



## Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

### Public Consultation Report

February 2024

## Executive summary

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme offers an exciting opportunity to improve a key gateway in the town. The scheme is an important initial phase of a programme of regeneration in Dovercourt to help revitalise the town centre and create a more inviting route along the B1414 Kingsway, helping make the town centre an even more attractive place to live, work, shop and visit. It also seeks to help deliver the vision set out in Tendring District Council's [Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited](#).

Funding for the project was announced by the Government in March 2023 and has been secured through the Levelling Up Fund sister fund, Capital Regeneration Projects. The scheme, which is being delivered by Essex County Council, forms part of a small package of projects being delivered in partnership with Tendring District Council (Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects) aiming to help revitalise the tired and under-utilised town centre and improve outcomes for residents and businesses through regeneration.

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme proposes a series of streetscape improvements along Kingsway, connecting Dovercourt Railway Station to the seafront and the site of the Queen Victoria statue. The scheme focuses on four main areas: the Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt, the Hight Street junction with Kingsway, the Harwich Library forecourt, and the Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade.

After developing initial designs for the scheme, based on the proposals set out in the funding bid and the Dovercourt Masterplan, Essex County Council ran a public consultation from November 2023 to January 2024 to give residents, businesses and visitors a chance to comment on the proposals and help shape the final scheme ahead of the next design stage.

In total, 141 responses to the consultation were received. Although this represents a fairly small sample, the responses still provided a good insight into the opinions of those who did respond. A much larger number of people accessed the scheme webpage and were contacted or reached about the scheme but chose not to respond. This included almost 1,000 residents and businesses who were contacted by post, as well as up to 17,800 local people who were reached on social media and up to 2,182 people who visited the scheme webpage during the consultation period. A large majority of survey responses (88%) were submitted by residents of the Harwich and Dovercourt area. The remaining responses came from local businesses, or individuals who work in or visit the area.

More than two-thirds of respondents were supportive of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. Specifically, 30% strongly supported the proposals, while a further 38% supported them. Comparatively, 15% opposed the scheme and 12% strongly opposed, while 5% said they had no opinion. Responses to the open-ended questions suggested that much of the opposition centred around a desire for wider improvements and regeneration outside of the current scope of the scheme rather than specific opposition to the specific proposals.

The Kingsway corridor was shown to be the area of highest priority on average. Similarly, improved paving and footways were shown to be the most important elements of the scheme to respondents, followed by improved pedestrian crossing and landscape improvements. A majority of respondents agreed that the scheme would both create a more inviting route between Dovercourt station and the seafront and make the area a more welcoming and attractive place, showing strong agreement that the proposals would help meet the aims of the scheme.

Most respondents also agreed the proposed 20mph speed limit along Kingsway and the surrounding roads would help improve safety and make the area more pedestrian-friendly.

Elsewhere in the consultation, the new speed limit was shown to be the sixth most important element of the proposals out of nine. This strong agreement with the impact the measure would have on safety, together with the qualitative feedback, suggests there was generally good overall support for the package of proposed improvements, with even the 'less important' elements of the scheme still receiving noteworthy understanding and support.

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide open comment on the proposals and these responses again indicated a good level of overall support for the scheme. Many respondents recognised benefits to the scheme, while others praised it for being the first element of much-needed regeneration of the area. However, a small number of respondents provided direct opposition to the proposals. A larger group seemingly suggested that while they were not against the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, much wider improvements were needed than those currently proposed as part of this project.

Concerns over a perceived reduction in parking on Kingsway or Marine Parade or the introduction of additional parking restrictions, such as double yellow lines as part of the scheme, were relatively common. It should be noted that there appeared to be some misunderstanding here, with the scheme aiming to retain as much of the existing parking as possible and only a small number of parking spaces outside the library needing to be removed but parking bays nearer the Marine Parade junction proposed to be extended. There are no significant parking changes or new restrictions proposed in other areas, including on Marine Parade. A request for more litter bins was the most popular suggestion for additional elements to include in the plans.

A question was also included in the consultation survey allowing respondents to suggest other areas for improvement in Dovercourt and Harwich outside of this scheme. The following four areas were most commonly suggested:

- **Parking** - Some respondents suggested more parking was needed, while others proposed removing it from certain areas altogether to prioritise pedestrians. Problem sites for parking on pavements, such as the area outside Iceland on the High Street, were also raised.
- **Promenade/seafront** - Many respondents called for regeneration of the seafront. Common requests included new paving and pavement repairs, better maintained seafront gardens and grass areas, and more bins along the promenade. Suggestions about new lighting along the seafront, and for this lighting to remain on during the night, were also popular.
- **High street and local businesses** - Respondents expressed concerns over the number of vacant shops and deteriorated shopfronts across the town. Some also raised issues with the High Street, mentioning issues with pavements and a general lack of business activity in the area. Some specifically asked for greater support for local businesses and incentives to help encourage new businesses to open in the town.
- **Derelict and empty buildings** - Concerns over derelict/empty buildings across the area were common. Some referred to absent landlords and suggested action was needed to ensure their buildings were kept in a more presentable manner. In particular, the Victoria Street area near Dovercourt Railway Station was highlighted as in need of attention.

Overall, the consultation provided a helpful insight into the public's views about the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. The feedback received will play a vital role in informing decisions made by Essex County Council and Tendring District Council as this project progresses and other improvements and regeneration are considered in the future.

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	6
<b>2. Methodology</b>	7
2.1 Consultation Materials	7
2.2 Survey	8
2.3 Methods of responding	9
2.4 Consultation event and partner briefings	9
2.5 Promotion of the consultation	10
2.6 Analysing the data	10
<b>3. Data Analysis and Interpretation</b>	11
3.1 Sample	11
3.2 Response location analysis	11
3.3 Feedback on proposed improvements	13
3.4 Other improvements to consider	20
3.5 Consultation feedback	23
<b>4. Conclusion</b>	24
<b>5. Appendices</b>	26
Appendix A Consultation Survey	26
Appendix B Project webpage	33
Appendix C In-person event materials	39
Appendix D Your Essex e-newsletter article	40
Appendix E Social media posts	41

## List of figures

Figure 1: Marine Parade junction artist's impression	8
Figure 2: Dovercourt Station forecourt artist's impression	8
Figure 3: Dovercourt proposals drawing	8
Figure 4: Dovercourt Library forecourt artist's impression	8
Figure 5: Postcode data	12
Figure 6: Postcode data (Harwich area)	12

## List of tables

Table 1: Relationship to Harwich and Dovercourt	12
Table 2: Support for proposed improvements	13
Table 3: Most important elements	14
Table 4: Areas of highest priority	14
Table 5: More inviting route to the seafront	15
Table 6: More welcoming and attractive place	15

Table 7: 20mph speed limit ..... 15  
Table 8: Passenger information available at Dovercourt Railway Station ..... 16  
Table 9: How did you find out about the public consultation? ..... 23  
Table 10: How helpful was the information provided? ..... 23

# 1. Introduction

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme offers an exciting opportunity to improve a key gateway and help revitalise the town centre. It is an important initial phase of a programme of regeneration and is aimed at realising the vision set out in Tendring District Council's [Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited](#).

Funding for the project was awarded in March 2023 following a bid to the Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The initial bid was unsuccessful, however, funding was subsequently awarded through the LUF sister fund, Capital Regeneration Projects. The funding also includes funds for separate schemes to refurbish Harwich Library and create a new Adult Community Learning skills centre in the building, as well as deliver new high quality housing in the town centre area.

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme proposes a series of improvements along the B1414 Kingsway, connecting Dovercourt Railway Station to the seafront. The scheme focuses on four main focus areas; Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt, the Hight Street junction with Kingsway, the Harwich Library forecourt, and the Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade.

The improvements at the station forecourt aim to provide a welcoming space by improving accessibility, enhancing the public realm, and creating a safer and greener gateway to the town. The existing parking spaces will be rearranged to provide 9 spaces, including designated pick-up/drop-off and accessible spaces. Road-level block paving will be used to visually enhance the forecourt area while maintaining parking.

The High Street junction, where the B1414 Kingsway and the B1352 High Street intersect, will be upgraded with improvements to the existing controlled pedestrian crossings on all four arms of the junction. Imprinted asphalt surfacing will also be used to clearly highlight the crossing areas. Advanced stop lines will be provided for cyclists and the concrete footway on the approaches to the junction will also be repaved.

The Harwich Library forecourt area will be enhanced to create a new and attractive public space outside the library. This will involve building out the footway into the carriageway to provide additional public space and create a clear focal point. The existing cycle stands will be retained and repositioned, and a change in paving material will be used to highlight the footway crossover area to Milton Road.

