

Managing freight vehicles through Kent

A consultation on proposals for a lorry area at Stanford West



12 August to 23 September 2016



About us

Highways England is the wholly government-owned company responsible for modernising, maintaining and operating England's motorways and major A roads.

Our network covers approximately 4,300 miles. In Kent, it includes the A2, M2 and M26 as well as the M20 and A20 - the routes that provide the main access to the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

1. The problem

Over recent decades, the number of lorries crossing the English Channel has increased seven fold. Nearly 90% of all UK roll-on, roll-off international freight goes through the Strait of Dover and that puts 11,000 lorries per day on Kent's roads¹. There are projections that by 2025 the number of these lorries could double².

Usually the road network copes well. But unexpected events cause problems, as there is little slack in the system.

Extra parking has recently been provided at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel, but we expect that severe weather, security threats or industrial action will still mean that queues of lorries have to be held on the M20 using a procedure known as Operation Stack. This happened on 32 days in 2015.

Operation Stack can cause significant problems as it shuts the M20. Kent residents struggle to get to work or school, to medical appointments or to carry out everyday tasks. People from further afield get held up or delayed and businesses are affected.

This consultation is about plans to alleviate the problems caused by Operation Stack by designing and building a dedicated lorry holding area at Stanford, near Folkestone. In almost all cases, this will keep Kent residents moving and get rid of traffic congestion caused by cross-channel disruption. Businesses will keep investing in the area and jobs can be created, leading to greater prosperity both in Kent and internationally.

2. The current response

A range of measures are used to deal with disruption to cross-channel services:

- **Localised incidents** are dealt with by the Police, our traffic officers and Kent County Council.
- **Queuing from the Eurotunnel terminal.** At times, lorries heading for Eurotunnel are allowed to queue on the hard shoulder of the M20 at junction 11a.
- **Dover 'TAP' (Traffic Assessment Project)** Lorries are held on the A20 between Folkestone and Dover when the port is full to reduce congestion and air pollution in Dover.
- **Operation Stack.** Four phases of Operation Stack can be deployed which, at its most intrusive could result in the closure of both carriageways of the M20 between junctions 8 and 11.

- **Use of Manston Airfield** Manston Airfield can accommodate a large amount of Port of Dover traffic but is 30 miles away from the M20; the government and key stakeholders accept that its use is an interim relief measure for Operation Stack while a long term solution for Operation Stack is being developed.

None of these measures can replace Operation Stack. We need a permanent solution during periods of disruption to cross-channel services.

The map below shows the main road network in Kent, the cross-channel ports and the location of the current traffic management responses



3. Deciding on Stanford West

Background

We have held discussions with key stakeholders and the government over the past few years and concluded that, ideally, any lorry area should meet the following criteria:

- be as close as possible to Eurotunnel and the Port of Dover
- allow lorries to be marshalled effectively and enable drivers to take their required rest periods
- provide welfare facilities for drivers and passengers
- be organised so drivers are not disadvantaged by using the system
- minimise disruption to local roads by being as close as possible to the M20
- minimise vehicle miles and reduce road congestion by facilitating easy access to the coast-bound M20
- meet environmental, social and/or economic requirements
- provide enough space to accommodate all lorries that presently queue in Operation Stack.

Following last summer's disruption on the roads in Kent, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that government is:

“...providing up to £250 million for a major new permanent lorry park to increase resilience in Kent, by taking pressure off the roads in the event of Operation Stack.”

Options consultation

Following the Chancellor's announcement, we consulted to fully test the case for a permanent lorry area and to understand the views of the community and other stakeholders. We received more than 1,300 written responses.

The majority of people felt Operation Stack had impacted on their life, their work life (26%), social life (28%), home life (29%) or business (8%). 60% said they would like to see plans to reduce or remove the need for freight traffic to park along the M20 and so reduce the effect that Operation Stack has on Kent.

Over half of people (55%) supported the provision of a permanent lorry area as an alternative to reduce or remove the need for freight traffic to park along the M20. 31% of respondents preferred the Stanford West site.

More details on the consultation responses can be found in Highways England's document, 'Managing freight vehicles through Kent - Public Consultation Report', by going to www.gov.uk and searching for 'Stanford West'.

On 6th July 2016, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that a single lorry area would be provided at Stanford West. The Secretary of State's decision can be found online by going to www.gov.uk and searching for Stanford West.

4. How this could impact on you

The M20 lorry area will significantly improve the lives of many thousands of Kent residents when there is major disruption to cross-channel services. It will reduce disruption, keep local people moving and ensure businesses can operate.

However, we accept that the building and operation of the lorry area will cause problems for those who live closest to the site. We particularly want to understand their concerns and any issues they have as part of this consultation process. Wherever possible, we want to reduce or mitigate the impact of the lorry area. As we design the site, we will be looking for opportunities to provide or enhance local amenities.

