



HIF responses from consultation

1. Further opportunities to comment on HIF

There will be future opportunities to comment on HIF.

As the HIF project moves forward there will be further opportunities for engagement and feedback through consultation including once the consent applications have been submitted.

2. Why the Housing Infrastructure Fund works are needed


The Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) was established by the government to create a funding source to bring forward essential infrastructure as an essential part of considered growth and well-planned and designed future development of new housing. With the support of all three Medway MPs at the outset we were successful in our bid for £170 million of this funding because the infrastructure to be delivered with these funds is to support the delivery of 10,600 new homes which are proposed to be allocated in the new Medway Local Plan. **The government target for population growth in Medway tells us that 28,000 new homes will be required** to accommodate this growth within the Medway area.

People living and working on the Hoo Peninsula have experienced journey delays and congestion due to there being only one way on and off the peninsula and lack of road capacity and alternative transport options. The HIF funding is targeted at increasing the capacity of the existing peninsula by providing a new link road to divert some traffic away from Four Elms Hill and its roundabout and improving other capacity hotspots on the peninsula. The rail provision provides an alternative travel option for those needing to head towards London. We recognise that development in the area needs to take account of the important habitats and species that exist on the peninsula. HIF therefore also delivers environmental benefits through the creation of extensive wildlife-rich spaces which will wrap around any new development proposals.

3. How the funding is allocated

- road: £86 million
- rail: £64 million
- environment: £14 million
- delivery costs: £6 million





4. Why there is a need to build new houses on Hoo

The government target for population growth in Medway tells us that 28,000 new homes will be required to accommodate this growth within our area.

Medway's emerging Local Plan guides the locations for these new homes looking at all opportunities, particularly the urban centres as well as on the Hoo Peninsula.

The HIF is important for Hoo as it provides an opportunity to more closely manage the development and deliver the new transport, environmental and community infrastructure required to ensure that sustainable development can be delivered.

5. New homes are needed for a growing population

Population growth targets are across all ages of the population. Therefore, there will be policy requirements in the new Local Plan for a full range of houses and apartments on the peninsula to reflect the diverse needs of buyers and occupiers.

6. You can get involved in the development of the HIF proposals

You can:

- sign up to our project update newsletters at: [Future Hoo Updates](#)
- send your questions or feedback to futurehoo@medway.gov.uk

Keep an eye on the Future Hoo webpage for news and updates of events and meetings.

(As with all projects of this nature there will be times when there will be lots of activity happening and news to share, however, there will also be times when most of the work is behind the scenes such as work on modelling, surveys and designing, at these times there will likely be fewer direct meetings or updates).

Further information can be seen in the consultation route map.

Your [Ward Councillors](#) and your [Parish Councillors](#) are also a source of information and their contact details can be found on the [your council page](#).

7. Who to contact if you have further questions about the HIF works

The most efficient way to get answers to your questions is to either email us at futurehoo@medway.gov.uk or to call on 01634 331 166

You can also contact your [Ward Councillors](#) who will pass on your questions to the Future Hoo team.





8. The HIF planning permissions process

There will be different planning approaches for each of the individual parts of the HIF proposals. Different planning permission and other consents are needed for the different parts of the HIF infrastructure.

Rail

We will submit a Transport and Works Act Order (TWAo) application to the Secretary of State for Transport for consideration. The Secretary of State will be the decision-maker for the TWAo which would authorise the Medway rail proposals.

Road

For the highways works, planning application(s) will be made to Medway Council in its capacity as local planning authority, and these will be determined by the Planning Committee.

Environment – Strategic Environmental Management (SEMs)

The Planning Committee will be the decision maker for the planning applications that would be made as part of the HIF proposals.

9. The supporting evidence for HIF (Alternative proposals)

The HIF proposals have been developed further to the options set out in the Regulation 18 (Development Strategy) consultation on the Local Plan, the 2020 consultation on Planning for Growth on the Hoo Peninsula and the ongoing development of the upcoming Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.