An enhanced public realm area will also be created around the Queen Victoria statue on Marine Parade. This will create a seafront 'book-end' to the Kingsway corridor and help highlight the town's beautiful coastline. High-quality natural stone paving will be installed around the statue to create a clear public focal point. An existing streetlight will also be removed from in front of the statue and new benches and planters will be installed. A raised table will be built to help reduce vehicle speeds and create an at-grade, barrier-free environment for people walking between the town centre and seafront. At-grade pedestrian crossing points will be installed on this raised table, clearly highlighting the pedestrian priority at the junction.

Outside these four focus areas, new, high-quality paving will be installed along the entirety of the corridor. Several new trees will also be planted along Kingsway, and new wayfinding posts will be used to help direct visitors to key local destinations.

The project is being delivered by Essex County Council in partnership with Tendring District Council and has been developed following engagement with key partners, including Harwich Town Council and Harwich and Dovercourt Tourism Group.

Having developed initial designs for the scheme, these were shared with residents, businesses and visitors as part of a public consultation. The consultation provided a chance for the public to view and comment on the proposals, with the feedback received helping to inform the next stage of design and to shape and refine the final proposals. This document presents a summary of the findings of the consultation and the conclusions which can be drawn from it.

## 2. Methodology

The public consultation ran for a total of seven weeks from 29 November 2023 to 16 January 2024. An additional week was added to the typical six-week consultation period to account of the consultation running over the Christmas and New Year period and to ensure people had adequate time for consideration of the proposals and to respond.

The aim of the consultation, which was non-statutory, was to give the public an opportunity to provide feedback on the current proposals, suggest potential future improvements in Dovercourt and indicate the most important elements of the current scheme to them. The responses will be used to help inform decisions about the makeup of the final scheme and the next stage of design.

### 2.1 Consultation Materials

The consultation took a primarily digital focus with the [project webpage](#) used as the main focal point. The webpage (see appendix B) provided a range of information to give visitors a good understanding of the proposals and enable them to make a more informed view on the plans through the consultation survey.

The webpage gave the background to the project, how it fits with wider regeneration plans for Dovercourt and the connection to the Dovercourt Masterplan. It also detailed the proposals as part of the scheme, particularly focusing on the four key areas of redevelopment: the Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt, the High Street junction, the Harwich Library forecourt area, and the Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade. Next, a section was included about the public consultation which contained a link to the survey, details of an in-person consultation event, and information about other ways to respond, including via a freepost address. At the bottom of the webpage, a series of questions and answers were provided to answer anticipated questions from the public.

Across the webpage a series of artist's impressions and drawings, such as those below in figures 1, 2, 3 and 4, were provided to give people a better understanding of the proposals and how they would look.



Figure 1: Marine Parade junction artist's impression



Figure 2: Dovercourt Station forecourt artist's impression

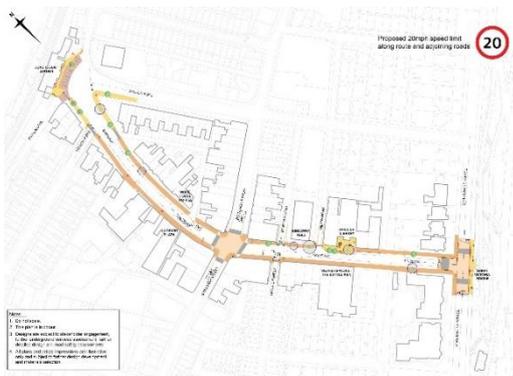


Figure 3: Dovercourt proposals drawing



Figure 4: Dovercourt Library forecourt artist's impression

## 2.2 Survey

A consultation survey (see Appendix A) was developed to help capture people's views and contained 14 questions about proposals for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. The first questions asked for basic respondent information, such as name, postcode, email address and their relationship to the Harwich and Dovercourt area.

The next section contained questions to ascertain respondents' levels of support for the overall proposals and the elements of the scheme they believed to be most important. Questions on specific elements of the scheme, such as the introduction of a new 20-mph speed limit, were also included to help us ascertain whether people felt the measures would meet our aims. To conclude this section, two open-ended questions were included to allow unrestricted comments from respondents. The first asked for comments specifically about the proposals for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme and the second asked respondents to give suggestions for other improvements they would like to see made to the Dovercourt area.

To conclude the survey, consultation specific questions were asked to allow us to consider potential improvements for future consultations. Voluntary demographic data was also collected to improve our understanding of who had responded and to help ensure the continued development of our equality and diversity monitoring. Where personal information was requested, it was made clear that the information provided was confidential, would be protected in line with our responsibilities under the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and would solely be used for the purposes of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme project.

### 2.3 Methods of responding

The consultation had three official channels for submitting consultation responses.

**Online survey:** Available on the Essex County Council consultation portal and via the scheme webpage.

**Freepost address:** Details were included on the scheme webpage and at the back of the printed consultation surveys. This enabled respondents to send in paper copies of the survey or any other response free of charge. Paper copies of the consultation survey were available to collect from Harwich Library throughout the consultation and could also be requested.

**Email address:** Details of the project email address ([dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org](mailto:dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org)) were included in the consultation survey, on the webpage and in all emails/letters sent to stakeholders and consultation responses could also be submitted via email.

### 2.4 Consultation event and partner briefings

As part of the public consultation, we held an in-person event at Harwich Library from 1pm until 8pm on Tuesday 12 December 2023. The decision was taken to run the event into the evening to provide maximum opportunity for people to attend. Members of the project team from Essex Highways, alongside colleagues from Essex County Council and Tendring District Council, were available to speak to members of the public and answer any questions on the proposals or consultation. Approximately 70 people attended the event during the course of the event. Paper copies of the consultation survey were available, as well as printed information booklets. Large-scale print outs of the artist's impressions and design drawings were also available for people to view (see appendix C). These were left at the library after the event for people to view in the remaining weeks of the consultation. Paper copies of the consultation survey and consultation brochure also remained available. A note was made of all the points raised at the in-person event for consideration in our detailed designs. These include requests for more planters, safety concerns over lighting and the maintenance of new trees.

Ahead of the start of the consultation, in October and November 2023, we also held online briefings with key partners and stakeholders to share the latest proposals for the scheme, outline our plans for the consultation and provide an opportunity for questions and feedback. The sessions included meetings with local Essex County Council and Tendring District Council members, Network Rail and Greater Anglia, Harwich and Dovercourt Tourism Group, Harwich Town Council, and local businesses.

## 2.5 Promotion of the consultation

A variety of different communications channels were used to publicise the consultation as widely as possible and encourage people to participate by attending the in-person event or completing the consultation survey. A summary of the channels used can be found below.

**Project webpage** – The project webpage (see Appendix B) was used as the main landing page for all communications and signposted people to the consultation survey. It also featured information about the project and a series of artist's impressions. The project webpage was viewed 2,182 times during the consultation period. The consultation was also promoted on the Tendring District Council and Harwich Town Council webpages, signposting to the project webpage.

**Press releases** – Two press releases about the consultation were issued by Essex County Council – one at the start of the consultation period and one as a reminder early in the new year. This resulted in good local media coverage both online and in print in the Harwich and Manningtree Standard.

**E-newsletters** – Details of the consultation were included in the Essex County Council's Your Essex e-newsletter (see appendix D) which is issued to thousands of subscribers. It was also featured in Tendring District Council's Tendring4Growth e-bulletin which is circulated to businesses in the area by the council's Economic Growth Team.

**Emails to stakeholders** – Following a stakeholder mapping exercise, emails were sent to various partners and stakeholders at key milestones in the consultation to encourage participation and request support in promoting it via their own networks.

**Letters** – A letter (see appendix D) was issued to almost 1,000 residential and business addresses in the vicinity of the scheme, setting out the proposals, directing recipients to the project webpage, explaining how to participate in the consultation and providing details of the in-person event at Harwich Library.

**Social media** – Content was posted across Essex Highways and Essex County Council social media accounts (see Appendix E), and shared by Tendring District Council. These posts focused on encouraging participation in the consultation and reached over 17,800 people. The posts were boosted and geographically targeted at people located in the Harwich and Dovercourt area. Posts were also shared to popular local groups on Facebook to maximise reach and engagement.

## 2.6 Analysing the data

To analyse the qualitative feedback received from the survey, via email and written responses, an emergent coding approach was used. A code framework was created, with every consultation response read and reoccurring themes and trends identified.