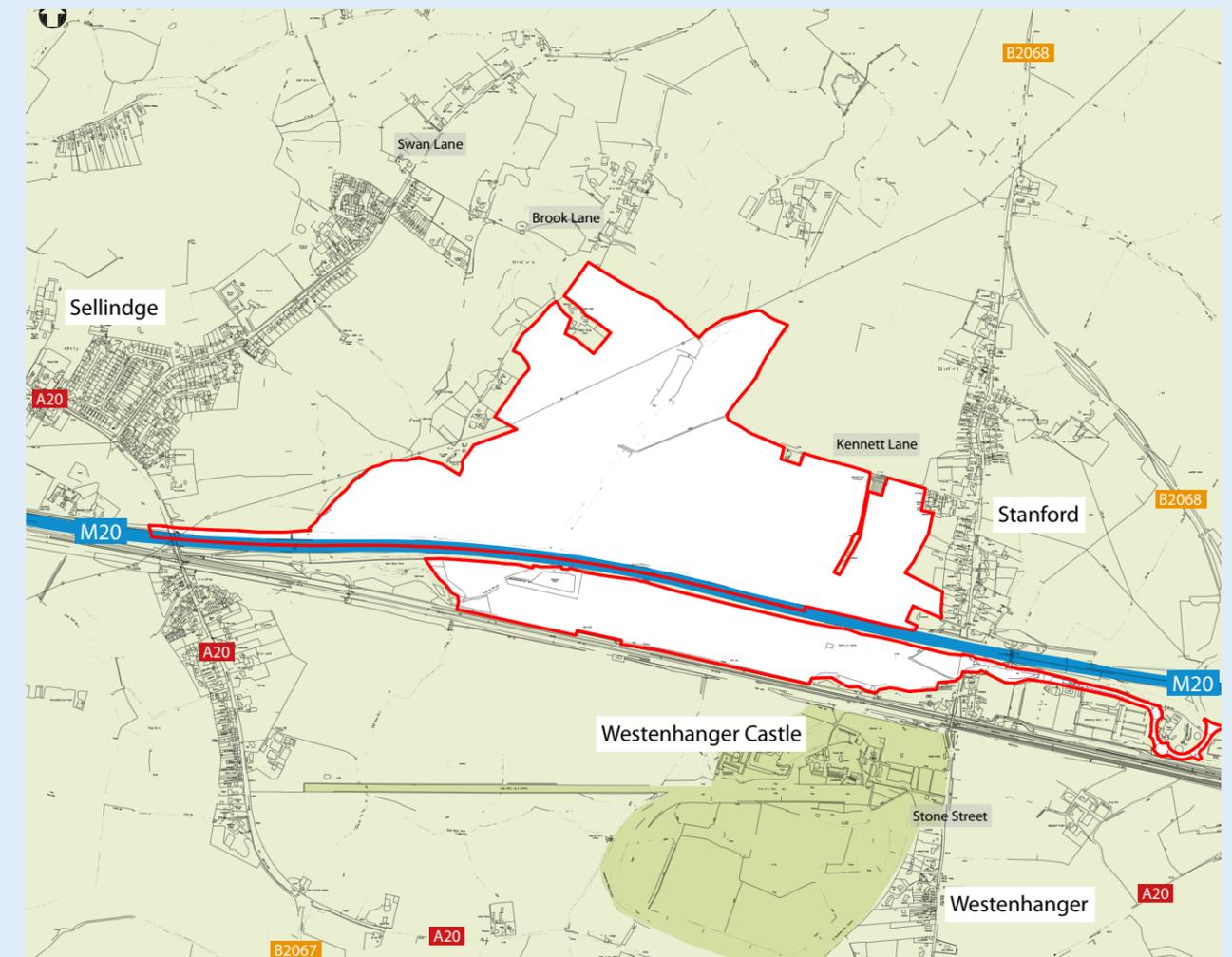
We are also considering ways in which the affected local community can have ongoing engagement in the operation of the site and we would be interested in your views as part of this consultation.

Our intention is that both during construction and after the facility has been built, it will, as far as possible, be a good neighbour.

5. The Stanford West site

The Stanford West site is located to the north and south of the M20, just west of junction 11 and close to the existing Stop24 Service Area.

The map below shows the location and outline of the site:





KEY

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
|  Indicative lorry parking layout |  Individual trees |  Mammal underpass |
|  Indicative green corridors |  Wildlife pond |  Public rights of way |
|  Species rich grassland |  Retention basin |  Main river |
|  Woodland/ woodland edge/ trees and shrubs |  Balancing pond |  Ordinary water course |
|  Scrub |  Hibernacula |  Proposed water course |
|  Wetland habitat |  Artificial badger sett | |
|  Green roof and facilities building |  Other/mammal ledge | |



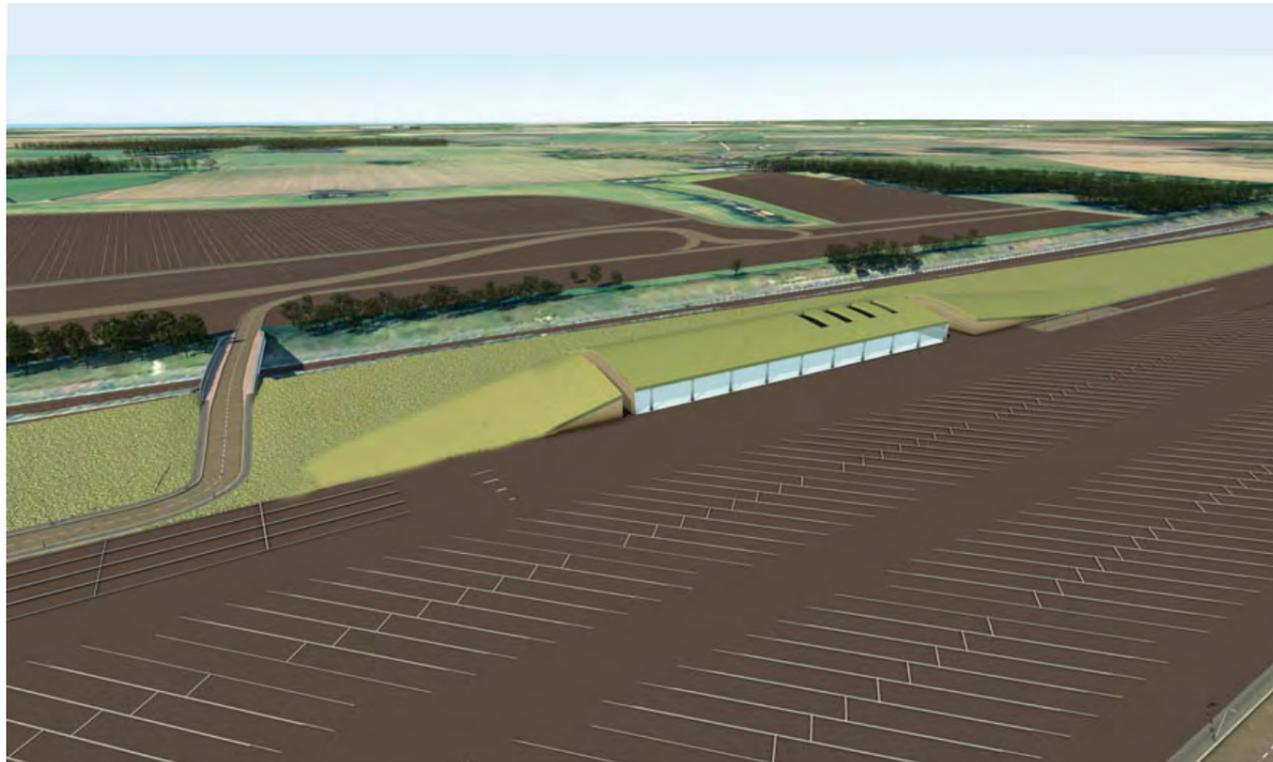
The site meets the criteria for a lorry area that we identified:

- It is close to Eurotunnel and Port of Dover
- There is sufficient land to accommodate 3,600 lorries, to allow effective marshalling and to provide welfare facilities for drivers and passengers
- It will have minimal impact on local roads and can give easy access to the coast-bound M20.

