



## Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme

Promoter's Response

March 2024

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## 1 Introduction

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, 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.

This document (promoter’s response) details our response to the main points raised in the consultation and sets out the next steps for the project.

### 1.1 Consultation Survey

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.

A consultation survey was developed to help capture people’s views and contained 14 questions about the 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. Many of the points included in this promoter’s response have been extracted from the feedback received in these two open-ended questions.

## 1.2 Analysing the data

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

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

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

## 1.3 Key findings and consultation report

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 be 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.

The full public consultation report can be found on the [project webpage](#), alongside this document.

## 2 Our response and actions

The following section sets out our response to key themes and points raised during the public consultation.

The issues have been split into the following sections in recognition of the popularity of requests for improvements outside of the scheme’s remit:

- Scheme-specific
- Wider issues

It should be noted that the points included relate to the key queries, issues or points raised in the consultation responses or at the in-person consultation event. We also received a number of more general statements and positive feedback, which have all been read and acknowledged but we did not feel required a ‘response’.

## 2.1 Scheme-specific

Theme of Issue/concern	Example comment	Project team response
<p><b>Requests to remove the shed from outside the library forecourt area</b></p>	<p><i>Harwich library has a very ugly shed structure at the front of the building that is still in the plans ... This needs to go or be remodelled.</i></p>	<p>We acknowledge removing this structure would be beneficial in creating more space and improving the visual appearance of the library forecourt area. Discussions will be held with the relevant landowner and utility companies to help determine the feasibility of removing the structure as part of the scheme ahead of the completion of the next stage of design.</p>
<p><b>Issues with litter along Kingsway and requests for more bins</b></p>	<p><i>Dovercourt needs more bins ...</i></p> <p><i>There needs to be lots of bins for rubbish</i></p>	<p>Having received a number of comments and suggestions about the need for additional litter bins along the corridor, we have now identified proposed locations for new bins and these have been included within our latest designs for the scheme.</p> <p>In relation to litter and other rubbish outside properties in the area, this feedback has also been shared with Tendring District Council and, where appropriate, it may consider contacting landlords of residential and commercial properties to ask for cooperation in keeping the area clean and tidy.</p>
<p><b>Concerns over accessibility challenges, especially at the proposed raised table</b></p>	<p><i>The term ‘barrier free’ when referring to crossing and pedestrianised areas in the section relating to the table-top section by the monument raises concerns.</i></p>	<p>Having received these comments as part of the consultation and to help ensure our proposals best meet people’s needs, we held an accessibility focused site visit in February 2024. Attendees included representatives from the Essex Sight Loss Council, Tendring Older People’s Forum and Sustrans. The visit provided an opportunity to discuss the proposals in more detail and to allay people’s concerns. A visual impairment simulation kit and mobility canes were also used which gave the design team insight into the reality of living with various visual impairments. In particular, there was discussion about ensuring there is contrast in the colours of materials used to help people with certain visual impairments, as well as the need for a kerb edge/lip on the crossings on the raised table on Marine Parade to allow people using mobility canes to identify the crossing points. There were also suggestions about the font and colour contrast on wayfinding signs and the layout and type of tactile paving used at crossings. These points are all being considered as part of the next stage of design of the scheme.</p>

<p><b>Questions over material choice and colour palette</b></p>	<p><i>It is important that the choice and colour of any materials and interventions i.e. paving and surface treatments are well considered and relate sympathetically to the historic sensitivity, context and character of the conservation area and its heritage assets.</i></p>	<p>All materials proposed for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme have been chosen to be sympathetic to the surrounding area, including the conservation area. A colour palette of dark grey tones is proposed to ensure the area is easier to maintain and to reduce the risk of staining or discolouration.</p> <p>A site visit was held with representatives of Historic England (the government’s statutory advisory body on the historic environment) in February 2024 to explain this subject in more detail. Material samples were tabled, and Historic England welcomed the revisions to the proposed materials and colour palette.</p> <p>The representatives also made a series of suggestions including the use of larger paving slabs where possible that will be considered during the next stage of design development.</p>
<p><b>Requests for cycle paths to be included in the scheme</b></p>	<p><i>I would like it if cycle paths were included, as a way to keep cyclists safe; away from traffic, and away from pedestrians on the footpath.</i></p>	<p>The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme does not include any proposed cycleways because there is limited funding and space available. Parking bays would likely need to be removed to incorporate cycleways along Kingsway and this would require extensive engagement and consultation with businesses and the local community.</p> <p>The proposed new 20-mph speed limit along Kingsway and throughout the wider area, as well as other elements of the scheme, such as the raised table on Marine Parade, will help reduce vehicle speeds further and make it safer to cycle on the road. It is hoped these improvements will encourage more in cycling in the area.</p>
<p><b>The money being spent on this scheme should be spent elsewhere</b></p> <p><b>Scheme is a waste of money</b></p>	<p><i>Feel like this is a complete waste of tax payer’s money ... think what else this money could achieve; a sports centre, youth clubs etc.</i></p>	<p>The funding for the scheme has been awarded to Tendring District Council specifically to deliver proposed public realm improvements along the Kingsway corridor and cannot be used for other purposes. The proposed improvements were submitted in a Levelling Up Fund bid by Tendring District Council in summer 2022, having been identified as an important priority as part of the Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan.</p> <p>The built environment in Dovercourt is currently constraining the visitor experience. In consultation on Dovercourt Revisited (<a href="#">the town centre masterplan</a>), the most common response from attendees on what they disliked about Dovercourt town centre was the quality of the street scene, with 88% stating their first impression of the town centre as unwelcoming and untidy.</p>