This consultation report summarises the key themes and outcomes from the qualitative responses, as well as the quantitative data we received through the survey. The responses included as examples are presented as provided and have been anonymised for the

purpose of this report, but please note that in some instances spelling and grammar have been corrected to ensure readability.

### 3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section of the report presents the survey results and feedback from the consultation. This includes a summary of who responded and analysis of the main themes and issues raised.

#### 3.1 Sample

In total, we received 141 responses to the consultation. These included:

- 105 online survey responses
- 27 written survey responses
- 9 email responses

Although this represents a fairly small sample, the responses still provided a good insight into the opinions of those who did respond, while a much larger number of people accessed the scheme webpage and were contacted or reached about the scheme but chose not to respond.

It should be noted that respondents to a consultation are a self-selecting sample made up of those who have chosen to respond and is, therefore, a non-scientific sample. Consequently, responses reflect the views of only those who respond. Responses to the consultation can provide an invaluable insight into the concerns, themes and issues surrounding the proposals, although these views may be skewed towards a particular viewpoint and thus should not be considered a fully representative sample of the population. Regardless of this, all responses and comments have been noted and considered.

Of the 132 respondents who submitted either an online or written survey response, 48% identified as male, 45% as female. 1% preferred to self-describe and 5% preferred not to say.

As part of the public consultation, we encouraged identified partners, stakeholder groups and organisations to provide a formal response. Organisations which responded included Historic England, Essex Fire and Rescue, Greater Anglia, Sustrans, Essex Sight Loss Council, the Harwich and Dovercourt Partnership and Harwich Town Council.

#### 3.2 Response location analysis

To establish an understanding of respondents' relationships to Dovercourt and their interest in the scheme, we firstly asked respondents if they were someone who lived in the Harwich and Dovercourt area, worked in the Harwich and Dovercourt area, lived and worked in the Harwich and Dovercourt area, visited the Harwich and Dovercourt area or if they were responding on behalf of a local business. The results can be seen in Table 1 below. A large majority of respondents (70%) said they lived in the area, while a further 18% said they both lived and worked in the area. This means that, overall, 88% of respondents were residents of the area. The remaining 13% had a connection to Harwich and Dovercourt through working in or visiting the area, or being associated with a local business. Therefore, the survey sample consists of people with very strong connections to the local area.

Table 1: Relationship to Harwich and Dovercourt

Relationship to Harwich and Dovercourt	Percentage
Someone who lives in the Harwich and Dovercourt area	70%
Someone who lives and works in the Harwich and Dovercourt area	18%
Someone who visits the Harwich and Dovercourt area	5%
Someone responding on behalf of a local business or organisation	5%
Someone who works in the Harwich and Dovercourt area	2%

This point is emphasised by the postcode data of respondents, which can be found in the heatmaps below (Figure 5 and Figure 6).

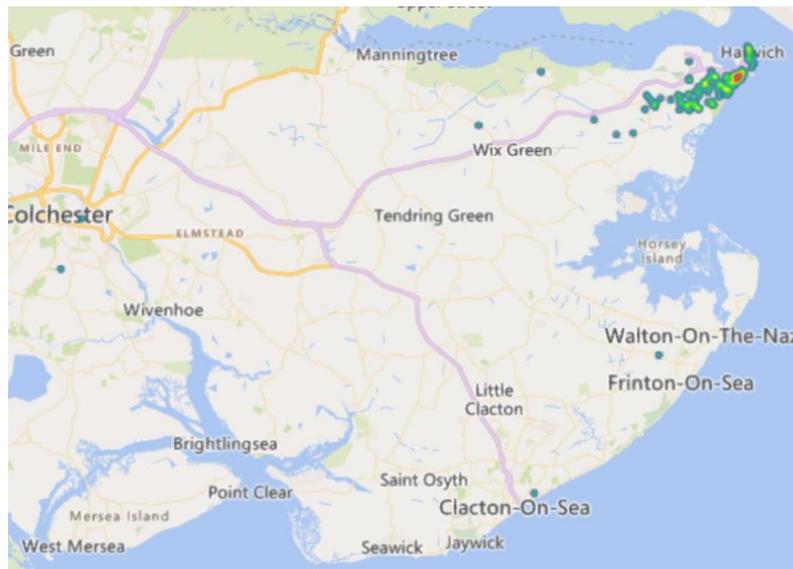
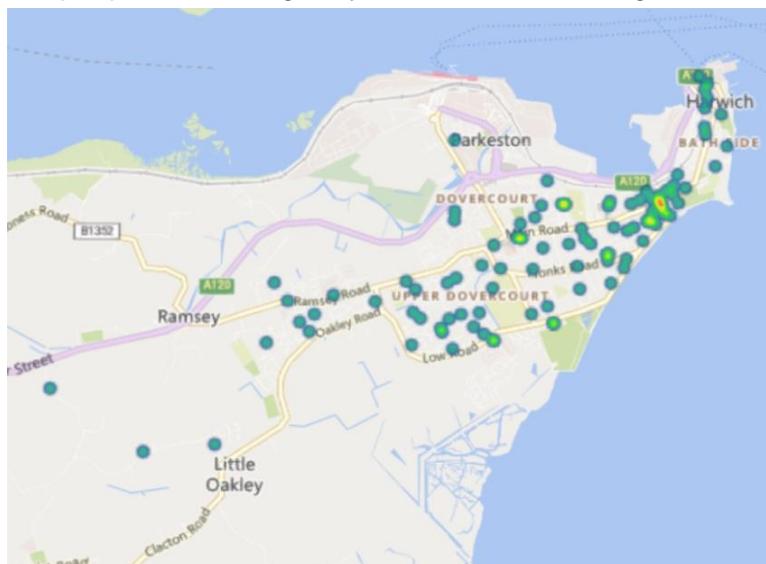


Figure 5: Postcode data

Figure 5 above shows the plotted postcodes for people who submitted survey responses. As shown, the vast majority came from the Harwich and Dovercourt area. This is further evidence of the very localised response we received to the consultation survey.

Figure 6 below shows a heatmap of postcodes for people who submitted responses with a focus on the more immediate Harwich and Dovercourt area. This shows a large proportion of response came from people in the Kingsway area itself, illustrating a number of residents



and businesses within close proximity of the scheme provided feedback through the consultation.

### 3.3 Feedback on proposed improvements

This section relates to questions seven to fourteen of the consultation survey. These questions asked for feedback on specific elements of the proposals and provided an opportunity for respondents to offer open-ended feedback on the plans for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. The data analysed below demonstrates a strong level of support for the plans, while highlighting some areas to be considered further following the consultation and as part of the next stage of design.

#### General support for the scheme

To begin this section of the survey, respondents were asked to what extent they supported the improvements proposed as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. Table 2 below shows the full answer data for this question. Positively, more than two thirds of people (68%) who responded to the survey expressed overall support for the improvements proposed as part of the scheme, with 30% of respondents strongly supportive and a further 38% supportive. A further 5% said they had no opinion. This shows the majority of those who responded are in favour of the scheme. On the other hand, 15% opposed the scheme and 12% strongly opposed it. While these percentages are small in comparison to those who supported the scheme, they are still noteworthy. From the open-ended question included at the end of this section, it is apparent that a large proportion of the opposition appears to be on the basis that they would like to see improvements across a broader area rather than necessarily opposition to the proposed improvements along the Kingsway corridor. Specifically, 40% of those who opposed the scheme to some extent revealed a desire to see wider improvements in their open-ended feedback instead of direct opposition to the scheme.

Table 2: Support for proposed improvements

To what extent do you support the improvements proposed as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme?	Percentage
Strongly support	30%
Support	38%
No opinion	5%
Oppose	15%
Strongly oppose	12%

#### Elements of most importance and areas of highest priority

Respondents were asked which elements of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme they considered to be the most important. Table 3 below shows the full answer data for this question. The figures are based on a ranking system and give an overall average ranking for each element, with the highest value indicating the most important element on average across all respondents and the lowest value indicating the least important element.

Overall, improved paving and footways was shown to be the most important element of the scheme, followed by improved lighting. These two areas were also regularly reference within responses to the open-ended questions in this section of the survey, suggesting a strong desire for upgrades of pedestrian facilities along Kingsway. Improved pedestrian crossing areas and landscaping improvements were the next most important elements to respondents, followed by additional seating and the proposed new 20mph limit. More space

outside Harwich Library, new wayfinding signs and the raised table were shown to be the least important elements of the scheme. However, the relatively small difference in overall values shows that while some elements were generally regarded as more important than others, all individual elements received a reasonable level of support.

