



HOO

New Routes to
Good Growth

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Have your say

In spring this year we wrote to everyone on the Hoo Peninsula with an update on the council's successful bid to secure funds that will enable us to provide the area with the additional road, rail and environmental infrastructure which is needed if we are to be able to sustainably accommodate new housing development in the area.

Importantly, the £170 million of funding we secured through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) will enable us to deliver the essential transport and environmental projects that will be required on the Hoo Peninsula before the new housing, leisure and employment opportunities are realised. This means that the road improvements, the new rail service and the environmental schemes will be in place by spring 2024 – some years before the forecast population growth.

This leaflet is going to every household on the peninsula and adjacent areas as we want to ensure as many people as possible and all stakeholders are able to be involved in the forthcoming consultation and have an opportunity to give us feedback on the planned road and rail improvements. We are also keen to hear your thoughts on future environmental improvements.

**new housing,
leisure and
employment
opportunities**

Why we're asking for your feedback now

Over the last few months, we have been working on the road, rail and environmental proposals to bring them to a point where we are now able to share them with residents, stakeholders and statutory consultees.

Included is a summary description of our proposals for the three schemes and explains how you can get involved in the consultation taking place early next year. Full details will be available on our website medway.gov.uk/futurehoo along with a questionnaire, which will go live from 4 January until 28 February 2021. Feedback from this engagement will be taken into account when finalising the applications for planning permissions and other consents. After the applications are submitted, there will be further opportunities for you to be involved and to have your say as the road, rail and environmental projects are considered as part of the planning processes.

Other related public consultations and engagements:

A number of council initiatives in respect of development on the Hoo Peninsula are taking place over the coming months:

- We have completed a pre-application consultation on the Cockham Community Parkland – and would like to thank everyone who responded to that. The application for planning permission for this proposal will be submitted in the next couple of months.
- In late spring 2021 the Medway Local Plan and its supporting evidence base will be published for consultation. This will be your opportunity to comment on how the council is planning for growth across Medway.



Overview of the proposals for Future Hoo

Access to and from the peninsula is currently restricted. There is only one way on and off; an issue frequently mentioned by residents and business on the Hoo Peninsula. The HIF-funded proposals seek to address this situation by providing three new or improved routes on and off the peninsula:

- (1) a new road linking the A289 to A228
- (2) improving the junctions along the Peninsula Way
- (3) a new rail passenger service connecting to London and the stations across Medway.

These investments will all be in place by spring 2024.

Each of these proposals will be subject to thorough scrutiny of its environmental impact, supported by detailed assessments of the local ecology, air quality and noise, cultural heritage and climate impact.

The proposals include additional provision for new public open spaces, pedestrian footpaths, cycleways, bridleways and spaces that will support wildlife and landscape features. All designed to create ease of access around the peninsula for residents and visitors.

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Future Hoo summary proposals

Full information on each of the proposed improvements will be detailed and available on the Future Hoo website or as a hard copy on request from January 2021.

Illustrative overview map:





Summary of road proposals

The essential road improvements are being designed to maximise the use of the existing road network and to create additional capacity. Measures include:

- Modifications to the A289 including providing new slip roads to Higham Road and widening and improvements to Islingham Farm Road and Woodfield Way. This will mean that drivers on the A289 will be able to leave at this junction to access Hoo rather than continue on to the Four Elms Roundabout. When traveling towards the M2/A2 drivers will be able to use the new road rather than continue down to the Four Elms Roundabout.
- A proposed new relief road from Upchat Roundabout on Woodfield Way, connecting to an improved Main Road Hoo junction. The new relief road will also connect users to the new slip roads on the A289 from Islingham Farm Road.
- A new junction on Peninsula Way providing access to a new road connecting to the proposed relief road.
- Improvements to A228 Bells Lane Roundabout and Dux Court Road, including widening to increase capacity and minimise queuing.
- Improvements to Ropers Lane Roundabout and access to the new railway station.
- Improvements to Four Elms Roundabout, including an additional lane and a dedicated slip road from the A289 Hasted Road to northbound A228, and a dedicated slip road coming down Four Elms Hill.
- An additional lane to Wulfere Way in each direction, and capacity improvements to Sans Pareil Roundabout.



Summary of rail improvements

The proposed scheme is to reinstate a rail passenger service on the Grain branch line and create a new station south of Sharnal Street providing a reliable link to London and the stations across Medway.

Passing places will be provided along the existing single line to improve the frequency of trains and flexibility in the service. Initially we are proposing a half hourly service. There is scope for this frequency to be increased in line with growth in passenger demand.

