

Highways Agency

A259(T)/ A2070 Hastings to Ashford

Route Management Strategy

Public Consultation Report

April 2005

Halcrow Group Limited

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Contents Amendment Record

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Contents

1	Executive summary	1
2	Introduction	3
	2.1 <i>Purpose of the Public Consultation</i>	3
	2.2 <i>Period of consultation</i>	3
	2.3 <i>Structure of this report</i>	3
3	Method of approach	4
	3.1 <i>Target groups</i>	4
	3.2 <i>Issues for consultation</i>	7
	3.3 <i>Leaflet and questionnaire</i>	8
	3.4 <i>Deposit points</i>	9
	3.5 <i>Press announcement</i>	10
	3.6 <i>Website</i>	10
4	Results of consultation	11
	4.1 <i>Questionnaire / email responses</i>	11
5	Key issues from questionnaire responses	14
	5.1 <i>Traffic speed</i>	14
	5.2 <i>Alignment / standards / improvements</i>	14
	5.3 <i>Signage</i>	15
	5.4 <i>Maintenance</i>	16
	5.5 <i>Safety</i>	17
	5.6 <i>Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)</i>	17
	5.7 <i>Congestion</i>	17
	5.8 <i>Noise</i>	18
	5.9 <i>Non-motorised users (NMU)</i>	18
	5.10 <i>General comments</i>	19
	5.11 <i>Issues outside the defined area of the RMS</i>	19
6	Council responses	21
	6.1 <i>Kent County Council</i>	21
	6.2 <i>East Sussex County Council</i>	22
	6.3 <i>Rother District Council</i>	24
	6.4 <i>Shepway District Council</i>	25
	6.5 <i>Lydd Town Council</i>	25

7	Other Stakeholder and Consultee Responses	26
7.1	<i>South East England Regional Assembly</i>	26
7.2	<i>South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)</i>	27
7.3	<i>Seaspace – Bexhill and Hastings Renaissance</i>	27
7.4	<i>Strategic Rail Authority</i>	29
7.5	<i>Winchelsea Town Plan: Traffic & Transport Working Group</i>	29
7.6	<i>Friends of the Brede Valley</i>	30
8	Conclusion	32

Appendices

A	Report on stakeholder seminar
B	Press announcement
C	Responses from councils
D	Responses from other stakeholders and consultees

1

Executive summary

There was public consultation on the A259 (T)/ A2070 Hastings to Ashford draft Route Management Strategy (RMS) during a 12-week period from September to December 2004. The purpose of the consultation was to collect the views of those affected by the route on the draft RMS.

The consultation was approached in three ways. Firstly, there was a stakeholder seminar in advance of the formal public consultation. Comments from this seminar were appended to the draft RMS made available during the consultation, and this allowed stakeholders to make further comment, if desired.

Secondly, individual letters and leaflets were sent to local political representatives ranging from MPs to Parish Councils, as well as other known special interest groups that might wish to comment.

Finally, the opinions of the general public were sought through an information leaflet and questionnaire. Copies of the leaflet and questionnaire were made widely available in the consultation area. This was supported by copies of the draft RMS report that were deposited in selected libraries and council offices.

In all, there were 211 responses during the consultation. This is regarded as a good response considering the relatively modest number of people living along the route.

It was evident from the responses that the information provided was well understood and the recommendations of the draft RMS were generally welcomed. However, there were a number of local issues raised, particularly in Rye and Winchelsea, that were not adequately addressed in the draft RMS. There were also many comments about the inadequacy of direction signing between Ashford and Hastings. The final RMS will be edited to take account of these issues.

There were also a number of issues of a wider strategic nature raised that were outside the scope of the RMS. Typically these included calls for new bypasses, substantial improvements to the existing route and the introduction of restrictions on heavy goods vehicles.

The main issue raised by stakeholders was that the some sections of the route were not 'fit for purpose', and specifically not suitable for heavy goods vehicles. The concern was that this could stifle the initiatives for regeneration in Hastings.

These more substantial measures are outside the scope of this study and therefore in such cases the RMS report refers to the most recent strategic study, the South Coast Multi Modal Study (SoCoMMS), and the subsequent response by the Secretary of State.