Assessments were also undertaken to inform our application for HIF funding for the proposals including high-level appraisals of potential transport and environmental impacts (including air quality) arising from the infrastructure. The results of these assessments were included in documents which accompanied the HIF bid.


10. HIF provides supporting infrastructure for housing

Whilst HIF will deliver essential strategic transport and environmental infrastructure, there is a need for the growing community to have access to a range of other facilities such as schools, health centres, local parks, and allotments.

The non-HIF infrastructure requirements for development on the peninsula will be set out in the new Local Plan and Hoo Development Framework and will be evidenced in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) accompanying the new Local Plan.

The Hoo Development Framework and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will form part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. The IDP will inform the level of expected future contributions to the funding of this community infrastructure by developers via what are called section 106 agreements.

Section 106 payments are made by developers once they have planning permission and as the new homes come forward. These S106 contributions will be combined to deliver infrastructure priorities as set out in the documents referred to.





11. HIF traffic and transportation assessments

The development of the HIF road proposals has been informed by local traffic modelling that informed the HIF bid.

These models tested how the new road designs accommodate the potential growth on the Hoo Peninsula. If the modelling demonstrated unacceptable queuing and delays, then the road design was revisited to see how it could work better to reduce queues. It was such modelling that demonstrated the need to create a spur road linking the A228 and A289. It also influenced the design of key junctions and roundabouts.

As the projects develop, they will be informed by the higher level, Medway-wide traffic modelling – called the Strategic Transport Assessment. The applications for the road and rail elements of the HIF project will be accompanied by their own transport assessments.

12. Pollution and environmental impact

A full assessment of air quality impacts, alongside other environmental considerations, will form part of the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) that will be carried out for the proposals. The results of the EIA and HRA will be submitted alongside the planning and Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) applications that are submitted.

Air quality will also be a consideration within the strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which support the Local Plan.

13. What we're doing to protect the environment

Protection of the environment is an important part of HIF planning and for us.

The first stage of protecting the environment is to ensure an understanding of the impacts on the environment. We have undertaken Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Opinions for both road and rail. As part of this scoping process statutory consultees were consulted and their feedback will inform the undertaking of the EIA process.


Numerous ecological, noise, lighting, archaeology, drainage, and landscape surveys are being undertaken during 2021 and the results will inform the avoidance and mitigation measures to be set out in the Environmental Statements that will record the results of the EIA and be submitted with the planning and Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) application.

Mitigation measures that are being considered include use of advanced lighting technology to reduce light spill and the impact on ecology, landscaping and noise barriers, sustainable drainage, creation of wildlife habitat; and use of more sensitive construction materials and methodology.

The mitigation measures will also be informed by the results of the recently completed Cumulative Ecological Impact Assessment (CEIA), which has sought to determine the nature and extent of the impact of potential growth arising from the Local Plans proposals (including the HIF works) on local ecology, and to then set out a high-level response to how impacts will be avoided, mitigated, compensated and how local ecology can be enhanced.

The findings of the CEIA are also informing the development of the HIF's Strategic Environmental Management Scheme (SEMS) environmental projects and the master-planning of potential





developments. For example, the proposed Cockham Community Parkland is 50 hectares of farmland that, subject to planning approvals, will see the creation of new flower-rich meadows, hedges, wet grassland and over five kilometres of new paths. There will be no access to the adjacent woodland to ensure the woods can continue to mature without impact.

The Four Elms Hill Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been established due to local air quality issues for those living in this area. The HIF road improvements are designed to reduce queuing traffic which, in combination with other measures, contribute to improvements in air quality in the AQMA.

14. New houses and HIF proposals

HIF is proposed to support the infrastructure needs for the delivery of 10,600 homes **by 2037** across:

- Chattenden
- Hoo St Werburgh
- High Halstow
- Allhallows.

However, if HIF projects are not delivered, **the government's housing targets** will still need to met, therefore it is still possible for developers to submit planning applications, which could be granted via appeal, particularly if they can demonstrate that the council is unable to show that a 5-year supply of housing on alternative sites across the council's area is able to be delivered.