There is also the potential to construct a new section of line which links the existing Grain branch line to Higham Station. If included in the scheme, this would also enable a direct train service to the stations across Medway.

We propose to provide a direct service to London, through Gravesend, throughout the morning and evening peak periods.

The station will form part of an integrated transport plan for development in the area which would include both cycle routes to housing and the wider peninsula and feeder bus routes linking new and existing housing and employment areas to the station.

Summary of environmental improvements

An essential element of ensuring a positive future for the Hoo Peninsula is the planning of environmental improvements and management of the area's ecology and landscapes, alongside addressing the impact of growth. The HIF has allocated £14m to enable the development of a Strategic Environmental Management Scheme (SEMS). The scheme will be in place by spring 2024.

The SEMS objectives are to:

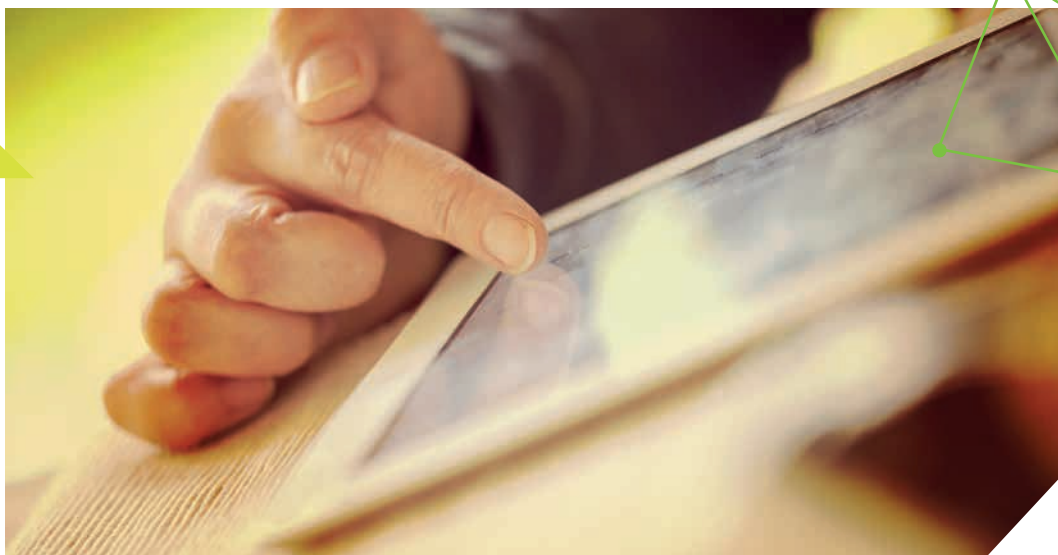
- Create large areas of green space close to Hoo which are there mainly to encourage wildlife, and that people can freely enjoy without disturbing wildlife.
- Create new, connected green spaces, which can be easily accessed by people and wildlife through the introduction of new paths.
- Provide a green bridge over the Peninsula Way which will combine new walking and cycling provision with the creation of shrub and grassland habitats.

The proposed areas will deliver a working landscape of meadows, woods and orchards. The Cockham Community Parkland running alongside the Saxon Shore Way south of Main Road forms part of the SEMS and provides an example of how the scheme will be designed. Following public consultation on the parkland in the summer, we will be seeking planning permissions for this community parkland in the next couple of months.

The new open spaces provided by the SEMS will provide additional opportunities for recreation such as informal play and picnicking. Areas will be managed by rangers and will be free to enter.

The planned open spaces will complement other local initiatives such as Birdwise and be informed by the environmental considerations of the Local Plan and the High Halstow and Hoo Neighbourhood Plans.





Please take part and help shape the future of Hoo

The information in this leaflet is an overview of the much wider proposals. Further information for each element of the proposals for road, rail and environment will be available on the Future Hoo website or as a hard copy on request from January 2021. We encourage you to read this information before submitting your feedback.

Please submit your feedback between 4 January and 28 February via the online questionnaire at **medway.gov.uk/futurehoo**

Using the online facility will ensure your input will be directly captured, recorded and analysed alongside all of the other submissions. If you have difficulty accessing the online questionnaire, please contact the HIF team by email at **futurehoo@medway.gov.uk** and we will send you a hard copy of the questionnaire. Your response will then be recorded on to the system.

Next steps

The engagement and consultation process will run from 4 January until 28 February 2021.

All the responses received will be reviewed and analysed, and the feedback will inform the on-going development of the three projects.

We are committed to working with Hoo and wider Medway communities during this process and will be providing ongoing opportunities for people to be involved and provide feedback.

Thank you for your interest in Future Hoo.