrian/cycling link around the town centre and the new Hub.*
- *There is an opportunity for a wide, continuous pavement across Monson Road to access Crescent Road car park and the proposed improved pedestrian alleyway to Crescent Road. The narrow pavements and light controlled pedestrian crossing at Monson Road / Calverley Road creates a congested and inadequate access to the central shopping area, particularly for disabled, elderly and families with buggies. A continuous ramp/walkway from the disabled parking in Crescent Road car park to the wider and raised pedestrian crossing would help.*
- *The Draft Planning Document has identified the alleyway beside Crescent Road Car Park for improvement. This provides a walking link to Crescent Road and beyond.*
- *There is also potential for linking Newton Road into the shared space with vehicle access only for residents and deliveries.*

4. Mount Pleasant to Fiveways

- *Buses only on Mount Pleasant*
- *Traffic exiting Newton, Dudley and York Roads would continue but consideration to be given to changing traffic flow to provide quiet roads and cycle ways.*
- *Consideration should be given to removing all traffic other than buses, taxis and cycles (and vehicles exiting Newton, Dudley and York Roads) from the shared spaces 24/7.*
- *The concentration of bus stops should be accompanied by appropriate seating and shelters, and wide pavements to ease the transition for bus users.*

5. Calverley Road/Camden Road:

- *Removing the current traffic lights could simplify the junction into a left / right turn. Retaining pedestrian crossings across Camden Road and Calverley Road would slow and regulate traffic on the approach to the turn.*
- *S106 funds from RVP for “improving” the Monson Road/Calverley Road junction would no longer needed and could be redirected to the Monson Road changes.*

6. Buses:

- *The architect’s plan requires the bus stops to be compacted at the southern end of Mount Pleasant close to the junction with Crescent Road/Church Road in order to make the proposed steps workable as an entrance to the Amelia Scott Centre. . Our plan could enable the bus stops to be located a little further from the junction which should ease congestion.*
- *Monson Road bus stop L currently services the 277, 6 and 293, and Bus stop M serves 283, 285, 287 and 296 routes. These need to be changed in discussion with the bus operator and users to*

achieve the advantages presented by the Hub project. These services could use the planned bus interchange.

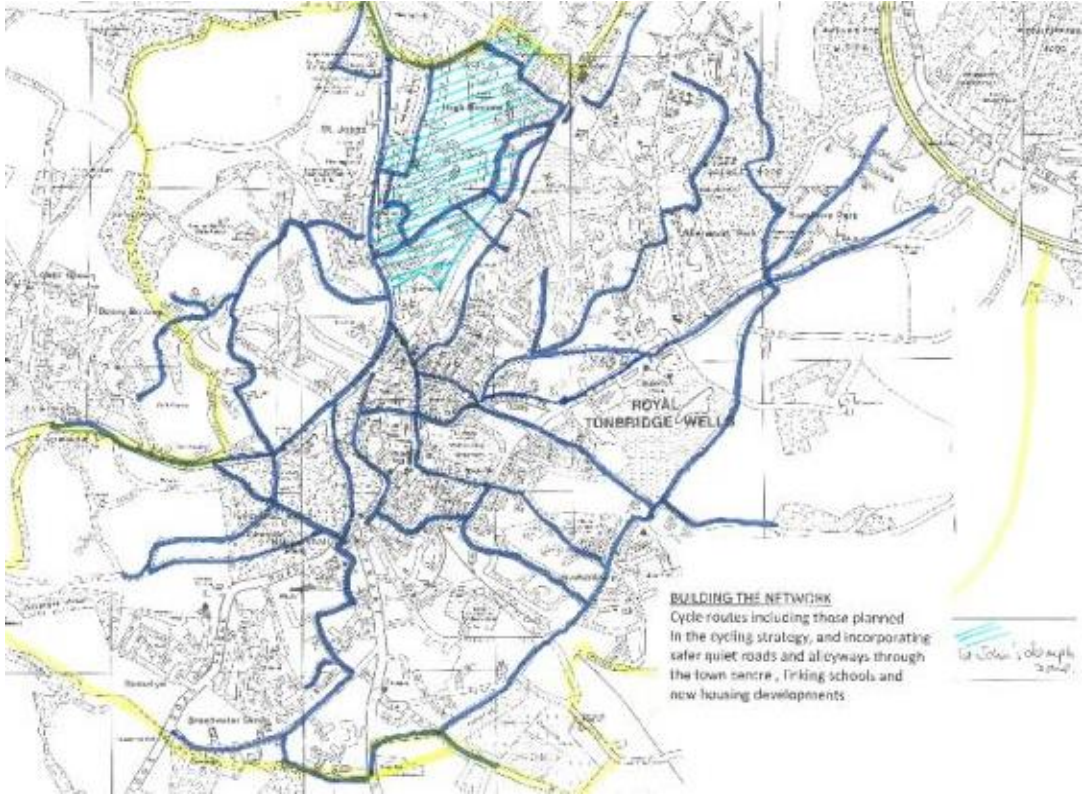
APPENDIX 2 - CYCLING

Segregated cycle routes will go some way to creating a cycle friendly town but experience from other towns show how other, relatively inexpensive changes could help even more:

- *adopt 20mph zones in all residential areas (and the historic centre);*
- *create Quietways for both cycling and walking with the 2-mile radius of the Town Hall;*
- *improve signage, share 'back alleys' with pedestrians;*
- *raised crossings for pedestrians; and*
- *introduce filtered permeability.*

Small improvements to cycling infrastructure benefit mobility scooter users, pedestrians, the elderly and those using baby buggies. In concentrating on long term projects that require large infrastructure investment, the TWBC Cycling Strategy did not sufficiently consider the shared use of existing footpaths. RTW is lucky to have a network of alleyways and footpaths creating off-road links and short cuts. Most are currently forbidden to cyclists and little used by pedestrians and would need little adaptation to achieve the 2.5 - 3m width and signage for shared use for quick access to the town and its schools. Both TWBUG and the Town Forum's Green Network report 'Developing our Green Network' demonstrate the potential of opening shortcuts and alleyways:

1. *Grove Park – links Claremont Road to Sutherland Road*
2. *Pantiles – links Pantiles Lower Walk with Market Street*
3. *Farncombe Lane – links Farncombe Road with Mount Sion*
4. *Highgrove to Warwick Park link*
5. *Hurstwood Lane to Bishops Down Park Road – link to local schools*
6. *Upper Cumberland Walk – consider the length from Cavendish Drive to Chapel Place*
7. *Broadwater Lane to Showfields Road avoiding A26*
8. *Broadwater Rise to Linden Gardens - limit traffic to encourage use of quiet roads to Pantiles*
9. *Hawkenbury Recreation Ground – cycling permitted signs*
10. *Campbell Road to Southfield Road – link for TWGGS*
11. *Teise Close to Camden Park - allow cycles but is a private road.*
12. *Warwick Road/High Street and Little Mount Sion/High Street – no access for cars*
13. *The Chase, Farncombe Road to Claremont Road – safe off road to Claremont School*
14. *Camden Park to the Chase – safe off road to Claremont School but on private roads?*
15. *Broadwater Lane to Broadmead to Broadwater Down.*



APPENDIX 4 PINCH POINTS (amended 2020 to list locations of concern where solutions for all road users are needed).

1. *Camden Road Traffic Lights – re-examine priorities at this junction for pedestrians and accommodate variable flows at peak times when the RVP car park exits.*
2. *Lansdowne Road /Garden Road/ Sandrock Road – triangular island creates a complex junction.*
3. *Mount Ephraim junction with London Road - unclear priorities and a steep hill for north flowing traffic.*
4. *Carr’s Corner – severe danger for pedestrian crossing without refuges or priority*
5. *Vale Road /London Road Junction - difficult exits from and turns into Vale Road.*
6. *Halls Hall Road junction at Hawkenbury:*
7. *Broadwater Down - exits at both Frant Road and Eridge Road have wide but confusing road alignments resulting in vehicles using the wrong lanes.*
8. *Sandhurst Road/ Pembury Road junction*
9. *Sandrock Road Junction at Dunorlan Park entrance*
10. *Mount Pleasant/station taxi rank: Taxis parked the wrong way round must cross into the oncoming traffic in both lanes.*