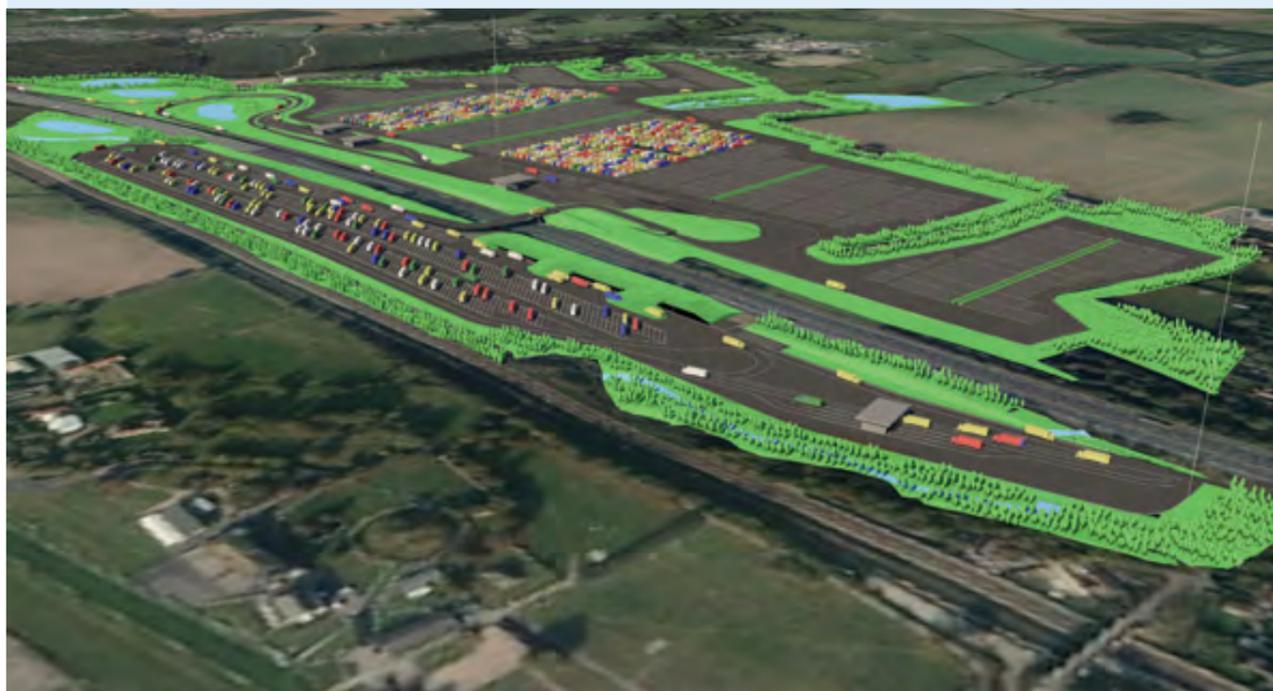
The site does, though, come with challenges:

- It lies between the villages of Sellindge and Stanford and is next to some residential properties
- It is bisected by the M20 so we will need to build a new bridge across the motorway. We also need to deal with high voltage cables that cross the site
- There are environmental sensitivities - an existing belt of mature vegetation and part of a man-made lake would need to be removed. We must consider an adjacent Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Several public rights of way cross the site
- It is close to M20 junction 11, which creates traffic management issues leaving the site.

None of these challenges are insurmountable, but they drive the way in which we are developing our design.



Proposed facilities shown from south



Indicative viewpoint from south east



Indicative viewpoint from north east

Stanford West lorry area will have space for around 3,600 HGVs. This includes 500 overnight parking spaces. Our first consultation indicated that overnight parking would help tackle anti-social lorry parking around Kent. Overnight parking would be stopped when the site was to be used as a holding area.

Welfare facilities will be provided for drivers. The indicative design assumes that permanent overnight parking will require facilities such as toilets, washing, fresh water, and waste disposal facilities. These would be supplemented by temporary amenities when the site is being used as a holding area for cross-channel disruption.

The site will need two new bridges: one across the M20 to connect the two parts of the site, and a smaller bridge across the East Stour River connecting the site to the Stop24 Service Area.

How we propose to bring the lorry area forward

We are bringing forward the proposals under the Highways Act 1980³. No one wants to see a repeat of the disruption Kent experienced in summer 2015 or previous years and we are working to deliver spaces as quickly as possible.

We will seek to acquire the necessary land and rights over land. In order to ensure we can do this we will be publishing a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

Later we will bring forward proposals to construct slip roads between the lorry area and the M20, and to provide overhead gantries displaying variable mandatory speed limits on the M20, similar to those already in operation on the M20 at Maidstone. The proposed slip roads and variable mandatory speed limit are not part of the consultation.