Table 3: Most important elements

Which elements of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme do you consider to be the most important?	Value
Improved paving and footways	5.73
Improved lighting	5.48
Improved pedestrian crossing areas	4.46
Landscaping improvements (e.g. new trees and other planting)	4.46
Additional benches and seating	4.08
20 mph speed limit on Station Road, Kingsway, Marine Parade and adjoining roads	3.83
More space outside Harwich Library	3.09
New wayfinding signs	3.05
Raised table on Marine Parade at the junction with Kingsway	3.00

In a similar manner, respondents were then asked to prioritise the four main areas where improvements are planned as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme; Kingsway Corridor, the Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt area, the Queen Victoria statue on Marine Parade and the area outside Harwich library. Table 4 below displays the full answer data for this question. The Kingsway corridor was given the highest average priority rating, which is consistent with the higher importance given to the improved paving and lighting elements of the scheme, as outlined above. The forecourt area outside the Dovercourt Railway Station was given the second highest average priority, followed by the Queen Victoria statue area and the area outside Harwich Library.

Table 4: Areas of highest priority

Which of the areas where we are proposing improvements do you feel should be the highest priority?	Value
Kingsway corridor (between the railway station and the seafront)	2.64
The forecourt area outside Dovercourt Railway Station	2.32
The Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade	1.92
The area outside Harwich Library	1.70

### More inviting route and a more welcoming and attractive place

The next few questions looked to assess whether people agreed the proposals would achieve the intended scheme aims. Firstly, respondents were asked to what extent they thought the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would help create a more inviting route between the railway station, town centre and seafront. Table 5 below displays the full answer data for this question. Again, a significant proportion of respondents (51%) either strongly agreed (23%) or agreed (28%) that the scheme would provide a more inviting route to the seafront, while a further 21% described their stance as 'neutral'. In comparison, 13% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed.

Table 5: More inviting route to the seafront

To what extent do you think that the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would help create a more inviting route between the railway station, town centre and the seafront?	Percentage
Strongly agree	23%
Agree	28%
Neutral	21%
Disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	14%

Respondents were next asked to what extent they believed the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would contribute to making Dovercourt a more welcoming and attractive place to live, work, shop and visit. Answers here were similar to the previous question, with a large proportion either strongly agreeing (21%) or agreeing (27%). 23% took a neutral view on this, while 18% disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed.

Table 6: More welcoming and attractive place

To what extent do you think that the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would contribute to making Dovercourt a more welcoming and attractive place to live, work, shop and visit?	Percentage
Strongly agree	21%
Agree	27%
Neutral	23%
Disagree	18%
Strongly disagree	12%

### New 20mph speed limit

This question related specifically to the proposed new 20mph speed limit as part of the scheme and to what extent respondents thought it would meet the aim of helping make the town centre a safer and more pedestrian-friendly place. Again, answers here were largely positive and to a greater extent than the two previous questions. Specifically, 27% strongly agreed and a further 31% agreed. Previously, the new 20 mph speed limit was shown to be the sixth most important element of the proposals out of nine. The support for it here, therefore, showcases how even the elements of the scheme generally regarded as less important still appeared to have received good levels of support. 17% of respondents described their view on the impact of the new speed limit in making the town centre safer as 'neutral', while 10% disagreed and 16% strongly disagreed. See table 7 below for the full answer data.

Table 7: 20mph speed limit

To what extent do you think the proposed new 20mph speed limit would help make the town centre a safer and more pedestrian-friendly place?	Percentage
Strongly agree	27%
Agree	31%
Neutral	17%
Disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	16%

## Passenger information at Dovercourt Railway Station

To finalise this set of questions, respondents were asked to give their opinion on the passenger information (e.g. the digital information screens showing live train times) currently available at Dovercourt Railway Station. This question was included to help determine people's views about the current information available and, therefore, whether there is a need for any potential improvements. Respondents appeared to generally believe the information was sufficient, with 77% feeling the information was either very good or good, or saying they had no opinion. This included 37% who said the information available was good, 16% who said it was very good and 24% who had no real opinion. 13% of respondents described the information as poor and 8% said it was very poor.

Table 8: Passenger information available at Dovercourt Railway Station

What is your opinion on the passenger information currently available at Dovercourt Railway Station?	Percentage
Very good	16%
Good	37%
No opinion	24%
Poor	13%
Very poor	8%

## Opportunity to comment on the scheme

To conclude this main section of the consultation survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback on the proposals for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. The following themes/points were identified as the most popular using an emergent coding approach. The eight email responses received were also included within the analysis at this stage.

Generally, comments received here were supportive of the scheme. Some did offer some opposition to the scheme, but this typically stemmed from a feeling that improvements were needed to a wider area than this specific scheme is able to provide. Other comments raised current issues along Kingsway, helpfully providing the opportunity for the project team to consider these during detailed design.

For ease of reading, general comments of support or disagreement have been presented first, before more specific views are included.

## **General supportive or unsupportive comments**

The most popular code within this answer with 24 comments was 'supports proposals/changes needed.' Many comments here offered support for Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme by praising the likely benefits they believed the proposed improvements would bring. It was also common for people to commend the scheme as the first element of much-needed regeneration to the area.

### **Supports proposals/changes needed**

*"All that is proposed sounds positive ..."*

*"We are supportive of any schemes that will make a difference to the aesthetics of the town. This has been a long time coming for Dovercourt."*

*"I think it seems a good idea. ..."*

*“I think all suggestions are optimistic and forward thinking to improve our town, both for residents and visitors. ...”*

*“I think it is long overdue and will make the area more inviting.”*

There was some direct opposition to the proposals, but there were notably fewer such comments compared with those which were supportive. Specifically, 11 comments were coded under ‘against proposals/changes not needed’. These included several which suggested the proposed changes would have little to no positive impact. Some referenced the view that the Kingsway corridor was currently underused and, as such, improvements should be focused on other areas of the town centre. On a related note, 12 comments were coded under ‘waste of money/money better spent elsewhere’. There was a significant crossover between comments here and many were recorded under both categories. Views in the latter code expressed concerns over the spending of funding, or a preference for money to be spent in other areas outside the scope of the scheme and the funding which has been secured.

### **Against proposals/changes not needed**

*“We need help to bring businesses to the town, not wasting money on plants, benches and more space outside the library ...”*

*“I struggle to see the necessity of changing the floor, there’s nothing wrong with the current pavement. ... The road from Dovercourt station to the Queen Victoria Statue is seldom used by anyone.”*

*“This is a superficial scheme design to satisfy some box ticks. Visit Dovercourt now, understand that there is minimal public traffic leaving the station directly for the beach.”*

### **Waste of money/money better spent elsewhere**

*“Waste of money when it could be spent in other areas of the town.”*

*“... Spending money in an area with rough housing is a waste – it will all be trashed near the station. Stop wasting our money.”*

*“This is a waste of taxpayer’s money. Why bother making Harwich safer for pedestrians when there is nothing to attract anybody to visit?”*

As referenced previously, the majority of negative feedback received as part of the consultation appeared to be due to those respondents wanting to see improvements to a wider area than the Kingsway corridor. In fact, 21 responses to this open-ended question were coded under ‘changes needed in wider area’. Again, these comments did not directly oppose the specific proposals as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, but instead suggested there was a need for wider regeneration across the area, including the high street and promenade.

### **Changes needed in wider area**

*“I feel the proposals are good, but they do not go far enough. By not completing the whole town centre at once you are going to create a mismatch of designs. ...”*

*“... Changes need to be made to the seafront and promenade areas ...”*

*“I don’t see the point of making all these improvements when you area not going to improve the rest of the town centre, one area will not do much for residents, businesses, or visitors. ...”*

*“...as a resident of Harwich my entire life, these plans lack boldness or significant changes to make a real difference. Why are we not taking this opportunity to be bolder with the plans. In essence, the plans are re-doing the paving, putting some trees in and a bit of lighting. Let’s be bolder!!”*

### **Specific areas for improvement**

Outside the more generalised topics outlined above, a number of respondents referenced more specified elements associated with the Dovercourt Public Realm.

The most popular of these codes was ‘parking/parking improvements needed’, with 21 comments. While some of these comments raised issues with parking in the area and asked for general improvements, many expressed concerns about a perceived reduction in parking on Kingsway or Marine Parade or the introduction of additional parking restrictions, such as double yellow lines as part of the scheme. It should be noted that there appeared to be some misunderstanding, with the scheme aiming to retain as much of the existing parking as possible. Only a small number of parking spaces outside the library are currently proposed to be removed, but parking bays nearer the Marine Parade junction are proposed to be extended so any overall reduction is expected to be very minimal. There are no significant parking changes or new restrictions proposed in other areas, including on Marine Parade.