15. New housing is not dependent on HIF


The most sensible planning route to secure both the potential 10,600 new homes and the infrastructure required to support them is for HIF's road, rail, and environmental proposals to be in place first. We are committed to being able to deliver the **government's housing targets** for Medway in a proactive and structured way, that is why we applied for and secured the government funds in advance of housing development.

However, if HIF projects are not delivered, **the government's housing targets** will still need to met, therefore it is still possible for developers to submit planning applications, which could be granted via appeal, particularly if they can demonstrate that the Council is unable to show that a five-year supply of housing on alternative sites across the Council's area is able to be delivered.

It is, therefore, possible that piecemeal housing is delivered without the supporting HIF infrastructure.

Medway has a housing target set by the government designed to meet a housing need that should be managed in a sensible proactive manner with consideration given to housing options on the peninsula and elsewhere. Without a Local Plan in place, developers are more likely to be able to bring forward development on appeal in a manner that we cannot control to ensure the best outcomes for Medway residents.





16. Why HIF not been shown on searches when buying a house

Local searches such as CON29 which are undertaken when buying a new home are the result of a particular set of local 'searches', which bring up results relating to a specific set of topics, for example covering matters which have been subject to a planning decision or statutory notice, such as a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).

The HIF proposals do not meet the criteria for the matters to be included in these search results as they are not yet the subject of a planning application, decision, or making of a CPO.

17. Why public funds are used in advance to support infrastructure and not initially paid for by developers

The government sets housing targets for each local authority based on the forecasted need for housing in that area, and therefore each local authority is obligated to deliver that housing.

The local authority planning system must then determine what is needed to make housing growth sustainable, including the supporting infrastructure needed; **developers are expected to contribute** towards the cost of that infrastructure as and when they deliver the homes. However, to ensure that the new housing does not create an unacceptable burden on existing communities, the government provides public money to local authorities to put in place infrastructure before the housing is built.


18. Why some properties were highlighted in red in the Jan 21 New Routes to Good Growth brochure

This was a design feature to help provide bearings and identify the area, it does not signify any impact, interest, or purpose for those buildings.

There are no HIF related compulsory purchase orders planned for any entire property.

We are seeking to avoid any compulsory purchase orders, however, under the current proposals where it is absolutely essential and only as a last resort, there may be a need to acquire a few small strips of land to aid the construction of the roads. Where this is the case any affected landowner or resident has been contacted directly.





19. Financial compensation available to residents and businesses impacted by the HIF proposals

There are occasions when claims (Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973) can be made to compensate for the impact of a development. If you believe that you may need to make such a claim, then you should speak to an independent professional advisor. In the event of a successful claim, you will be able to claim for the professional surveyors' and legal fees.

To find out more about Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 and whether you can make a claim visit:

The [GOV.UK guide to part 1 claims](#)

We are not permitted to make recommendations on which professionals to use but can offer these links for guidance:

- [RICS firms](#)
- [GOV.UK compulsory purchase system guidance](#)

20. The impact of any of the highway proposals being rejected

The highway proposals are being developed as a package of measures to deliver the most benefit for the community, with the expectation that a single planning application will be submitted for all phases.

The implications of only part of the highway proposals being approved would have to be considered very carefully and what impact this would have on the effectiveness of the total road proposals and any potential negative consequences, as this could vary depending on what individual elements were rejected.

21 Potential for restrictions for vehicles as part of highways developments (for example: no lorries)

In normal circumstances, the only section of the road proposals to have any vehicle restrictions will be the new link connecting the Peninsula Way (A228)

to Hasted Way (A289). Here signage and other forms of enforcement will stop lorries using this route.

Except in exceptional circumstances, lorries and buses will not be permitted to use Woodfield Way, Islingham Farm Road, or the proposed overbridge and on and off slips.

In exceptional circumstances, such as the closure of Four Elms Hill, all restrictions will be removed until the incident has been addressed.