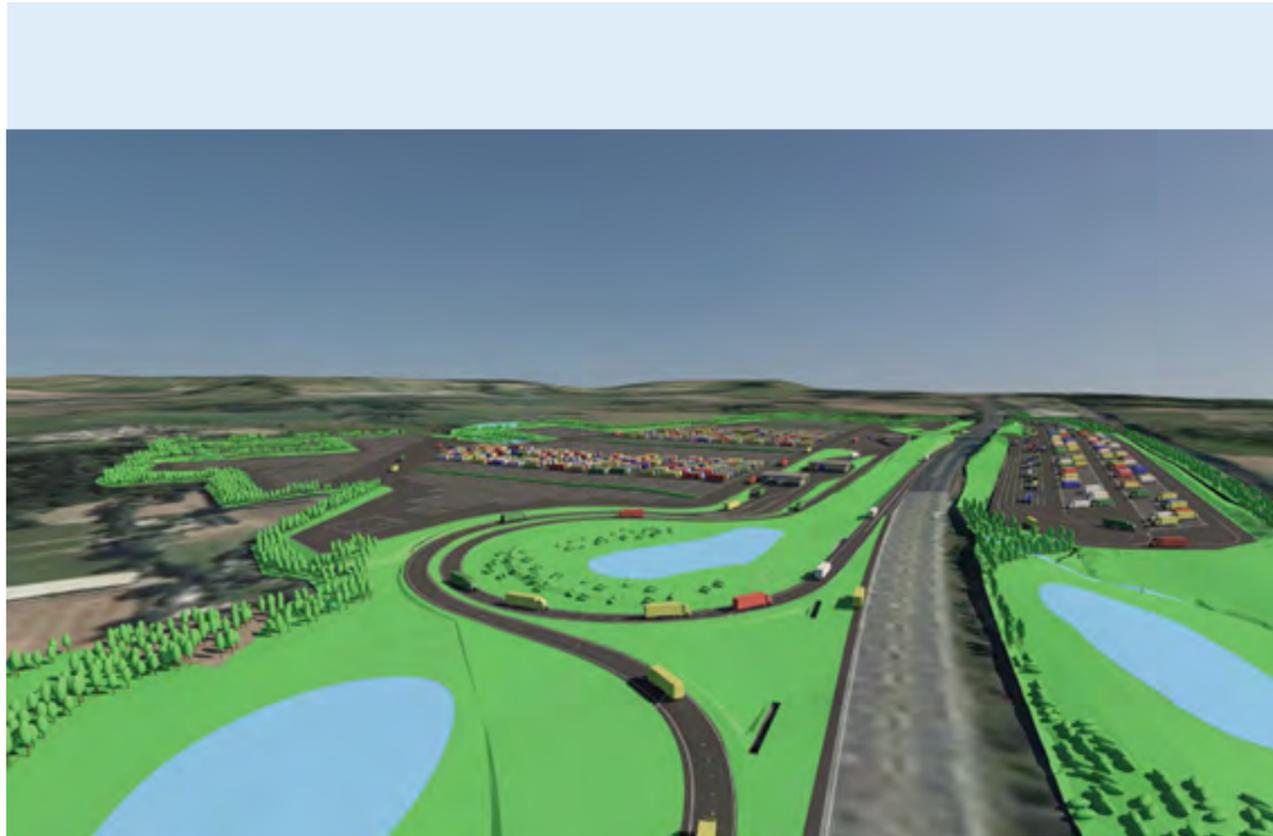
³Initially we will be using Section 115, which gives us powers to construct a lorry area, and Section 184 which allows us to connect the M20 and the lorry area.

6. Operating the lorry area

We are currently considering how the lorry area will operate, when it will be used, how it will be called into operation and how lorry drivers will use it. The site operator will be expected to work in close partnership with the local community.

We are also thinking about charges for using the lorry area. It will be free when being used to alleviate Operation Stack, but we expect a charge for overnight parking.

We would welcome your views on the operation of the lorry area as part of this consultation.



Indicative image showing lorries entering lorry area from the west



Indicative image showing lorry area from north west



Indicative image showing a view from the south west

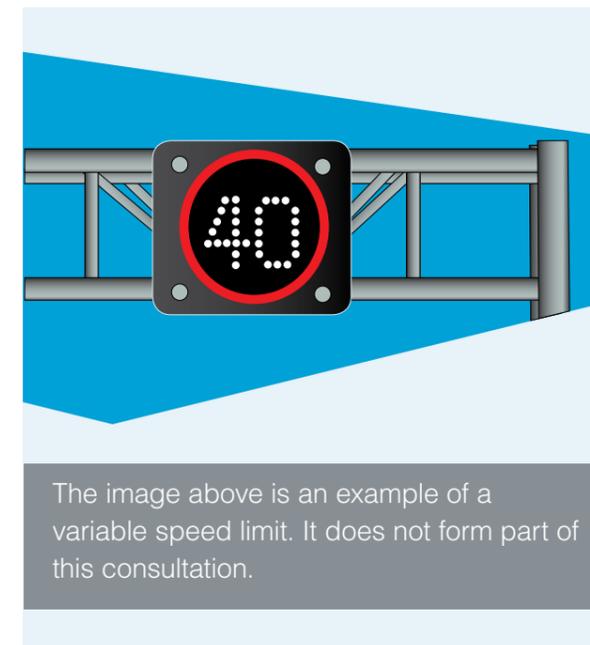


Getting lorries into and out of the site from the M20

When the lorry area is to be brought into operation, signs will be placed on the M20 to advise drivers to slow down as there will be more lorries leaving and joining the motorway, than would occur at a normal junction. To do this a 40mph speed limit will be introduced on the coast-bound carriageway of the M20. Lorries will be kept to the nearside while other vehicles will use the outer two lanes.

When the lorry area is being prepared or in use, the coast bound exit slip road off the M20 at junction 11 will have to be closed on safety grounds, as we do not want the high numbers of lorries leaving the site to create danger for local traffic.

We understand the inconvenience this will cause to local people but it is the quickest way to bring the lorry area into operation and so reduce wider disruption. As soon as possible we will come forward with proposals to provide automated signs and signals, including a variable speed limit. These will allow the slip road to remain open as well as reducing delays to traffic on the M20. We will work hard to get the automated signs and signals in place as soon as possible.



The image above is an example of a variable speed limit. It does not form part of this consultation.

Security

The safety and security of members of the local community, users of the lorry area, and staff is a key priority.

The site will be secured using a robust perimeter fence with gates for footpaths and bridleways. These gates will be closed when the site is being used to alleviate Operation Stack. We will continue to work with our partners and relevant stakeholders, including Kent Police, to ensure the safety and security of the site. Security would be a standing item in our proposed regular reviews of the area when in operation.

Public rights of way

When the lorry area is being used to alleviate Operation Stack, public rights of way across it will be temporarily diverted or closed for reasons of safety and security.