#### **Parking/parking improvements needed**

*“Concerned this will radically reduce the availability of on street parking.”*

*“We should not lose anymore free parking spaces as it is often hard to find free spaces already. ...”*

*“... better parking control needed within the whole area.”*

11 comments were coded under ‘shopfront improvements needed’. These responses revealed a desire among some respondents to see shopfronts along Kingsway renovated. Some also commented that improving the public realm in the area and providing new pathing/lighting could further emphasis the tired appearance of certain shopfronts along the corridor.

#### **Shopfront improvements needed**

*“Think we need to tidy up some of the shops ...”*

*“... It would look even better if all the shops had the traditional old-fashioned look as some of the shop fronts have. ...”*

*“... This programme is good start but much more focus should be on how to help shop owners improve their own frontage. ...”*

9 comments were coded under ‘more bins needed/litter issues on Kingsway’. Responses here raised issues with the amount of litter currently on Kingsway and suggested more litter bins should be installed along the corridor as part of the scheme.

### **More bins needed/litter issues on Kingsway**

*“... In Kingsway we have landlords of cheap rental property who do not provide their tenants with enough storage for waste. This results in fly tipping and daily black rubbish bags being broken open by seagulls and foxes. ...”*

*“Needs to be lots of bins for rubbish ...”*

*“Dovercourt needs more bins and more cycle racks. ...”*

A very popular code within this section was other requests/issues with 21 comments. This code was used to capture individual points or suggestions made by respondents which were not seen with enough regularity to justify their own code. Below is a selection of some examples of these.

### **Other requests/issues**

*“... We need to make sure no more banks close. ...”*

*“... There is very little in this for our younger people – 14 years old and upwards.”*

*“... We need money invested in things to do to bring people in not new pavements. I'd suggest a new crazy golf course. ...”*

### **Feedback from partners and key stakeholder groups**

Strong support was also received on the proposals from identified partners and key stakeholder groups or organisations . These responses were primarily submitted via email to the project inbox. The majority praised the proposals and offered their support to the scheme moving forwards. A selection of quotes from these partners can be seen below.

*“Greater Anglia is supportive of the vision to deliver improvements to Kingsway to help revitalise the town ...” – Greater Anglia*

*“We welcome the proposals which seek to improve and enhance the historic environment within Dovercourt through upgraded surfaces, greening, improved wayfinding, and increasing connectivity between Dovercourt Station to the Queen Victoria Statue/Sea front area. We are pleased to see this as an area of focus that it was identified as an enhancement opportunity in Dovercourt’s Conservation Area Appraisal ...” – Historic England*

*“Although in principle I agree to the improvement plans, I would like to make the following points. As a representative for the blind and partially sighted community I feel it is important to highlight the impact of some of the proposed changes ...” – Thomas Pocklington Trust/Essex Sight Loss Council*

*“Excellent idea but remember to include walking and cycling signage on route as this forms part of the National Cycle Network route 51.” – Sustrans*

*“We are supportive of any schemes that will make a difference to the aesthetics of the town. This has been a long time coming for Dovercourt.” – Harwich and Dovercourt Partnership*

### 3.4 Other improvements to consider

A second open-ended question was included to ask respondents what other improvements they would like to see made in the Dovercourt area outside of the current scheme. The four most popular areas where it was suggested improvements were needed were parking, the promenade/seafront, the high street and local businesses, and issues with derelict buildings.

#### **Parking**

18 comments were coded under 'concerns over parking/parking improvements needed'. The views provided here were mixed. Some expressed concerns over a lack of parking in the area and requested more spaces were needed, while others raised issues with current on-street parking provision. A few even suggested the introduction of new one-way systems or parking restrictions to remove cars from certain areas, for example the high street, in order to prioritise pedestrians. Specific problem sites for cars parking over pavements were also flagged, especially the area outside Iceland on the high street. Comments within this code, therefore, offered contrasting and sometimes conflicting views, however, what is clear is that many respondents to the survey appeared to feel improvements were needed to parking arrangements in the area.

#### **Concerns over parking/parking improvements needed**

*"... The lack of car parking is still a problem in the town centre, if the top level of the old car park is removed and the current ground level is used as a second car park that would be a real positive ..."*

*"... Have parking restricted to just one side of the road in Kingsway to prevent the build up of traffic caused by narrowing of the road when there are vehicles parked on both sides. ..."*

*"I would like to see parking at the top of the priority list. ..."*

*"No parking in town centre now there is a decent car park."*

*"There are serious issues with illegal parking on Dovercourt high street – specifically outside of 'Iceland' and 'Family Shopper'."*

*"We need more parking spaces to encourage people to visit ..."*

#### **Promenade/seafront**

17 comments were coded under 'improvements needed on promenade'. This makes it the most popular location put forward for future improvements. Respondents here were critical of the current condition of the promenade area, with many referring to how nice it used to be in the past or making reference to other promenades, such as in Clacton or Felixstowe. Common areas of concern included the seafront gardens, the grass areas, paving and a lack of bins. Calls for new/improved lighting on the promenade, especially at nighttime, were also popular.

#### **Improvements needed on promenade**

*"Lighting along the seafront at nighttime!"*

*"Re-establishment of gardens on the cliff terraces ..."*

*“... I would also like to see the seafront and promenade in this quarter of the bay cared for at least as well as I have seen in other locations nearby (Dare I say Felixstowe is exactly what a seaside resort should look like!) ...”*

*“... Along the promenade improve the unsafe, uneven paths and walkways. Clear all the weeds and replant the whole area ...”*

*“Improvements to the promenade such as heritage lighting, benches, bins etc and restore the white shapes cut into the grassland.”*

*“... Improve the landscaping along the seafront ...”*

## **High street and local businesses**

A series of codes related to the high street and/or local businesses more generally. Respondents expressed concerns about the number of vacant shops, citing both the need to encourage new businesses into the town to fill these, but also the damaging visual impact of vacant shops on the high street and in the wider town centre area. In a similar manner, the issue of deteriorated shopfronts was again raised, however, this time across the high street and town centre and not just along the Kingsway corridor. Many comments also raised issues with the high street, mentioning concerns about paving and a general lack of business and activity in the area. Some respondents asked for greater support for local businesses, including suggestions of funding to help renovate shopfronts or reductions in business rates to attract and support businesses.

Specifically, 15 responses were coded under ‘concerns over vacant shops/new businesses needed’, 10 under ‘shopfront improvements needed’, 8 under ‘high street declining/needs improving’ and 11 under ‘need to support local businesses/shops’. A selection of responses from all these codes can be seen below.

### **Concerns over vacant shops/new businesses needed**

*“There are so many empty and run down shops ...”*

*“Money should be used to encourage new business to open in the town centre ...”*

*“... really need to encourage independent and mainstream shops to give people a reason to come into town.”*

### **Shopfront improvements needed**

*“Make all the shops have an old fashioned frontage with fake Victorian style electric lighting in the streets around the town centre ...”*

*“Would love to see shopfronts have some love and care in the future and be mended, painted, nice plants etc.”*

*“... Upgrade of shopfronts.”*

### **High street declining/needs improving**

*“... I think the high street leading to Dovercourt park is the area that needs modernising. ...”*

*“The retail units at the bottom end of the High Street are a disgrace ... the ones by the Jobcentre. The path there is treacherous and is so uneven. It always looks a mess ...”*

*“The high street needs attention asap. It is a total disgrace ...”*

### **Need to support local businesses/shops**

*“... invest in cutting business rates to bring businesses in. ...”*

*“... Support for local shops.”*

*“Maybe businesses could get small grants to help update shopfronts. It does look a bit drab.”*

### **Derelict buildings**

Another frequent area of concern was the number of empty or derelict buildings across Harwich and Dovercourt, with 14 comments coded under ‘issues with empty/derelict buildings’. These comments generally related to concerns about the poor aesthetics of the derelict buildings. Many referred to absent landlords and asked for action to be taken to ensure their buildings were kept in a more presentable manner. The area most mentioned was the end of Victoria Street near Dovercourt Railway Station, with particular attention paid to the site of an old pub. In fact, 9 comments coded under ‘issues with area near station/Victoria Street’. Requests for the station building itself to come back into use or be renovated were also expressed by a number of respondents.