2 Introduction

2.1 *Purpose of the Public Consultation*

The Route Management Strategy (RMS) aims to identify and collate existing problems and concerns along the route as well as to consider future development issues. To ensure that the concerns and opinions of those affected by the route, including those who have a stakeholder interest in it, were incorporated into the final report, a public consultation was carried out.

2.2 *Period of consultation*

The period for the public consultation was twelve weeks, which ran from September to December 2004.

2.3 *Structure of this report*

The aim of this report is to:

- Detail the approach adopted for the consultation
- Report on the responses received as part of the consultation
- Draw conclusions from consultation responses
- Indicate how comments from the consultation will be incorporated into the final RMS report.

3 Method of approach

3.1 *Target groups*

The following groups of people were targeted for the consultation:

- Stakeholders
- Members of Parliament
- County & District/Borough Councillors
- Parish Councils
- General Public

3.1.1 *Stakeholders*

A stakeholder seminar was held on 30 June 2004. Before the seminar the following were sent copies of the draft RMS and were asked, if they wished, to supply any comments:

- English Nature
- English Heritage
- The Countryside Agency
- The Environment Agency
- Sustrans
- Romney Marsh Levels Internal Drainage Board
- The Rye Partnership
- South East England Development Agency
- Freight Transport Association
- Ramblers Association
- British Horse Society

The following were invited to attend the seminar:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Kent County Council
- Shepway District Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Rother District Council
- Hastings Borough Council
- Kent County Constabulary
- Government Office of the South East
- Sussex Police
- Seaspaces
- InterRoute

A seminar report is included in Appendix A.

Additionally all of the above were also written to individually and invited to respond to the public consultation.

3.1.2

Members of Parliament & Councillors

The following were written to and invited to respond to the public consultation:

- Members of Parliament for Kent and East Sussex
- County Councillors for Kent and East Sussex
- Councillors for Rother District, Shepway District & Ashford Borough Councils

3.1.3

Parish Councils

There are many parish councils in East Sussex and Kent, and it was assumed that not all of them would have an interest in the RMS. It was decided to invite comments from those councils actually situated along the route. Additionally, from a plan showing parish council boundaries, an attempt was made to determine those councils that although not directly situated along the route, could be affected by

the route, and invite comments from them. The following is a list of all the parish councils who were written to and individually invited to respond to the RMS.

- Brenzett Parish Council
- Brookland Parish Council
- Burmarsh Parish Council
- Camber Parish Council
- Dymchurch Parish Council
- East Guldeford Parish Council
- Fairlight Parish Council
- Guestling Parish Council
- Icklesham Parish Council
- Iden Parish Council
- Kingsnorth Parish Council
- Kingsnorth Village Parish Council
- Lydd Town Council
- Mersham & Sevington Parish Council
- New Romney Town Council
- Newchurch Parish Council
- Orlestone Parish Council
- Pett Parish Council
- Playden Parish Council
- Romney Marsh Parish Council
- Rye Foreign Parish Council
- Rye Town Council
- Shadoxhurst Parish Council
- Snargate Parish Council

- St Mary in the Marsh Parish Council
- Udimore Parish Council
- Warehorne Parish Council
- Woodchurch Parish Council

3.1.4

General Public

It was the intention to consult with the general public via a series of exhibitions held in supermarkets and libraries along the route. However, due to the rural nature of the route the only suitable locations for this type of exhibition were Hastings and Ashford. As both these locations are at the ends of the route it was deemed that this was not the most appropriate manner of engaging the people living alongside the route. Alternatively, it was decided to invite comments from the public by the use of a leaflet and questionnaire. See section 3.3 for information on the creation and distribution of the leaflet and questionnaire.

3.2

Issues for consultation

An initial draft RMS report was written prior to the stakeholder seminar held in June last year. This report aimed to identify the problems and issues along the route, and proposed 'route outcomes'. Route outcomes form a plan of how the problems and issues are to be addressed over the next ten years. The information on problems and issues for this initial draft were gained from liaising with Local Authorities, Highways Agency Managing Agents, and looking at reports such as the Non-Motorised Users Crossing Survey for the A259 and accident data for the entire route. As an outcome of the Stakeholder Seminar, the proposed route outcomes were validated and in parts edited to reflect the views expressed by the stakeholders. The problems and issues that form the route outcomes were described in the consultation leaflet and questionnaire, and formed the basis of the public consultation. The main eleven problems identified in the leaflet were:

- Number of accidents
- Severity of accidents
- Accidents involving pedestrians, pedal cyclists, motor cyclists, equestrians and children
- Sharp bends in the road
- Effect the route has visually on towns and villages
- Inadequate access to food, toilets, fuel and rest facilities

- Inadequate facilities for cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians
- Effect of new developments on the existing route
- Need for diversions when road maintenance is being carried out
- Road Congestion

3.3

Leaflet and questionnaire

The design of the leaflet was simple and showed a plan of the route under consideration as well as defining the eleven problems mentioned in section 3.2, together with locations and possible solutions. In addition the leaflet included: a route description, information on land use and development issues, where copies of the draft RMS report could be viewed and how to respond to the consultation.

The leaflet was distributed together with a questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire was to validate information already gathered and to give the public an opportunity to mention any additional problems and issues, not already discussed.

The questionnaire aimed to determine how many of the respondents:

- lived along the route
- which section of the route they predominately used
- what form of transport they used
- how often they used the route and at which times of the day

In addition, respondents were asked for their views on six key issues and at what locations they knew these problems to occur. These six issues were:

- ease of crossing the route
- safety
- congestion
- sharp bend
- narrow sections of the road
- adequacy of signs

The results from the consultation can be found in section 4 of this report.

3.4

Deposit points

Copies of the leaflet and questionnaire along with a copy of the draft RMS report were placed at:

- Ashford Library
- Hastings Library
- Hastings Mobile Library
- Polegate Library
- Rye Library
- Ashford Borough Council Offices
- East Sussex County Council Offices – Lewes
- Rother District Council Offices

In addition to the above locations it was the aim to deposit leaflets at as many shops and community facilities along the route as possible. As a result leaflets were deposited at the following locations for the general public to pick-up:

Place	Address	Number of leaflets placed
Tesco	Ashford Crooksfoot Store Hythe Road	150 in store 150 in petrol filling station
Little Chef	Brenzett Garage	100
Total Petrol Filling Station	Brenzett Garage	100
Ashford Tourist Information Centre	18 Churchyard Ashford	250
Ashford Library	Church Road Ashford	250
Costcutter/Post Office	The Street Hamstreet	25
Rye Tourist Information Centre	Heritage Centre Strand Quay Rye	400
Rye Library	Lion Street Rye	250
Rother District Council Help & Advice Centre	48 Cinque Port Street Rye	100

Place	Address	Number of leaflets placed
Winchelsea Community Office/ Post Office	High Street Winchelsea	50
Winchelsea Lodge Motel	Hastings Road Winchelsea	100
Texaco Petrol Filling Station	Guestling Garage Winchelsea Road	100
Hastings Tourist Information Centre	Queens Square Hastings	400
Hastings Tourist Information Centre	The Stade Old Town Hastings	100
Hastings Library	Brassey Institute Hastings	250
Rother District Council	The Town Hall Bexhill-on-Sea	500
East Sussex County Council	County Hall Lewes	250

3.5

Press announcement

A press announcement was issued at the start of the public consultation, a copy of which can be found in Appendix B.

3.6

Website

A website for the RMS has also been created. A web-based version of the draft report and consultation leaflet can be found on the site. In addition, during the public consultation the questionnaire could be completed on-line. For the duration of the consultation a dedicated email address was available for people to write to with their views. The site can be found at:

http://www.highways.gov.uk/roads/projects/a_roads/a259/hastings_ashford/

4 Results of consultation

4.1 Questionnaire / email responses

A total of 210 responses had been returned by the end of the consultation period. Questionnaire responses totalled 154, with a further 35 e-mail responses received. The e-mail responses have been included in the general assessment along with the questionnaires. During the consultation period a total of 14 letters were received from members of the public, along with 7 formal responses from stakeholders. These responses have not been included in the questionnaire and e-mail assessment but have been included in the overall assessment.

4.1.1 Question 1 – Do you live close to the route?

Of the respondents who answered question 1:

- 88% lived near the route
- 12% were not local to the route

4.1.2 Question 2 – Which section of the route do you predominantly use?

Of the respondents who answered question 2:

- 37% predominately use the A259
- 17% predominately use the A2070
- 46% predominately use both

4.1.3 Question 3 – Which form of transport do use on the A259/A2070?

For the respondents who answered question 3 the results are displayed below.