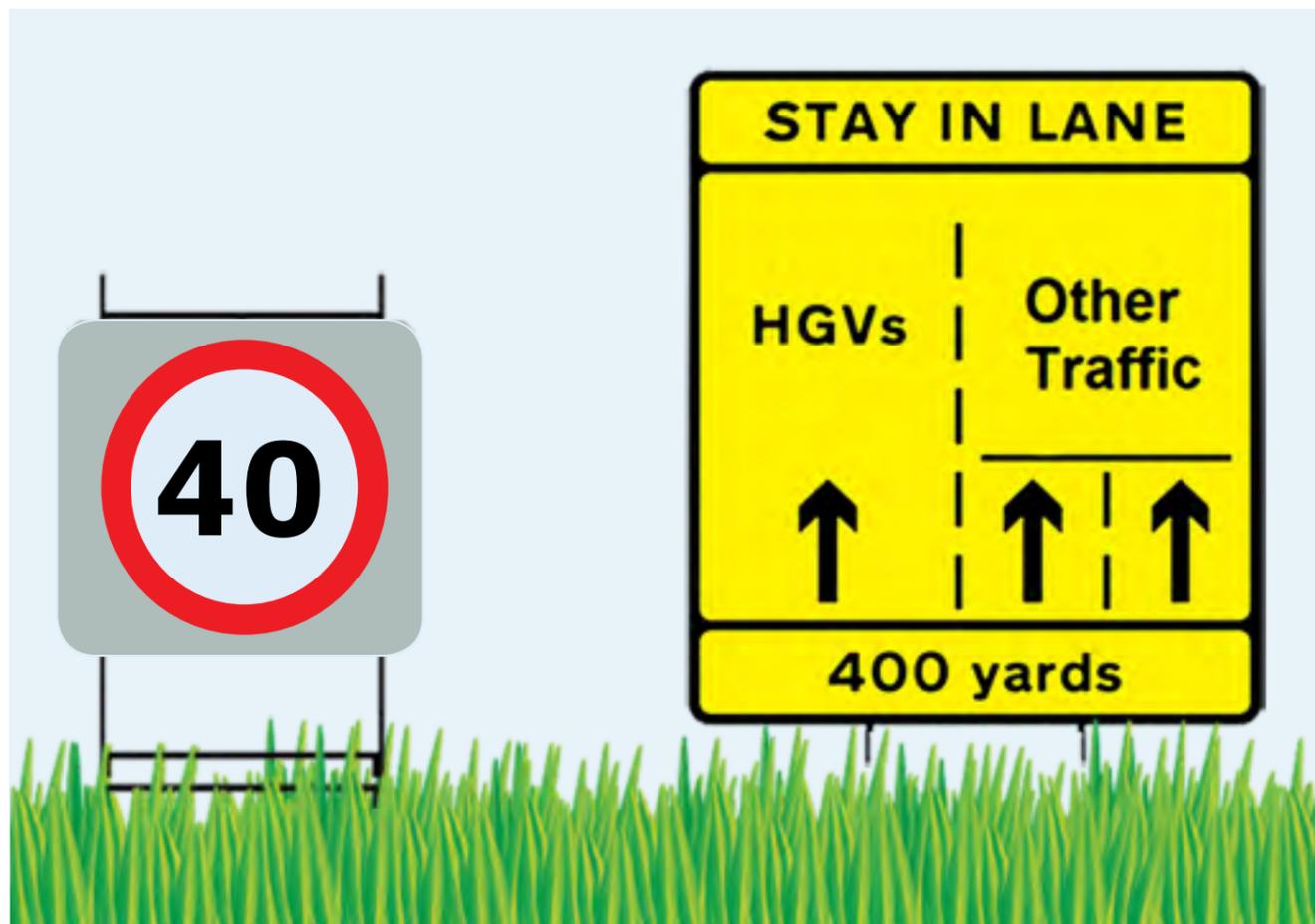
Overnight parking

Surveys by Kent County Council and others suggest that the 500 spaces we plan for overnight parking will be enough to address the problem of anti-social lorry parking in the local area.

For overnight parking to be effective, we think that there must be enough capacity; it must also be promoted effectively; have adequate welfare facilities; be user-friendly and be priced sensibly to encourage HGV drivers to use it, but without competing unfairly with commercial lorry parks.

While the objective is to provide overnight parking, lorries that arrive late at night may remain on the site for a large part of the following day, particularly if drivers have to comply with legal rest breaks.

We are interested in further feedback on what facilities should be provided and your thoughts on how this lorry area can most effectively tackle the issue of anti-social parking on the roads and streets of Kent.



Examples of the proposed methods of directing lorries to the lorry area

The image above shows an indicative example of the signage which will be the interim solution

Access to overnight parking will be through the Stop24 services not directly from the M20.

The indicative design assumes that control booths will receive and despatch vehicles. Signs and electronic displays will tell drivers where to park. This is similar to operations at the Port of Dover and Eurotunnel.

We are proposing regular reviews of the lorry area when in operation and want the local community and stakeholders to take an active role in these reviews. We would welcome your views on how this might best be done as part of this consultation⁴.

⁴ Any change to the use or layout of the site will need to go through any relevant statutory procedures before it can be implemented.



7. Environmental impact

The lorry area will, of course, have an impact on the environment. We will take all reasonable measures to mitigate adverse environmental effects and to make our activities as sustainable as possible.

The first step is to understand the potential issues. We are carrying out an environmental assessment in which we are assuming a 'highest possible impacts' case so we understand the effect of the lorry area and can design measures which will mitigate problems. We are also talking to statutory environmental bodies and local stakeholders as we assess the proposals.

The detailed design of the lorry area is therefore an ongoing process. We will continue to engage as we work towards a final design.

We have published an interim Environmental Assessment Report which sets out in more detail the outcome of our assessments and proposed mitigation. This is available on our 'Management of freight vehicles through Kent' web page. Search for 'Stanford West' at www.gov.uk. We will publish an updated Environmental Assessment Report before construction of the area starts.



Indicative image showing lorry area from above

Landscape

Description of the current site

The topography of the area is undulating with the ground rising northwards from the site. The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies to the north, east and south of the site and is approximately 250 metres from the site boundary at its closest point. The southern area of the site is dominated by the M20 and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, as well as the Stop24 Service Area to the east of the site. Most of the site is agricultural land planted with arable crops and with hedgerows along the field boundaries.

What we have done so far

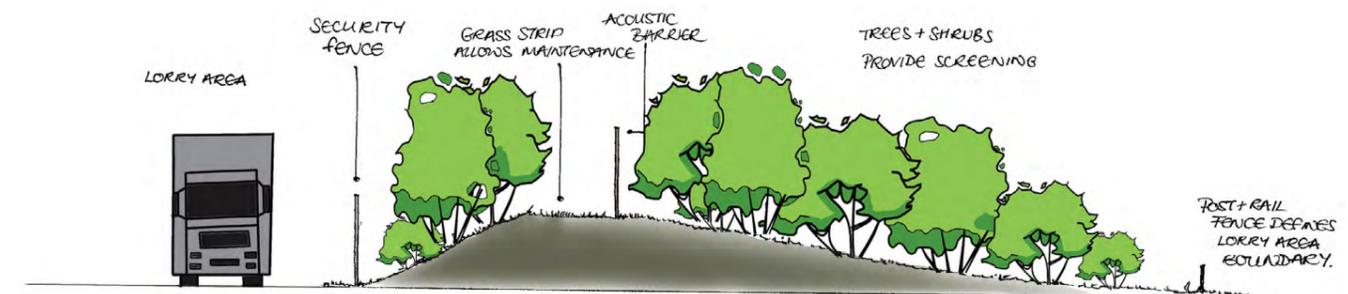
We have undertaken a desk study and walked the site and part of the surrounding area to assess the visual impact of the proposals on homes and public rights of ways, as well as from the Kent Downs AONB. The illustrative design proposes a swathe of planting around the perimeter of the site to provide screening and to help screen the lorry area from nearby homes. We propose green corridors within the site that reflect the historic field pattern, to break up the expanse of concrete surfacing.