We propose to have signage with weight restrictions to mitigate movement of these vehicles.





22. New facilities for pedestrians and cyclists

Improvements to walking and cycling is a key component of HIF and the Hoo Development Framework, and important documents such as the Medway Rights of Way Improvement Plan will be informing the nature of new paths to be created.

Within the HIF proposals, new pavements and cycleways will be provided along the new link road and Woodfield Way and Islingham Farm Road.

A green bridge is being considered crossing the Peninsula Way just north of the Main Road.

The signalisation of Four Elms, Main Road and Bells Lane roundabouts will significantly improve accessibility for walkers and cyclists.

The new open spaces such as Cockham Community Parkland will also create over five kilometres of access routes for a range of users.

23 Noise and light management

Work is still underway to determine what impact HIF proposals could have on the levels of noise and light pollution. These findings will be made available in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Any building work has an impact on the local environment; however, our priority is to minimise any negative impact and put in place mitigation proposals to address the changes in noise and light levels.

The EIA process will enable us to determine counter measures to off-set any impact, including tree planting, hedge planting, scrub and grassland planting on engineered embankments associated with the slip lanes, and four levels of noise mitigation measures in the shape of:

- 1) Retaining structures
- 2) Dual-purpose structures serving both as a vehicle restraint system (crash barrier) and environmental barrier
- 3) Landscaping
- 4) Upgraded acoustic barriers

Also, as part of the proposed Hasted Way A289 junction works, the speed limit on the existing A289 is likely to be reduced from 70 MPH to 50 MPH. This will support significant noise reduction from the traffic on this road.

Lighting engineers are working on mitigating light pollution and potential lighting solutions. More detail will be provided as it becomes available.

24. Managing Four Elms Roundabout congestion

Our modelling shows that the proposals will improve access from Hoo Road, reducing queue lengths and delays for vehicles entering the junction.





25. Proposed changes to speed limits on selected roads

- The Woodfield Way speed limit is to remain at 20 miles per hour (mph)
- Islingham Farm Road will be 30 mph
- The A289 Hasted Way speed limit will be reduced from 70 to 50 mph

26. Easing congestion when there is a serious road incident

The HIF proposals are designed to address the issue of there being only one way on and off the peninsula.

The new link road will provide an alternative route for vehicles and HIF will be building a series of new emergency cross-over points in the central reservations and barriers. These will increase access for emergency vehicles and will also allow controlled opportunities for the traffic to escape from blocked roads.

27. Why the HIF proposes improvements to roads

Each part of the road improvements contributes to ensuring that traffic related to existing houses, the 10,600 new homes and commercial traffic can be accommodated.

There are no elements of the proposals which are not necessary – each part is important to the overall delivery of a system that is fit for purpose.

The improvements along the Peninsula Way are designed to work together to reduce congestion and queuing.

28. New train station at Hoo


We are in ongoing discussions regarding potential timetables with stakeholders such as Network Rail, the Department for Transport and train operating companies.

The current proposals are that there will be two trains per hour during peak times connecting Hoo to London.

29. Why the Higham curve has been removed from the proposals

The Medway Curve was originally considered as a way of connecting the Freight line to the North Kent Line, and would enable trains to run between Hoo and the Medway stations. It was removed when further studies by Network Rail identified that the numbers of passengers likely to use this new line are likely to be insufficient to justify the operational subsidy required from the council to the train operator.

However, this will be kept under review, and if, in the future there are sufficient changes for either passenger or freight traffic, then new funds could be explored to deliver the rail curve.





30. Train power source

The new passenger trains using the Hoo Line will be powered via battery.

31. Parking at Hoo train station

There will be parking at the new Hoo station and this will be chargeable. At present the charges have not been set but when operational they will reflect the station's rural location.

There will be approximately 300 spaces including disabled bays.

32. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points at Hoo train station

It is extremely likely that the provision of EV charging points will be part of the planning conditions for the new rail station.

2 new EV charging points are also planned for the car park for Cockham Community Parkland.