		<p>Poor public realm also reduces commercial and residential property prices, hindering the potential of the town centre to attract and invite confidence for investment.</p>
<p><b>Changes are needed in a wider area</b></p>	<p><i>I feel the proposals are good but they don't go far enough. By not completing the whole town centre at once you are going to create a miss match of designs.</i></p>	<p>The Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme 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.</p> <p>Significant investment is being made in Harwich and Dovercourt through the <a href="#">Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects</a>, including the 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 are anticipated to come with Freeport East.</p> <p>The package of projects being delivered through the Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects also includes a separate scheme to refurbish Harwich Library and create a new Adult Community Learning skills centre in the building. The programme aims to revitalise the tired and under-utilised town centre and improve outcomes for residents and businesses through regeneration.</p> <p>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 needs and better access to training and skills.</p> <p>More information about the other schemes being delivered as part of the Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects is available on the <a href="#">Tendring District Council website</a>.</p> <p>While we recognise people may have liked to see the Dovercourt Town Centre Masterplan delivered in one go, this would require funding of a very significant scale, which is unlikely to be available. We have been clear that the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme is an important initial phase of regeneration and both Essex County Council and Tendring District Council hope to be able to deliver future phases in line with the masterplan, subject to the availability funding.</p> <p>Any further works to buildings in the town centre area will go through the full planning process. This will help ensure future works are sympathetic and in-keeping with the regeneration projects.</p>

		Beyond the regeneration projects being led by Essex County Council and Tendring District Council, Bathside Bay (known as Freeport East Harwich) has the potential to become the southern North Sea’s leading Green Energy Hub, drawing inward investment from Europe. It could deliver 3,500 jobs and unlock wider growth and regeneration in the area.
<b>Concerns over the scheme reducing parking in the area or implementing new double-yellow lines</b>	<i>I have concerns over parking ... if more yellow lines are put down then parking would be reduced further.</i>	<p>We are not proposing to make any significant changes to parking restrictions (e.g., double yellow lines) as part of the scheme.</p> <p>Across the scheme area there is no planned net loss of parking. In the Dovercourt Station forecourt area, we are proposing to rearrange the existing parking spaces and use road-level block paving to visually enlarge the forecourt area.</p> <p>To create additional space outside Harwich Library, the footway will be built out into the carriageway which will require the removal of a small number of existing parking spaces. However, we are proposing to extend the existing parking bays on Kingsway near the junction with Marine Parade to the start of the proposed raised table and providing additional spaces opposite the library and on Station Road which will mitigate the loss of spaces outside the library.</p>
<b>Requests for improvements to shopfronts (along Kingsway and the wider area)</b>	<p><i>Think we need to tidy up some of the shop fronts ...</i></p> <p><i>Maybe businesses could get small grants to help update shop fronts. It does look a bit drab.</i></p>	<p>The funding for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme is ringfenced and cannot be used to directly support businesses or improve shop frontages along the Kingsway corridor. However, the proposed public realm improvements aim to attract more visitors and increase footfall in the town centre which will provide obvious benefits to the existing businesses in the area.</p> <p>There may also be separate future opportunities for businesses to apply for funding through Tendring District Council.</p>
<b>Requests for more trees and planters</b>	<i>I believe the only thing the plan is missing is more trees and planters.</i>	Due to space restrictions and underground utilities, the maximum number of new trees and planters have already been proposed in the designs for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme. All existing planters are being retained and will be replanted as part of the project.
<b>Requests for provision of disabled parking bays</b>	<i>It might be worth an idea to have dedicated disabled bays.</i>	The provision of disabled parking bays will be reviewed and considered as the project progresses.