What we have found

We have concluded that there would be significant adverse visual effects on the views from some houses and public rights of way close to the site and upon the local landscape character. However, these effects would be reduced by planting trees and shrubs around the perimeter and within the site.

What is left to do

As the detailed design progresses, we will continue to work with stakeholders to design and assess mitigation measures to reduce these effects using measures such as bunds (landscaped mounds of earth) or fences to provide additional screening. We would like your feedback on our landscape proposals.



Indicative landscape bund and planting proposals

Noise and vibration

Description of the current site

There are many homes close to the site. Sellindge village is to the west and Stanford village to the east and there are a number of individual properties along the site boundaries.

What we have done so far

Noise monitoring has given us an indication of existing noise levels in the area around the site. The results have then been used to work out how noise levels in the area might change both during the construction and operation of the lorry area. Particular attention has been given to the noise generated by refrigerated vehicles, which make up approximately 10% of the lorry fleet, and to the noise produced by lorries as they travel from the entrance to a holding position and then again to the exit.

What we have found

Without mitigation measures, the construction and operation of the lorry area would have significant adverse noise effects on the local community, both during the day and at night.

There are unlikely to be any significant adverse operational vibration effects, though several properties are expected to be adversely affected during construction.

What is left to do

We are currently investigating the extent to which construction of bunds or acoustic fences around the perimeter and within the site would reduce the noise effects of the lorry area on nearby properties. We are also investigating distribution of the refrigerated vehicles on the site so they would not affect any particular properties disproportionately. We would like your feedback on our proposals relating to noise and vibration.

Air quality

Description of the current site

Air quality is another potential concern given the residential properties around the site. Existing nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter concentrations in and around the site are relatively low, and below national and European air quality thresholds for human health. The prevailing wind blows from the southwest, and so blows across the site towards Stanford village.

What we have done so far

We have undertaken air pollution monitoring and the results have been used to inform a 'site specific air pollution dispersion model' which allows us understand how the lorry area may change air quality in the area around the site.

Particular attention has been given to the emissions generated by refrigerated vehicles and to the emissions produced by lorries as they travel from the entrance to a parking position and then again to the exit.

What we have found

The overall air quality effects of the lorry area are not expected to be significant.

Some construction activities would generate dust, particularly during dry weather. This would be controlled by watering stockpiles of building materials and haul roads.

Operation of the lorry area has the potential to change nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter concentrations around the site. However the use of the parking area to the north of the M20 to alleviate Operation Stack is expected to have a negligible effect on annual mean concentrations of pollutants, due to the low frequency of use (on average 5 to 6 times per year) and low existing nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter concentrations in the area.

Emissions from refrigeration vehicles held when the site is being used as part of Operation Stack have the potential to lead to high hourly nitrogen dioxide concentrations in relation to national and European thresholds for human health. However, no exceedances of the hourly nitrogen dioxide objective are predicted.

The overnight parking area to the south of the M20, which will be used every night, has the potential to increase average nitrogen dioxide concentration readings. However no exceedances of the national and European annual average threshold for nitrogen dioxide are predicted.

What is left to do

We are also investigating distributing the refrigerated vehicles on site to improve the efficiency of pollution dispersion from these vehicles. We would like your feedback on our proposals regarding air quality.

Ecology

Description of the current site

The majority of the site is improved agricultural land with hedgerows along the field boundaries. In the northern section of the site, there is a fishing lake which is surrounded by trees and shrubs which extends to the south to form a linear belt of trees and plants. Gibbins Brook Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located along the northwest boundary of the site to the north of the M20. The majority of the southern section of the site is also improved agricultural land with hedgerows and some broadleaved woodland along the site boundaries. Within the area to the south of the M20 there is also a stream, ditches and a pond along with a reed bed.

What we have done so far

We have carried out a range of surveys to identify the condition of the existing habitat in and around the site, and also assess if any protected species or designated sites would be affected by the proposals. These have informed our discussions with Natural England who are key stakeholders in relation to the ecological assets.

What we have found

So far we have found evidence of bats, badgers, reptiles, wintering and breeding birds, as well as water voles using the site. Areas of habitat would be lost but replaced.

Overall, the construction and operation of the lorry area would have a slight adverse impact on the ecology of the area. A range of new habitats would be created around the perimeter of the site to replace those lost and affected species (such as water voles and dormice) would be relocated to these new habitats.

What is left to do

Due to seasonal constraints, some of the surveys will continue until September. These will continue to inform the detailed design and any mitigation measure that are required to allow the construction to proceed. We would like your feedback on our proposals regarding ecology.



Cultural Heritage

Description of the current site

A number of buildings close to the site have legal designations of heritage status. The scheduled monument and listed buildings at Westenhanger Castle are located approximately 35 metres south of the site beyond the railway line, while the Grade II* listed Stanford Windmill and Grade II listed Gibbins Brook Farmhouse Shalom are both located approximately 10 metres from the site boundary.

What we have done so far

We have undertaken ground investigations to establish the potential for archaeology buried underground. We have also undertaken desk studies and site visits to assess the effects the lorry area would have on the setting of the nearby heritage assets. This has informed our discussions with Historic England and Kent County Council about the site's impact on heritage locally.

What we have found

Our geophysical survey has identified the potential for archaeology buried underground on the site, which if present will be adversely impacted by the construction works. In accordance with normal practice, it is proposed to excavate and record any significant buried archaeology prior to construction. The construction and operation of the lorry area would have a significant adverse impact on the setting of the scheduled monument and listed buildings. However, these effects could be reduced as the proposed planting around the perimeter, and within the site, matures.

What is left to do

To investigate the potential buried archaeology, a series of trial trenches will be excavated across the site to the north of the M20 to locate any archaeological remains that may exist. We will undertake further archaeological excavation should archaeological remains be located in the trial trenching.