#### **Issues with empty/derelict buildings**

*“Clear up derelict buildings and fly tipping areas. ...”*

*“I would like all landowners and property owners of vacant lots to be encouraged to keep their sites tidy and safe ...”*

*“Tackle all the vacant boarded up shops in the town and the slum properties in the area. ...”*

#### **Issues with area near station/Victoria Street**

*“The whole area in the vicinity of Dovercourt rail station is a mess. ...”*

*“I think the main priority should be acquiring the abandoned eyesores of land on Victoria Street, outside Dovercourt Station and doing something to them. ...”*

*“Acquire the vacant land around the Railway Station and remove the eyesores. ...”*

### **Other requests**

As with the previous question, this code was used to capture individual points or suggestions made by respondents which were not seen with enough regularity to justify their own code. For this question, this code was the most popular with 37, demonstrating the plethora of ideas about potential improvements to the town, but also the variance in opinions. Below is a selection of some examples of these.

#### **Other requests/issues**

*“A WW2 museum in town to attract more visitors. ...”*

*“Ensure there is information and signposts to historic Harwich. ...”*

*“More leisure facilities for young people, encourage them to stay local and love the town they live in. ...”*

“... less houses.”

### 3.5 Consultation feedback

As with most public consultations, feedback was collected about the consultation itself to help inform future projects. Social media channels were identified as the most popular method of hearing about the consultation with 38%. This was followed by online with 15%, and newspaper with 14%. Other received 15%, with the majority of these respondents advising they had heard about the consultation from the library, either during the in-person event or via the consultation materials available at the library.

Table 9: How did you find out about the public consultation?

How did you find out about this public consultation?	Percentage
Social media	38%
Online	15%
Newspaper	14%
Word of mouth	7%
Email	5%
Email newsletter	2%
Poster	2%
Other	15%

When asked how helpful respondents found the information provided as part of the consultation, three quarters of people indicated they found it helpful, with 44% describing it as fairly helpful and 31% as very helpful. A further 18% indicated it was neither helpful or unhelpful, while just 6% said it was unhelpful (2% fairly unhelpful and 4% very unhelpful). This reflects very positively on the consultation and the level and quality of information provided.

Table 10: How helpful was the information provided?

How helpful was the information we provided to you as part of this public consultation?	Percentage
Very helpful	31%
Fairly helpful	44%
Neither helpful or unhelpful	18%
Fairly unhelpful	2%
Very unhelpful	4%

#### **Opportunity to comment on the public consultation**

To conclude the survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to provide open-ended feedback on the public consultation.

12 responses were coded under 'better promotion needed'. While the consultation was extensively promoted online and in print, views here suggested the need for more extensive promotion of the consultation or expressed concerns that not all residents were aware of it.

#### **Better promotion needed**

*"I hope that this will be well advertised in the local newspapers, had it not been for idling on Facebook I'd have known nothing about it"*

*“.. I wouldn't have known about this public consultation if not for a tiny notice at the end of a news story on the local newspaper's website.”*

9 comments were coded under 'believe views will be ignored'. These respondents were sceptical that the feedback provided would be listened to and would have an impact on the next steps of the project. The publication of this consultation report, the associated promoter's response and planned design changes will hopefully reassure these respondents that this is not the case.

#### **Believe views will be ignored**

*“The people of Harwich will not be listened to this is just a PR exercise.”*

*“At least you are doing a public consultation. Hopefully you'll actually listen to it, rather than paying lip service (as it what normally happened).”*

7 comments were coded under need to 'consult/listen to local people'. These comments stressed the importance of listening to the local population and incorporating their ideas into the project.

#### **Need to consult/listen to local people**

*“Please listen to the people of Harwich.”*

*“... Please ask the people what they want and need, not someone who has never spent any time in Dovercourt. It can be great again with financial help.”*

7 responses were also coded under 'more in-person events needed'. Many of these comments praised the in-person event held at Harwich Library but suggested more of these events should have been held during the consultation.

#### **More in-person events needed**

*“More than one drop in consultation event should have been scheduled. ...”*

*“Consult the public in person, not just online. Come into town and talk to people on the street. ...”*

Finally, 7 comments were also coded under 'issues with survey'. Most of these comments expressed concerns with the ranking questions included in this survey, with a small number of respondents seemingly misinterpreting these questions and what people were being asked to do. In light of this, we will review the phrasing of any similar ranking questions in the future to try to avoid any confusion.

#### **Issues with survey**

*“Couldn't rate 1-9 on each individual question when asked to rate ... so you are not really getting a true opinion of the public. ...”*

*“The prioritisation of improvements question was a pain in the backside and made me not want to fill it out. ...”*

## **4. Conclusion**

The public consultation has provided a valuable insight into the public's views about the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. The feedback received will play a vital role in

informing the decisions made as this project progresses in the future, in particular helping shape the detailed design of the final scheme.

It is clear from the quantitative feedback provided that there is a good level of support for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. Specifically, more than two thirds of respondents indicated they were supportive of the scheme (30% strongly supportive and a further 38% supportive). The Kingsway corridor itself was shown to be the area of highest priority among respondents on average, which was further supported by the importance given to improved paving and footways along the corridor, as well as improved pedestrian crossings and landscaping, which were also identified as particularly important elements of the scheme.

A large majority of respondents agreed the proposed scheme would achieve our aims of both helping create a more inviting route between the railway station and the seafront and making the area a more welcoming and attractive place for residents and visitors. However, there were also a number of more neutral opinions.

A significant proportion of respondents agreed the proposed introduction of a 20mph speed limit along the corridor would help make the area safer, with 27% strongly agreeing and a further 31% agreeing. When ranking the various individual elements of the scheme, on average the new 20 mph speed limit was shown to be the sixth most important element out of nine. The level of agreement with it in improving safety therefore suggests the 'less important' elements of the scheme still have good levels of support.

Support for the scheme was also evident in the responses to the open-ended questions in the consultation survey. Respondents praised the scheme as the start of much-needed regeneration for the Dovercourt area with support for the improved paving, footways and lighting particularly popular. A small number provided direct opposition, while a similarly sized group suggested wider improvements and regeneration were needed than those currently proposed as part of the scheme. Concerns over parking were relatively common, although seemed to stem from some misunderstanding that on-street parking would be significantly reduced, and additional double yellow lines would be introduced. A good level of support for the scheme was also received from key partners and stakeholders.

Elsewhere, the four main areas suggested for future improvements in Dovercourt outside this scheme were parking, the promenade, the high street and local businesses, and the need to address the empty and derelict buildings.

Having concluded the consultation, analysed all responses and written this report, the feedback will now be considered to support the next stage of design and to identify potential changes and refinement to the current proposals. To follow up on specific points raised in relation to ensuring the scheme meets the accessibility needs of different people, a site meeting is planned in February 2024 with local accessibility groups. Further engagement is also planned with Historic England, Greater Anglia and other partners and stakeholder groups to finalise the proposals.

# 5. Appendices

## Appendix A Consultation Survey

### Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

#### Public consultation survey

[www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme](http://www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme)

29 November 2023 - 16 January 2024

1 What is your name?

Name *(Required)*

2 What is your postcode?

Postcode *(Required)*

3 Which of the following best describes you?

*Please select only one item*

- Someone who lives in the Harwich and Dovercourt area
- Someone who works in the Harwich and Dovercourt area
- Someone who lives and works in the Harwich and Dovercourt area
- Someone who visits the Harwich and Dovercourt area
- Someone responding on behalf of a business or organisation in the Harwich and Dovercourt area

4 What is your email address?

Email *(Required)*

5 Would you be happy for us to contact you by email with updates about the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme in the future?

*(Required)*

*Please select only one item*

- Yes
- No

6 If you are responding on behalf of a business, group or organisation, what is the name of that business, group or organisation?

**7 To what extent do you support the improvements proposed as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme?**

*Please select only one item*

- Strongly support
- Support
- Oppose
- Strongly oppose
- No opinion

**8 Which elements of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme do you consider to be the most important? Please rank them from 1 (most important) to 9 (least important).**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Landscaping improvements (e.g. new trees and other planting) <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
Additional benches and seating <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
Improved lighting <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
Improved paving and footways <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
More space outside Harwich Library <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
Improved pedestrian crossing areas <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
New wayfinding signs <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
Raised table (a raised section of road with a ramp on both sides) on Marine Parade at the junction with Kingsway <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								
20mph speed limit on Station Road, Kingsway, Marine Parade and adjoining roads <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>								

**9** Which of the areas where we are proposing improvements do you feel should be the highest priority? Please rank them from 1 (highest priority) to 4 (lowest priority).