33. The HIF plans for open spaces and recreational areas


The HIF budget allocates just over £14 million for the creation and management of new key ecological areas – such as Cockham Community Parkland.


The HIF open spaces to the north of the Peninsula Way will have a strong focus on habitat for breeding birds – such as the Nightingale, alongside access management. Open spaces to the south of the Peninsula Way will look to provide high value spaces for wildlife and for people, with a view to broadening the open space offer and complementing the access to the sensitive estuary landscape. The function and location of these spaces will be informed by the Cumulative Ecological Impact Assessment (CEIA).

Other community open spaces, such as allotments, parks, play areas and outdoor sports pitches will be planned and delivered alongside potential housing development as opposed to by HIF. The Local Plan and Hoo Development Framework will help determine the location of these new community open spaces.

34. How the new open spaces will be looked after

We are going to be working with a number of possible long term management partners who will have the responsibility of maintaining the HIF created ecologically focused open spaces. Other community open spaces (parks etc) could be managed either by us or by a management company that would be set up by developers.





35. Protecting open spaces may include some access restrictions

Most of the HIF open spaces will be free to use, however, local restrictions (for example seasonal restrictions) might be in place to reduce disturbance during sensitive times of year, this might include breeding bird seasons or winter roosts for wetland birds.

The existing ancient Cockham Woods is to be kept free of new access routes to enable the trees to continue to mature and decay without being compromised by health and safety linked to public access.

36. Open spaces to support wildlife and for residents to enjoy

The new HIF funded ecologically focused open spaces which are designed to encourage wildlife will be for everyone to enjoy, particularly local residents and wildlife enthusiasts.

These spaces will add to the array of beautiful areas across Medway including the well-used country parks at Riverside, Capstone and Ranscombe Farm.

37. New foot paths and cycleways

One of the key aims of the HIF environmental strategy is to provide alternative ways of travel, with this in mind there will be new footpaths and cycleways. These will also be included in the design of the new open spaces which will provide links for local journeys to schools, community centres and the station.

The hope is that the spaces can be enjoyed on a daily basis by everyone in the community.

38. Wildlife protection

Ecological surveys are being undertaken to support the design and future planning requirement of the HIF road, rail, and environmental proposals. This detailed analysis will ensure the design and associated mitigation measures, such as appropriate lighting and noise control, takes into account wildlife such as birds and bats.

Any works and planning will be in accordance with wildlife legislation and best practice for any translocations for example the Great Crested Newt District Level Licences.

The assessment will also be informed by the Cumulative Ecological Impact Assessment (CEIA). All schemes will also be subject to policies linked to Biodiversity Net Gain.

39. When HIF construction is planned to start

We are currently in the process of developing the high-level programme of activity setting out the key milestones for the HIF infrastructure for delivery within the next few years. Once completed this will be available to view on our website.





40. Local flooding risk mitigation

The HIF road and rail proposals will have to include drainage measures to ensure they do not cause flooding; and will be subject to a flood risk assessment as part of their applications.

We will be following good practice with a range of sustainable measures being developed. At present this will include the use of attenuation ponds

– these are large ponds close to the road infrastructure that will fill when heavy rain occurs and will slowly discharge back into the water courses over a longer period.

41. Why the HIF proposals are based on Hoo

The spend of the £170 million HIF is focused on the areas that require improvements and which will have the greatest benefit in supporting the needs of a growing community.

For road improvements this relates to the more southerly areas of the peninsula – from the Ratcliffe Highway to Four Elms Hill, along with the need to create an alternative way on and off the peninsula.

The rail design is concentrated on improvement to the current freight line and the provision of a new station south east of the existing historic station at Sharnal Street. Which will be created on existing Network Rail land and will provide an alternative transport option for local residents.

The environmental funds are focussed on creating new open spaces to protect and enhance the area including existing high quality ecological areas such as the Medway Estuary and the woodlands, and which will provide areas for leisure and relaxation for local residents to enjoy.