<p><b>Need for trees and planters to be maintained</b></p>	<p><i>Get rid of weeds, repair path, plant new trees and flowers, and then maintain it.</i></p>	<p>Discussions will be held with the relevant parties to determine a maintenance plan for the new trees and other planting proposed as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.</p> <p>We are also specifically proposing low-maintenance tree and planting species, along the streetscape and in planters, to minimise the amount of ongoing maintenance required.</p> <p>In particular, the tree species proposed, namely pear trees and hornbeam, have been chosen, in part, because of their resilience and ability to thrive in coastal conditions as they are salt tolerant. This will again limit the amount of required maintenance.</p>
<p><b>Concerns over new pavements being ripped up for utilities</b></p>	<p><i>Material finished need to be thought about for the ease of AW/BT/UKPN or re-instating after emergency works or planned works for services.</i></p>	<p>As is standard for projects of this kind, agreements will be made to determine a specified time period of up to two years during which utility companies will be unable to carry out non-emergency works in the area following completion of the scheme. Only emergency works will be allowed to take place during this period.</p> <p>We have deliberately used a limited number of industry standard materials, which are currently readily available. This will mean it is easier to source any replacement materials if and when required.</p>
<p><b>Requests to remove the telephone callboxes outside the station</b></p>	<p><i>Comment made at the in-person consultation event</i></p>	<p>Enquiries will be made with the relevant parties to ensure the maintenance and repair of the phone boxes.</p>
<p><b>Requests for more cycle parking provision</b></p>	<p><i>Considerations should be given to provision of cycle racks to encourage cyclists – just re-orientating those outside the library does not add much.</i></p>	<p>Due to limited space, we are not currently proposing additional cycle parking as part of the proposed scheme. However, all existing cycle parking is being retained in the library and station forecourt areas. Some cycle parking will be repositioned to make the areas more attractive and user friendly. Any additional cycling amenity improvements (e.g., cycle racks) will be considered in future designs stages depending on available space and funding.</p> <p>Tendring District Council is also aware of requests to provide additional cycle parking and will consider potential opportunities as part of other regeneration schemes in the area.</p>

<p><b>Requests for information/advertising boards for the local area</b></p>	<p><i>Would consider buying media space to promote the town on its own billboards (like the ones next to the station).</i></p> <p><i>Can we have marine information panels.</i></p>	<p>The current advertising hoardings on the corner of Kingsway and Station Road, opposite the station, are privately owned and managed. There would, therefore, be a significant cost for booking this advertisement space. However, this could be considered in the future if funding is available and it was considered a high impact and cost-effective advertising channel for future projects, campaigns or initiatives.</p> <p>We are not currently proposing to install any additional information or advertising boards as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.</p> <p>Tendring District Council is also aware of requests for information/advertising boards and will consider this as part of upcoming town centre improvement programmes.</p>
<p><b>Questions over what destinations will be signposted by the wayfinding</b></p>	<p><i>I think you should ensure there is information and signposts to historic Harwich.</i></p>	<p>Further discussions are planned with Tendring District Council to consider any current wayfinding strategy for the area and which local destinations should be included on signage. The suggestions received during the consultation will be shared and considered as part of this process. The proposed wayfinding signs will reflect the current design style used in the area.</p> <p>During the consultation, the project team was also informed that the England Coast Path route passes in front of the station. As such, the path will also be included on signage delivered as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.</p>
<p><b>Requests for timings on pedestrian crossings at junction to be increased</b></p>	<p><i>Sort out the timing of traffic lights so that pedestrians get longer to cross the road.</i></p>	<p>The crossings are fitted with motion sensors which are able to extend the time pedestrians get to cross the road if movement is detected.</p> <p>Specifically, the crossings have green, audible and tactile signals for a set period. If the sensors detect that pedestrians are still crossing, the time before the lights change is extended in relation to the length of the crossing itself.</p>
<p><b>Requests for station building to be included in the scheme</b></p>	<p><i>As for the station it's all well &amp; good making improvements outside that station, what about sprucing up the building? It looks old, tired and decrepit and could do with having some TLC.</i></p>	<p>Dovercourt Railway Station and the station building are owned by Network Rail and leased to Greater Anglia as the train operator. While we are proposing to make improvements to the station forecourt as part of the scheme, we are not able to make further improvements to the station or station building. However, Essex County Council is keen to work with Greater Anglia to explore potential opportunities for the station building to be brought into community or commercial use.</p>