	1	2	3	4
The forecourt area outside Dovercourt Railway Station <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Kingsway corridor (between the railway station and the seafront) <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The area outside Harwich Library <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade <i>Please select only one item</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10** To what extent do you think that the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would help create a more inviting route between the railway station, town centre and the seafront?

*Please select only one item*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**11** To what extent do you think that the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme would contribute to making Dovercourt a more welcoming and attractive place to live, work, shop and visit?

*Please select only one item*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**12** To what extent do you think the proposed new 20mph limit would help make the town centre a safer and more pedestrian-friendly place?

*Please select only one item*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13 What is your opinion on the passenger information (e.g. the digital information screens showing live train times) currently available at Dovercourt Railway Station?

*Please select only one item*

- Very good
- Good
- Poor
- Very poor
- No opinion

14 Do you have any comments on the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme?

15 What other improvements would you like to see considered within this project or in the future?

**Consultation feedback**

The following questions are about the consultation itself and will be used to improve our engagement and consultation processes in the future.

16 How did you find out about this public consultation?

*Please select only one item*

- Email
- Email newsletter
- Newspaper
- Online
- Poster
- Social media
- Word of mouth
- Other

If you selected 'Other', please specify.

**17** How helpful was the information we provided to you as part of this public consultation?

*Please select only one item*

- Very helpful
- Fairly helpful
- Neither helpful or unhelpful
- Fairly unhelpful
- Very unhelpful

**18** Do you have any comments about the public consultation?

**About you**

**19** What age group do you belong to?

*Please select only one item*

- Under 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

**20** To which gender identity do you most identify?

*Please select only one item*

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say

If you selected 'Prefer to self-describe', please specify

**21** To which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong?

Asian/Asian British

*Please select only one item*

- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Any other Asian background

If you selected 'Any other Asian background', please describe

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

*Please select only one item*

- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

If you selected 'Any other Black/African/Caribbean background', please describe

Mixed/multiple ethnic origins

*Please select only one item*

- White and Asian
- White and Black African
- White and Black Caribbean
- Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background

If you selected 'Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background', please describe

White

*Please select only one item*

- English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- Gypsy/Irish Traveller
- Irish
- Any other white background

If you selected 'Any other white background', please describe

Other ethnic group

*Please select only one item*

- Arab
- Any other ethnic group

If you selected 'Any other ethnic group', please describe

**22** Do you consider yourself to have a health condition, disability or impairment? Please tick all that apply.

*Please select all that apply*

- No impairment
- Hearing impairment/deaf
- Visual impairment/blind
- Deafblind
- Mental health needs
- Physical impairment
- Learning difficulties/disabilities
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Other
- Prefer not to say

If you selected 'Other', please specify

**Return:**

This survey can be returned to us in an envelope via Freepost at:

**FREEPOST ESSEX HIGHWAYS ENGAGEMENT TEAM**

Just add this as the address and there is no need to use a stamp.

**Find out more:**

For more information about the proposals, please visit: [www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme](http://www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme)

Printed copies of the consultation survey and information about the proposed scheme are also available from Harwich Library or can be requested by emailing us at [dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org](mailto:dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org)

We are also hosting a drop-in consultation event at Harwich Library, in Upper Kingsway, on Tuesday 12 December 2023 from 1pm until 8pm.

Information about the proposals will be available and you will have the opportunity to view our latest designs, meet the project team and ask any questions.

If you are unable to attend the event, information and designs will remain on display at the library until the end of the consultation on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

If you have a questions, please email us at: [dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org](mailto:dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org)



SAFER GREENER HEALTHIER

Welcome to the Highways Service Information Centre

**Overnight site investigation surveys - Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme**

23/01/2024 Advance Notice

Overnight site investigation surveys will be taking place in the Kingsway area of Dovercourt as part of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.

The surveys will run from Monday 5 February to Friday 9 February and traffic management will be required in some areas.

Please select 'read more' below for more details.

[Read more](#)

**ADVANCE NOTICE**

[Home](#) > [Making Changes](#) > [Highway Schemes](#) > [Tendring Schemes](#) > Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme



## Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

### Background

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme aims to deliver a series of streetscape improvements along the Kingsway corridor in Dovercourt to help revitalise the town centre.

The proposed scheme will create a more inviting route along the B1414 Kingsway between Dovercourt Railway Station, the town centre and seafront, helping make the town centre an even more attractive place to live, work, shop and visit.

It is an important initial phase of a programme of regeneration of Dovercourt town centre and is aimed at realising the vision set out in Tendring District Council's [Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan](#).

The project is being delivered by Essex County Council in partnership with Tendring District Council as one of the [Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects](#) and has been developed following engagement with key partners, including Harwich Town Council and Harwich and Dovercourt Tourism Group.

The proposed scheme is based on proposals put forward as part of a successful Government funding bid, with construction currently expected to start in summer 2025.

Having developed initial designs for the scheme, we carried out a seven-week public consultation between Wednesday 29 November 2023 and Tuesday 16 January 2024 to provide residents, businesses and visitors with an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals. The consultation has now closed. Thank you to everyone who responded. We are currently reviewing responses to the consultation and the feedback we received will then be summarised in a consultation report and will be used to help shape the final scheme.

“Dovercourt will be a thriving town with an attractive High Street, a range of shops and cafes and regular street markets: a town which is proud of its heritage but also able to respond to new opportunities. A town with a high-quality public realm and open spaces, stunning beaches and good connections – an attractive place to live, work, shop and visit”.

– Dovercourt Masterplan vision

## Our proposals

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme is focused on four main areas – [Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt](#), the [High Street junction with Kingsway](#), the [Harwich Library forecourt](#) and the [Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade](#).

It aims to improve connectivity between these key areas and highlight the town's beautiful coastline, helping to enhance the visitor experience, support local businesses and encourage investment in the area ahead of the planned Freeport East.

As well as enhancing the four key focal points, we are also proposing a series of general improvements along the B1414 Kingsway between the station and the seafront to help revitalise this important town centre gateway. These improvements include:

General public realm improvements including enhanced footways throughout the scheme, with high-quality natural stone paving at key public realm focus areas (railway station forecourt, library forecourt and Queen Victoria statue area) and improvements to the overall corridor with good quality standard concrete paving

Improvements to crossing points along the Kingsway corridor with dropped kerbs and tactile paving to enhance the pedestrian experience and to encourage Safer, Greener and Healthier modes of travel

Additional trees, planting, lighting and benches to create a greater sense of pride in the town and a better visitor experience

A new 20mph speed limit on Station Road, Kingsway, Marine Parade and adjoining roads to help make the town centre a safer and more pedestrian-friendly place

New fingerpost wayfinding signs to help direct visitors to key destinations

There are no plans to make improvements to the Dovercourt Railway Station building as part of this scheme.



## Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt

We aim to transform the Dovercourt Railway Station forecourt into a welcoming public space, improving accessibility, enhancing the public realm and creating a safer and greener gateway to the town.

Our proposals in this area include:

Footway improvements, with high-quality natural stone paving in the station forecourt area to make it a clear focal point as a gateway into the town

Rearrangement of the existing station parking spaces, with road-level block paving used to visually enlarge the forecourt area while maintaining parking, including designated pick-up/drop-off and accessible spaces. A total of nine parking spaces are currently proposed

Additional trees and benches in the vicinity of the station

Retaining existing granite planters, which will be replanted



New fingerpost wayfinding signs in the railway station forecourt area providing directions and journey times to key destinations

Retaining existing cycling stands outside the station

Change in paving material to highlight the footway crossover area across Nelson Road



Dovercourt Station forecourt artist's impression

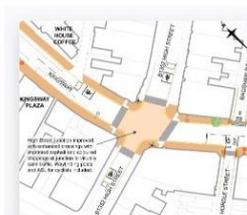
## High Street junction

The High Street junction, where the B1414 Kingsway and the B1352 High Street intersect, will be upgraded with improvements to the existing controlled pedestrian crossings on all four arms of the junction. There are no plans to make any changes to the traffic signals at the junction.

Imprinted asphalt surfacing will be used to clearly highlight the crossing areas and existing tactile paving will be retained. The junction surface will be highlighted with coloured chippings as a traffic calming and visual enhancement measure, highlighting this key junction on the High Street.

Advanced stop lines will be provided for cyclists and the concrete footways on the approaches to the junction will be repaved.

Wayfinding posts will help direct visitors to key destinations.



Dovercourt High Street proposal plan

## Harwich Library forecourt area

The Harwich Library forecourt area will be enhanced to create an attractive new public space outside the library.

