

# Thanet Parkway Public Consultation Report

## Executive Summary

An eight week public consultation on the initial high level design, impacts and benefits of Thanet Parkway, a new railway station to the west of the village of Cliffsend in Thanet, was run from 2nd February to 27th March 2015. The new parkway station is scheduled for delivery by January 2019, and will be served by both High Speed and Mainline rail services.

A full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was conducted prior to the public consultation and reviewed once the public consultation had been completed. The EqIA shaped the engagement and participation mechanisms, identifying protected characteristics of the population which had the potential to be negatively or positively impacted by the proposal, as well as ensuring that particular attention was paid to engagement with minority groups in East Kent.

A range of communication methods, given below, were used to ensure a broad range of target audiences were engaged:

- Post
- Press releases
- Social Media
- KCC website
- Libraries
- KCC Community Engagement Officers
- Pre-consultation meetings
- Posters at East Kent railway stations
- Emails

The consultation consisted of seven open consultation events held across East Kent, and was supported by a range of consultation documents which were made available at a dedicated webpage ([kent.gov.uk/thanetparkway](http://kent.gov.uk/thanetparkway)). The primary response method was by the completion of a questionnaire online or by post. A total of 529 consultation responses were received, consisting of:

- 492 questionnaire responses
- 10 written letters from stakeholders
- 27 response cards completed at the consultation events.

The analysis of the responses is categorised into the following three sections: design, impacts and benefits of the parkway station.

#### *Design of the parkway station*

- All the facilities proposed for the station and car park were deemed to be 'more important' than 'not important'.
- The most important station facilities were (in order of priority):
  1. Platform lighting
  2. CCTV
  3. Real time journey information
- The most important car park facilities were (in order of priority):
  1. CCTV
  2. Bus stop
  3. Lighting
- The three most commonly requested additional facilities were (in order of priority):
  1. Catering facilities
  2. Toilet facilities
  3. Staff at the station
- Other frequent comments in the consultation raised the need for:
  - Good public local transport links
  - Affordable parking

- 12% more people wanted access to the platforms via ramps as opposed to lifts (34% vs. 22%).
- More than twice as many people wanted access between platforms to be via a footbridge as opposed to an underpass (44% vs. 19%).
- 57% of people agreed with the proposed road access arrangement while 26% disagreed and 18% didn't know. The main reasons for disagreement were:
  - Safety concerns with the proposed arrangement (29%)
  - That the arrangement would increase congestion/traffic (20%)
  - That respondents would prefer direct access from the Sevenscore roundabout (15%)

*Potential impacts of the parkway station*

- The most 'concerning' impacts in order of priority were:
  - An increase of congestion around the site and within adjacent villages due to through traffic
  - The impact on wildlife
  - The impact on surrounding water resources
  - The impact on road safety
- Particular congestion concerns raised included:
  - There would be an increase in traffic through the village of Cliffsend
  - The volume of traffic already using the A299/A256 Sevenscore roundabout particularly past Westwood Cross
  - Additional traffic flows on Cottington Road that is already hazardous due to its capacity, lack of pavements and poor sight lines.
- Other concerns commonly raised during the consultation included:
  - The impact on existing stations/services
  - The station adding to existing journey time
  - Loss of agricultural land/green space
  - Safety / increase in vandalism due to unstaffed station

*Potential benefits of the parkway station*

- 68% of respondents identified they would receive at least one benefit from the station.
- The top three benefits of the station to be realised by respondents were:
  1. Improved access to High Speed 1 (HS1) (47% of respondents)
  2. Being about an hour's journey time to London Stratford (45% of respondents)
  3. Greater investment in East Kent due to improved accessibility (42% of respondents)
- When asked to state any other benefits felt from the station the most common responses in order of priority were:
  1. There was no benefit from the parkway station
  2. The station would help support the re-opening of Manston Airport
  3. The benefits of the parkway station would not be realised unless the airport is re-opened

*Stakeholder organisation response*

- Objections to the proposal were received from two landowners (including the principal landowner), a Parish Council and the Thanet branch of a national political party.
- Key concerns raised were that:
  - The need for the station should be kept under review depending on the future of Manston Airport
  - Congestion will get worse as a result of the parkway station
  - The station will be unsafe as it is unstaffed
  - The station will result in closure or loss of service to existing stations
  - The station will add to existing journey time
  - There will be an irreversible loss of type 1 agricultural land
  - The station will attract future housing development
  - The station will prevent the principal landowner farming his retained land

### **The next steps**

This consultation was undertaken to inform the design and development of the project. The outcome of this report has already been shared with Kent County Council's design and planning consultants so that appropriate measures can be taken into the design, planning application and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work.

Following public consultation, Kent County Council's project team has engaged with key stakeholders, including but not limited to the related landowners, Cliffsend Parish Council, one specific directly affected local resident, Thanet District Council, Southeastern and Network Rail. Ongoing communication will be undertaken to get feedback from key stakeholders on the design and EIA work as this work is progressed. The updated design and EIA work will be presented in a second public consultation planned for early 2016.

*The full consultation report is available online at [kent.gov.uk/thanetparkway](http://kent.gov.uk/thanetparkway).*