## 2.2 Wider issues

Theme of issue/concern	Example comment	Project team response
<p><b>Requests for more parking in Dovercourt and Harwich</b></p>	<p><i>More parking needed in the town centre and make it free.</i></p>	<p>Tendring District Council is currently considering the need for potential additional parking across the Dovercourt and Harwich area. Any additional parking provided will not be free to use. All council tax paying households within the Tendring District can register for a Free Parking Permit, which can be used at all Tendring District Council-run car parks (except for the Naze car park, Holland Haven, Ipswich Road and Walton pool) between 11am and midnight. The permits are not valid for the months of July and August. You are able to apply for a Householder Permit at any of the year.</p>
<p><b>Requests for the pedestrianisation of streets or sections of streets</b></p>	<p><i>The aim could be to make Dovercourt an even greener, traffic-free area.</i></p> <p><i>I wish to suggest that the high street on a Friday is made pedestrian full time, this could create a pedestrian friendly area and even a café culture.</i></p>	<p>We are not proposing to pedestrianise any roads in the town centre area as part of the scheme, and any proposals to do so would require significant assessment and extensive consultation with residents, businesses and other stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Issues with cars parking on the pavement, especially outside Iceland on the High Street</b></p>	<p><i>I would like to see the stretch of High Street leading down from the top of the hill to the traffic lights be given double yellow lines; cars parked outside Iceland not only block the High Street they make it difficult to cross the road safely.</i></p>	<p>The wider High Street area falls outside the scheme area for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, which is specifically focused on the Kingsway corridor between Dovercourt Railway Station and Marine Parade. However, we have shared these comments onto Tendring District Council for consideration as part of any future schemes or any wider review of town centre parking.</p> <p>Any concerns about illegal parking or parking enforcement should be raised with the North Essex Parking Partnership. Details of parking restrictions and how to request further enforcement can be found on their <a href="#">website</a>.</p>
<p><b>Requests for improvements to be made along the promenade including new benches, more bins, new lighting and better maintained seafront gardens</b></p>	<p><i>Improvements to the promenade such as heritage lighting, benches, bins etc and restore the white shapes cut into the cliff grassland.</i></p>	<p>The promenade was included as a key area for regeneration within the Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited document, however, we only have a certain amount of funding available and our bid was focused on the Kingsway corridor. It is hoped that improvements can be made to the promenade and other areas in the future, in line with our shared aspirations for wider regeneration of the town centre, but this will be subject to available funding.</p> <p>Tendring District Council were successful in an application to the Levelling Up Parks Fund, which enabled the Council to carry out some useful cosmetic work along the promenade; new benches,</p>

		<p>some repairs, removing old planting and putting in new.</p> <p>As part of the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, improvements will be made to the seafront area surrounding the Queen Victoria statue. These improvements include new high-quality natural stone paving, a raised table to create a visual focal point, new benches and planters, and the relocation of an existing streetlight from in front of the statue.</p>
<p><b>Issues with fly tipping in the area</b></p>	<p><i>Fly tipping and daily black rubbish bags broken open by seagulls and foxes.</i></p> <p><i>Address the issues with litter and fly tipping.</i></p>	<p>Following feedback received in the consultation regarding issues with litter along the Kingsway corridor, we have now included additional litter bins in our designs for the scheme.</p> <p>Regarding fly-tipping across the wider Dovercourt and Harwich area, Tendring District Council is aware of the issue. Where the issue affects private land, as well as public land, the council may also consider contacting landlords of commercial properties to work with them to help tackle the problem.</p>
<p><b>Concerns over vacant shops and the need to bring more businesses into the area</b></p>	<p><i>There are so many empty and run down shops. Any time a boutique business comes in, they leave as quickly.</i></p>	<p>To unlock the growth required to support wider regeneration of Dovercourt, attract new businesses and investment, and bring forward major development, improvements to the town centre infrastructure and public realm are required to drive commercial demand, improve investor confidence, and create a town centre which is more inviting to residents and visitors.</p> <p>By making Dovercourt a more attractive and welcoming destination and increasing footfall in the town centre, new businesses are more likely to be attracted to the area. It is our aim that the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme and other potential future improvements set out in the Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited will help to regenerate the town centre area and encourage more visitors and businesses.</p>
<p><b>Requests to better support local businesses</b></p>	<p><i>Invest in cutting business rates to bring businesses in.</i></p> <p><i>Support for local businesses to stay afloat (often this should start with social media training ...) Also finding some way to stop businesses closing for Winter.</i></p>	<p>Because the funding for the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme is ringfenced, it must be used for that purpose and cannot be used to directly support businesses in the area.</p> <p>Tendring District Council currently offers a rolling programme of business support events throughout the year and the team can be contacted for advice by emailing <a href="mailto:business.advice@tendringdc.gov.uk">business.advice@tendringdc.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Business rates are set by government. However, many shops on Dovercourt High Street are eligible for full business rate exemptions if they have a rateable value of under £12,000.</p>
<p><b>Requests for improvements to be made to the high street including shopfronts,</b></p>	<p><i>The high street should be priority.</i></p> <p><i>The retail units at the bottom of the High Street are a disgrace. The path</i></p>	<p>Similarly to the promenade, Dovercourt High Street was included as a key area within the Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited document for regeneration. It is hoped that the improvements detailed in the document can be delivered in the future, but this will be dependent on securing the necessary funding. In</p>