Our proposals in this area include:

Existing fencing to the front of the library will be removed and the footway will be built out into the carriageway to create additional public space and a clear focal point. This will necessitate the loss of a small number of existing parking spaces outside the library to create space for the public realm improvements

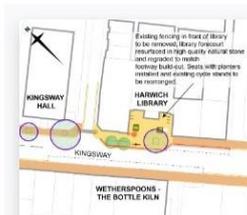
Additional trees and feature benches with in-built planters will be provided to create an attractive social area outside the library building

Existing stainless steel cycle parking stands will be retained and repositioned

Widening and repaving of footways, using high-quality natural stone paving to create an attractive public realm area outside the library

Change in paving material to highlight the footway crossover area across Milton Road

New wayfinding posts to help direct visitors to key local destinations



Harwich Library proposal plan

There are also separate proposals to refurbish Harwich Library and create a new Adult Community Learning skills centre in the building as part of the Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects. Although these improvements are being delivered as part of the same programme, they are separate to our proposals for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.



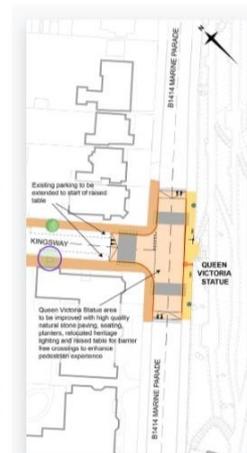
Dovercourt Library forecourt artist's impression

### Queen Victoria statue area on Marine Parade

An enhanced public realm area will be created around the Queen Victoria statue on Marine Parade, creating a seafront 'book-end' feature to the corridor between the railway station and seafront, and helping to highlight views of the town's beautiful coastline.

Our proposals in this area include:

- Footway improvements, with high-quality natural stone paving in the Queen Victoria statue area to make it a clear public focal point
- A raised table (a raised section of road over a junction with a ramp on all sides) at the B1414 Marine Parade/B1414 Kingsway junction to help reduce vehicle speeds and create an at-grade, barrier-free environment for people walking between the town centre and seafront
- At-grade pedestrian crossing points on the raised table, with tactile paving, imprinted asphalt surfacing at the crossings and coloured chippings on the raised table. This will help clearly highlight the pedestrian priority at the junction and act as a visual traffic calming measure
- New benches and planters on either side of the Queen Victoria statue to frame this significant view and create an attractive public realm area
- An existing streetlight will be relocated from in front of the Queen Victoria statue to open up the views and will be replaced by new heritage-style lighting to enhance the setting of this public space
- New fingerpost wayfinding signs providing directions and journey times to key destinations



Dovercourt Marine Parade proposal plan



Marine Parade junction artist's impression

## Public consultation

We have now completed our initial proposed designs for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme and asked residents, businesses and visitors for their feedback through a public consultation. The consultation ran for seven weeks, opening on Wednesday 29 November 2023 and closing on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

The main components of the scheme are largely determined by what was included in the Levelling Up Fund/Capital Regeneration Projects bid and the funding we have available. However, the public consultation was an opportunity to have your say and feedback will be used to help shape the finer details of the scheme so it best meets the town's current and future needs.

As part of the consultation, we held a drop-in event at Harwich Library on Tuesday 12 December 2023 to allow people to find out more about the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme and ask questions about the proposals.

If you have a question about the scheme, please email us at: [dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org](mailto:dovercourtpublicrealm@essexhighways.org).

## Next steps

The following dates are based on the latest programme and are dependent on various legal and statutory processes, and other approvals. Therefore, they are subject to change.

- Site surveys - February to May 2024
- Completion of preliminary design - March 2024
- Detailed design and tender - April 2024 to Summer 2025
- Estimated construction start date - Summer 2025

Construction of the scheme is expected to take approximately 18 to 24 months and will be carefully managed to minimise the impact and disruption for local residents and businesses.

## Wider context

### Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects

Significant investment is being made in Harwich and Dovercourt through the [Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects](#), including the £4.3million Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. This demonstrates recognition of the area's huge potential and a shared desire to build on the significant opportunities and economic boost which will come with Freeport East.

### Timeline



The package of projects being delivered through the Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects, which includes a separate scheme to refurbish Harwich Library and create a new Adult Community Learning skills centre in the building, is the next phase in realising the vision set out in [Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited](#). The programme aims to revitalise the tired and under-utilised town centre and improve outcomes for residents and businesses through regeneration.

Together, the series of proposed projects will help create much-improved public spaces and facilities for local residents, as well as providing high-quality housing to support local need and better access to training and skills.

More information about the other schemes being delivered as part of the Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects is available on the [Tendring District Council website](#).

Separately, Tendring District Council is progressing a [Levelling Up Fund-funded Civic Quarter scheme in Clacton](#) and Tendring has also been named as one of 20 areas to be involved in a [Levelling Up Partnership with Government](#), with a total funding pot of £400million to be shared across the areas.



Funded by  
UK Government



Tendring  
District Council



Essex County Council

## Questions and answers

[Reveal / hide all answers](#)

1. [How is the project being funded?](#)

2. [Can the funding be spent on other improvements, such as road repairs?](#)

3. [Why are public realm improvements a priority?](#)

4. [How will the scheme help attract businesses to Dovercourt and encourage greater investment in the town?](#)

5. [What other regeneration is planned?](#)

6. [Is there any other investment planned for Dovercourt?](#)

7. [Will the Dovercourt Public Realm scheme support existing shops in the area or help renovate shop fronts?](#)

8. [When will the proposed scheme be constructed?](#)

9. [How will the scheme affect parking in the area?](#)

10. [Why did Tendring District Council introduce payment for parking at Orwell Place?](#)

11. [Why is housing being put at Milton Road? Why are you removing parking from the town centre?](#)

12. [Will the Dovercourt Railway Station building be improved and brought into use as part of the scheme?](#)

13. [Why is something not being done to address run-down sites in Victoria Road?](#)

14. [What proposals are there to improve Harwich Library?](#)

15. [How will the Dovercourt Public Realm scheme benefit pedestrians?](#)

16. [How will the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme benefit cyclists?](#)

17. [How will the 20mph speed limit be enforced?](#)

18. [How can people have their say on the proposals?](#)

### Documents

[Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme consultation survey - PDF\(0.7MB\)](#)

[Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme design drawing - JPG\(0.8MB\)](#)

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## Have your say



### Help us shape tourism in Essex

We're working with Visit Essex and Tomorrow's Tourism Ltd to develop a new tourism plan for the county. Share your views on our visitor attractions, accommodation, food, drink offering in Essex, and how you think we can improve as a county. [Complete the visitor economy survey](#) and help shape tourism in Essex.

### Share your views on cycling and walking networks in Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford and Witham

We've launched a survey on walking and cycling networks for Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford and Witham. The findings of the survey will help us develop and plan routes over the next ten years. Share your views and [take part in the cycling and walking network survey](#). The consultation closes on Wednesday 17 January.

### Last chance to have your say on the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

Residents, businesses and visitors are invited to have their say on plans to revitalise a key gateway in Dovercourt as part of an exciting multimillion-pound regeneration programme. It is an important initial phase of a wider programme of regeneration of Dovercourt town centre.

[Have your say on the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme](#) before the consultation closes on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

## Appendix E Social media posts

**Essex Highways**  
29 November 2023 · 🌐

🔔 Have your say on our proposals to help revitalise Dovercourt and make the town centre an even more attractive place to live, work, shop and visit. 🔔

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme includes a series of planned streetscape improvements and aims to create a more inviting route along Kingsway between Dovercourt Railway Station, the town centre and seafront. 🚶

The proposed scheme has been developed by [Essex County Council](#) in partnership with [Tendring District Council](#) and... [See more](#)



**Essex Highways** [Learn more](#)

[See Insights](#) [Boost a Post](#)

👍🥳 60 178 comments 37 shares



Essex Highways

8 December 2023 · 🌐



Do you want to find out more about our proposals as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme?

Come along to our drop-in public consultation event at Harwich Library on Tuesday (12 December) between 1pm and 8pm.

Information about the proposed scheme will be available and you will have the opportunity to view our latest designs, meet the project team and ask any questions you may have.

There is no need to register so just come along at a time to suit you.

If you are unable to attend the event, the information and designs will remain on display at the library until the end of the consultation on Tuesday 16 January 2024.

For more information about the event and our proposals, please visit:  
[www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme](http://www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme)



ESSEXHIGHWAYS.ORG

### Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme is the latest phase of a programme of...

Learn more

See Insights

Boost a Post

👍 🥰 🤔 14

27 comments 10 shares