The site to the south of the M20 was investigated during the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, so no further archaeological investigation will be undertaken.

We are also exploring the use of screening, fences and planting to reduce the effect of the lorry area on the setting of the heritage assets. We would like your feedback on our proposals regarding cultural heritage.

Public rights of ways

Description of the current site

A number of public rights of ways cross the site, in particular to the north of the M20.

What we have done so far

We have worked with Kent County Council to establish the potential effect of the lorry area on the public rights of ways and their users that cross the site both during the construction and operation of the site.

What we have found

The illustrative design proposes that the public rights of ways would remain open the majority of the time, with their route clearly marked across the lorry area. When the site is being used to alleviate Operation Stack they would be closed at the boundary of the site and alternative routes to nearby public rights of ways clearly signed.

What is left to do

Surveys will be undertaken over the next few months to establish the current usage of the public rights of ways. We will continue to work closely with Kent County Council to ensure that the use of the public rights of ways through the site are maintained the majority of the time, and appropriate diversions are put in place when they are inaccessible due to the site being used to alleviate Operation Stack. We would like your feedback on our proposals regarding public rights of way.

Water environment, drainage and flood risk

Description of the current site

There are two water bodies on the site. The largest of which is a man-made and stocked fishing lake on the north side of the M20, and the other a drainage attenuation pond to the south of the M20 linked to the motorway drainage system.

There are numerous small watercourses throughout the site, which are mostly field drains, although Haytons Stream is a larger watercourse running north-south from the fishing lake, under the M20 before it joins the East Stour River. Gibbins Brook flows to the west of the site and under the M20 before joining Haytons Stream to the southwest of the site. Gibbins Brook supports an area of marshy grassland to the northeast of the site, which is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The East Stour flows to the east of the site, under the M20 then to the south of the site. We must also give consideration to the potential impact of the site on the wider drainage profile of the area, including Aldington Reservoir, a key flood defence for Ashford.

What we have done so far

We have assessed the effect of the lorry area on existing water courses in and around the site, and also the potential downstream effects. This has been carried out in close discussion with the Environment Agency and Kent County Council.

What we have found

The existing water courses and ditches affected by the proposed development would be culverted, diverted or replaced to maintain the existing flows. The greatest residual risks are associated with direct impacts due to construction works taking place within or adjacent to water features or below the water table, in particular risks associated with spillage and sedimentation. The majority of potential adverse effects likely to occur during both the construction and operational phases of the project would be mitigated through careful design and measures set out in the Construction Environment Management Plan.

The risk of flooding to the surrounding area by increased surface water runoff from the site would be managed by the provision of a new on-site drainage system. The storage within the system will be sized to protect the site against flooding for a range of storm events and include an allowance for climate change. Sustainable drainage systems, including ponds, will be incorporated into the drainage system where appropriate, and will also provide replacement habitats for those lost.

What is left to do

We will design drainage systems to prevent any flood risk, including at Ashford. We will continue to work with the Environment Agency and Kent County Council to make sure that the design of the lorry area does not cause flooding downstream or in its immediate surroundings. Further investigation is also taking place to establish the groundwater levels across the site. We would like your feedback on our proposals regarding drainage and flood risk.

8. A summary of the potential impacts of the M20 lorry area

Issue	Why this is important	What we have done so far	What is left to do
Traffic	Ensuring that lorries are marshalled on to and off the site efficiently with the minimum of disturbance to the free-flowing traffic on the M20 and to the local road network is vital to the successful operation of the site.	We have designed an outline traffic management plan which includes slowing all traffic, including lorries, down to a 40mph speed limit on the coast-bound carriageway of the M20 and then directing affected freight vehicles to the nearside, and temporarily closing the coast-bound exit slip road off the M20 at junction 11 when the lorry area is in use or expected to be brought into use. Control booths will receive vehicles into the lorry area and despatch them from it. Directional and variable message signs will tell drivers where to park.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop this plan to include feedback from this consultation and continue discussions with operational stakeholders. Look for opportunities to reduce the environmental effects of operating the site. Work with the community to further mitigate the impact of the lorry area in this area.
Security	Keeping users of the lorry area, members of the local community and the site staff safe and secure is a key priority.	We have established that the site will be secured through a robust perimeter fence. Gates would be provided in the fence for access to footpaths and bridleways. These gates will be closed when the site is being used to alleviate Operation Stack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate. Work with the community to further mitigate the impact of the lorry area in this area.
Public rights of way	Keeping walkers, cyclists and horse-riders in the area safe is a priority.	We have established that gates will be provided in any perimeter fence for access to footpaths and bridleways. These gates would be closed when the site is being used to alleviate Operation Stack.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate. Work with the community to further mitigate the impact of the lorry area in this area.
Non-congestion related parking	The public and stakeholders indicated they want the lorry area to tackle the issue of anti-social lorry parking in East Kent as well as cross-channel related congestion.	We have designed outline plans which include enough capacity to avoid any excuse for lorries to park inappropriately in the local area outside of the site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that overnight parking is promoted adequately and have adequate welfare facilities, is user-friendly and also is cost-effective in order to encourage HGV drivers to use it, but without competing unfairly with commercial lorry parks. Work with the community to further mitigate the impact of the lorry area in this area.

Issue	Why this is important	What we have done so far	What is left to do
Landscape	To mitigate significant adverse visual effects on the views from some residential properties and public rights of way in close proximity to the site.	We have consulted with stakeholders to design and assess mitigation measures to reduce the adverse landscape and visual effects of the proposed lorry area on views from the affected residential properties and local landscape character. These measures may include landscaped bunds or fences to provide additional screening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through ongoing liaison and dialogue with the local community work to monitor and further mitigate the impact of the lorry area in this area.
Noise and vibration	Without the implementation of mitigation measures, the construction and operation of the lorry area would have significant adverse noise effects on the local community, both during the day and at night.	We are currently investigating to what extent the construction of bunds or acoustic fences around the perimeter and within the site would reduce the noise effects of the lorry area on nearby properties. We are also investigating distributing the refrigerated vehicles on the site so they do not affect any particular properties disproportionately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the local community to further mitigate the impact of noise from the lorry area on them. Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.
Air quality	The operation of the lorry area has the potential to lead to changes in nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter concentrations at receptors such as residential properties and public rights of way.	We are investigating distributing the refrigerated vehicles on site to improve the efficiency of pollution dispersion from these vehicles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the local community to further mitigate the impact on air quality from the lorry area on them. Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.
Ecology	To mitigate significant adverse impact on the existing habitat in and around the site which may be affected by the proposals.	We have carried out a range of surveys to identify the condition of the existing habitat in and around the site, and also assess if any protected species or designated sites would be affected by the proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to seasonal constraints some of the surveys will continue until September. Ensure these continue to inform the detailed design and any mitigation measures that are required. Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.