Appendix 5 PARKING: Changing the culture

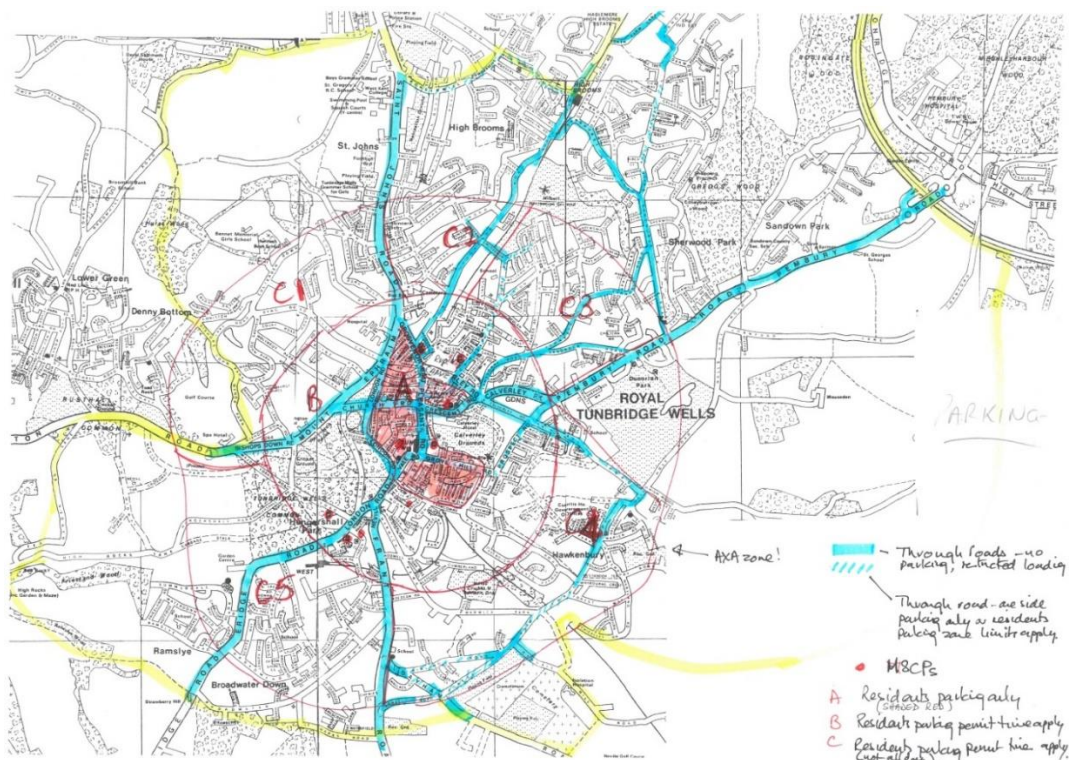
The experience of traffic planners who have managed to increase walking and cycling is that one of the “non-negotiables” is the need to manage parking. These are some essentials of a new approach:

1. Limit ‘free’ on-street parking times and spaces where MSCP within 5-10 minutes’ walk.
2. With plenty of spaces in MSCPs are unfilled and not generating income for TWBC. (see <http://www.kentlive.news/this-is-why-there-is-enough-parking-in-tunbridge-wells/story-30318927-detail/story.html>), consider offering a free first hour parking in an MSCP can lead to change of parking culture. (The proposed loss of the Great Hall, AXA, Linden Road and Union House car parks will affect parking places for the High Street and Pantiles area, but capacity is proposed to largely replace this.)
3. Better signage to spare car park places and variable pricing to maximise the use of MSCPs.
4. Develop an internal frequent bus/driverless vehicle service between top and bottom of town centre and linking MSCPs to maximise car park usage, minimise congestion and pollution, and encourage active travel.

Residents parking

5. A Parking permit is not a right but a valued benefit - create a waiting list for parking permits;
6. Limit residents parking permits – one per household, and/or a higher fee for second car permit;
7. Limit growth of front garden parking except for disabled, electric car charging and to reduce congestion;
8. Enforce a penalty for permit misuse, fraud, renting out off street parking etc – penalty suggested is cancelling of residents parking permit and returning to the waiting list.

Consider parking permit zones drawn in concentric circles related to distance from the town centre.



Employers, employees, parents

- 9. Businesses should adopt transport plans to minimise on-street parking by customers and employees; they can be rewarded with reserved or cheaper parking in MSCPs for workers;
- 10. A town wide employee car-sharing scheme could have allocated reserved spaces in MSCPs;
- 11. Unregulated on-street parking impedes emergency and delivery vehicles and damages pavements; regulated on-street parking can be used to reduce speeds in residential roads
- 12. Work with schools and parents to reduce the congestion caused by the ‘school run’

APPENDIX 6: major routes in Kent currently recognised by DfT⁸



Figure 1: Indicative Major Road Network as proposed in the DfT's consultation

APPENDIX 7 SOURCES

- www.nice.org.uk/guidance/GID-PHG92/documents/draft-guideline
- www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/DMRB/vol5/section1/ta7999.pdf
- RTW Town Forum's Green Network 2016
- RTW Town Forum's Vision 2017
- TWBC Transport Strategy 2015-16 and RTW Town Forum consultation response
- A26 and A264 study Route Study 2015
- Local Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy 2017
- Clean Air Zone Framework 2017

⁸ <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s83440/Item%208%20-%20KCC%20response%20to%20DfT%20Major%20Roads%20Network%20Consultation%20FINAL.pdf>