<p><b>pavement repairs and wider aesthetic improvements</b></p>	<p><i>there is so uneven it is treacherous.</i></p>	<p>designing the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, we have been careful to ensure that it complements the local environment and is in-keeping with the conservation area, as well as making it easy to extend to other parts of the town centre, such as the High Street, in the future.</p> <p>Tendring District Council has also been awarded separate funding through the Government’s new High Street Accelerator pilot programme. The council is working with the business community and Harwich and Dovercourt Tourism Group to assess what improvements should be made through this funding.</p>
<p><b>Issues with derelict buildings in the area and request to ensure landlords keep these in a more presentable manner</b></p>	<p><i>I would like all landlords and property owners of vacant lots to be encouraged to keep their sites tidy and safe, either by enforcement or cash handouts.</i></p>	<p>As these buildings fall under private ownership, Tendring District Council is unable to directly influence their upkeep. However, if appropriate, the council may consider contacting landlords as part of its wider regeneration plans to encourage better maintenance of such properties.</p>
<p><b>Requests to deal with the derelict sites at the end of Victoria Street near the station.</b></p>	<p><i>The site of the former Victoria Hotel, the adjacent burnt-out house and its nearby car park and the car sales/car wash site is horrendous and needs the council to take action. It is one of the first things anyone alighting at Dovercourt Station sees and creates a very and impression of our town.</i></p> <p><i>Acquire the vacant land around the station and remove the eyesores.</i></p>	<p>Tendring District Council has now agreed a Cabinet decision to purchase this site for future redevelopment. The required processes for purchasing the site are currently being worked through.</p>
<p><b>Requests for a better visitor experience in Dovercourt such as new WW2 museums or information signs along the waterfront.</b></p>	<p><i>A more accessible visitor experience. Harwich and Dovercourt have a lot of places to visit and things to do, but they are only sporadically open.</i></p> <p><i>I think you should ensure there is information and signposts to historic Harwich, perhaps maps available and</i></p>	<p>The project team are very aware of Dovercourt’s history and share people’s views about its enormous potential. It is hoped the improvement’s proposed as part of the Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme, alongside further regeneration of the area, will help encourage future investment in Dovercourt to further enhance the visitor experience.</p>

	<i>encouragement for visitors to go there.</i>	
<b>Requests to move the weekly market to the station forecourt area.</b>	<i>The Friday market should be moved to the Railway end of Kingsway, thus freeing up 2 lengths of on-street parking that are lost on Fridays.</i>	Any decision to relocate the market would rest with the market organisers, who would be required to apply for any necessary road closures or other permissions to allow the market to be held.

### 3. Latest progress and next steps

The feedback and comments provided through the consultation have demonstrated that there is generally a good level of support for the proposed Dovercourt Public Realm Scheme.

Having analysed the feedback received and written a public consultation report summarising the responses, the project team are considering and reviewing potential design improvements and any other changes which can be made to enhance our proposals. We have also engaged further with Historic England and representatives of local accessibility and disability groups to help ensure our proposals best meet people’s needs and are in-keeping with the conservation area. A series of site investigation surveys are also taking place in the area to further inform the detailed design.

Once updated designs are finalised, they will be published on the project webpage at: [www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme](http://www.essexhighways.org/dovercourt-public-realm-scheme).

Based on the current programme, we anticipate detailed design and the tender process to be completed by Summer 2025, at which point construction of the scheme is expected to begin.