Issue	Why this is important	What we have done so far	What is left to do
Cultural heritage	A number of buildings close to the site have legal designations of heritage status and need protecting. These are the scheduled monument and listed buildings at Westenhanger Castle, the Grade II* listed Stanford Windmill and Grade II listed Gibbins Brook Farmhouse Shalom.	We have undertaken ground investigations to establish the potential for archaeology buried underground. We have also undertaken studies and site visits to assess the effects the lorry area would have on the setting of the nearby heritage assets. This has informed our discussions with Historic England and Kent County Council about the site's impact on heritage locally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To investigate the potential buried archaeology, a series of trial trenches will be excavated across the site to the north of the M20 to locate any archaeological remains that may exist. We will undertake further archaeological excavation should archaeological remains be located in the trial trenching. We are also exploring the use of screening, fences and planting to reduce the effect of the lorry area on the setting of the heritage assets. Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.
Water environment or drainage and flood risk	To ensure that we consider and mitigate the impact of the site on the fishing lake on the north side of the M20, a drainage attenuation pond to the south of the M20 and numerous small watercourses throughout the site including the Haytons Stream, Gibbins Brook and The East Stour. Also we must also give consideration to the potential impact of the site on the Aldington Reservoir, a key flood defence for Ashford.	We have assessed the effect of the lorry area on existing water courses in and around the site, and also the potential downstream effects. This has been carried out in close discussion with the Environment Agency and Kent County Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will design drainage systems to prevent any flood risk, including at Ashford. We will continue to work with the Environment Agency and Kent County Council to make sure that the design of the lorry area ensures that it does not cause flooding downstream or in its immediate surroundings. Further investigation is also taking place to establish the groundwater levels across the site. Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.
Equality and diversity	This is the right thing to do as set out in the Equalities Act 2010 and is Highways England's public sector equality duty objective.	We have considered equality and accessibility to and within the site as part of our design process. This includes, but is not exclusive to, ensuring safe passage around the site for pedestrians, providing facilities for those with disabilities, different faiths, cultures and genders, and taking account of the different languages spoken by users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to the feedback on these plans from the public and include in our revised design where appropriate.

9. Our consultation

The purpose of this consultation is to set out proposals for the design and operation of the site and to provide an opportunity for local residents, stakeholders and road users to comment on them. This will help us arrive at a revised design. This consultation takes account of normal good practice, for example, the 2010 Equality Act, and is non-statutory.

The consultation will run for six weeks, from 12 August 2016 until 23 September 2016. We may not be able to consider responses returned after **11.45pm on 23rd September 2016**.

A number of public information events are planned during the consultation period. Please come along, talk to the team and give us your views. The events will be held on the following dates:

Date	Time	Venue
Friday 19 August	1pm - 7pm	Sellindge Village Hall, Main Rd, Ashford TN25 6JX
Tuesday 23 August	2pm - 8pm	Leas Cliff Hall, The Leas, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2DZ
Thursday 25 August	2pm - 8pm	Postling Village Hall, Hythe CT21 4EU
Friday 2 September	1pm - 7pm	Sellindge Village Hall, Main Rd, Ashford TN25 6JX
Saturday 3 September	1pm - 7pm	Postling Village Hall, Hythe CT21 4EU
Saturday 10 September	12pm - 6pm	Lympne Village Hall, Aldington Road, Lympne, CT21 4HL
Monday 12 September	2pm - 8pm	Dover Town Hall, The Maison Dieu, Biggin Street, Dover CT16 1DL
Wednesday 14 September	2pm - 8pm	St Mary's Church, Bentley Road, Willesborough, Kent, TN24 0LB

10. Next steps

Following this consultation, we will carefully consider all feedback received and publish a report on it. The report will be available on request and on our website. We will produce a revised design that takes into account the results of the consultation.

We will publish an updated Environmental Assessment Report for the revised design before construction of the area starts.

Before construction of the area starts, we will hold exhibitions to inform local people of the revised proposals and give information on how to contact us throughout the process.

We want to hear your views

We have prepared this questionnaire that accompanies this consultation document. This is also available online. Alternatively you may respond to us by email or letter. You can return the hard copy by post or by filling it in, scanning and returning to us using one of the following methods below.

- By email: m20lorryarea@highwaysengland.co.uk
- By post: **M20 Lorry Area, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4LZ**

We may not be able to consider responses returned after **11.45pm on 23 September 2016**. Following this consultation, we will carefully consider all feedback received and publish a report on it.

If you need a questionnaire response form or have any other queries please contact the Highways England customer information line on:

- **0300 123 5000** (lines are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

An interactive version of this document is available online at www.highwaysengland.citizenspace.com

1. Do you have any comments on the indicative layout of the lorry area?	
2. Do you have any comments on the environmental impact of the proposals?	

Cut off questionnaire

3. Do you have any comments on additional measures we could take to further mitigate the environmental impact of the proposals?	
4. Regarding the management of the site, do you have any comments on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Traffic managementb. Securityc. Operation of overnight parkingd. Management in general?	

Cut off questionnaire

5. Do you have any comments on the facilities that should be provided at the site?

6. Do you have any comments on how the operation of the site should be kept under review?

Cut off questionnaire

7. Do you have any comments on our equality and diversity proposals?

8. Do you have any other comments?

Cut off questionnaire

If you need help accessing this or any other Highways England information, please call **0300 123 5000** and we will help you.

Contact us

If you have any queries relating to the M20 Public Consultation Scheme, please contact us at:

M20lorryarea@highwaysengland.co.uk

By post: **M20 Lorry Area, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4LZ**

For the latest information and updates, please visit our website:

www.highways.gov.uk

This document is also available on our website at:

www.gov.uk/highways

If you have any queries relating to Highways England, you should contact the information line on:

0300 123 5000

or alternatively email:

info@highwaysengland.co.uk

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If you have any enquiries about this publication email **info@highwaysengland.co.uk** or call **0300 123 5000***. Please quote the Highways England publications code **PR75/16**

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