	Bus (%)	Car (%)	Cycle (%)	Equestrian (%)	HGV (%)	Motorcycle (%)	Van (%)	Walk (%)	Other (%)
Total	8	57	10	1	2	4	4	11	3

From the table it can be seen that the most used form of transport along the route is the car; the vehicles that form the 'other' category are: tractors, motor caravans and an ambulance.

4.1.4

Question 4 – How often do you use the A259/A2070?

For the respondents who answered question 4 the results are as follows

	Daily (%)	Weekly (%)	Every 2-3 Weeks (%)	Monthly (%)	Less (%)
Total	51	35	9	4	1

4.1.5

Question 5– During which time of day do you mainly use the A259/A2070?

For the respondents who answered question 5 the results are as follows

	Peak (%)	Daytime (%)	Night Time (%)	Weekend (%)	All (%)
Total	15	29	11	22	23

4.1.6

Question 6– Please rate the following issues identified on the A259/A2070 in terms of their severity

In order to analyse this question more efficiently the results have been divided into comments relating to the A259 & A2070 individually and those comments that relate to the entire route. The responses to this question are as follows:

			Ease of crossing (%)	Safety (%)	Congestion (%)	Sharp Bends (%)	Narrow section (%)	Adequacy of signs (%)	Other (%)
Severity A259	1	Extremely Concerned	40	65	35	57	69	19	78
	2	Moderately Concerned	47	29	37	26	20	31	19
	3	No Concern	13	6	28	17	10	50	3
			Ease of crossing (%)	Safety (%)	Congestion (%)	Sharp Bends (%)	Narrow section (%)	Adequacy of signs (%)	Other (%)
Severity	1	Extremely Concerned	44	81	43	33	28	21	81

			Ease of crossing (%)	Safety (%)	Congestion (%)	Sharp Bends (%)	Narrow section (%)	Adequacy of signs (%)	Other (%)
A2070	2	Moderately Concerned	44	19	29	28	33	47	0
	3	No Concern	13	0	29	39	39	32	19
			Ease of crossing (%)	Safety (%)	Congestion (%)	Sharp Bends (%)	Narrow section (%)	Adequacy of signs (%)	Other (%)
Severity Entire Route	1	Extremely Concerned	43	62	37	65	66	20	80
	2	Moderately Concerned	34	28	35	22	20	52	16
	3	No Concern	22	11	28	14	14	28	4

Other issues mentioned included dangerous driving including overtaking, the inadequacy of the route as a trunk road, noise, parking, lack of cycle provision and railway crossings.

4.1.7

Question 7– Any other comments?

When asked if there were any other comments, there were a wide variety of responses. These have been grouped into twelve key issues. A summary of these main issues is given in section 5 of this report.

5 Key issues from questionnaire responses

5.1 *Traffic speed*

In total, 8% of respondents commented on traffic speed.

5.1.1 *Comment:*

Most comments on speed related to the A2070. In particular there is concern regarding vehicles performing overtaking manoeuvres at high speed on the single carriageway section of the A2070.

5.1.2 *Response:*

This problem has been identified in the RMS report and is covered by Route Outcome RO1 and Route Outcome RO2.

5.1.3 *Comment:*

The main concern with regard to speed and the A259 appears to be that motorists take short cuts through adjacent villages, particularly Winchelsea.

5.1.4 *Response:*

Unfortunately this is beyond the scope of the RMS as the roads under consideration are local roads, which are the responsibility of the local authority and not the Highways Agency.

5.2 *Alignment / standards / improvements*

5.2.1 *Comment:*

This was the area where most comments were made, accounting for 24% of the total comments received. Many comments focussed on the suitability of the A259 as a trunk road, and difficulties experienced by HGVs in negotiating the many bends along the route.

5.2.2 *Response:*

The ability to substantially change the suitability of the route to better perform as a trunk road is outside the scope of the RMS. The RMS aims to assist the HA in planning and optimising investment in the existing trunk road network, and in the delivery of HA strategic plans and ten year transport strategy. The Secretary of State's response to the South Coast Multi-Modal Study was to use the Hastings to

Ashford RMS to review safety and other local issues along the route. Having said this, the RMS has identified that there may be scope to improve the carriageway alignment at certain locations along the route, particularly in the East Guldeford area. This is detailed in Route Outcome RO4.

5.2.3

Comment:

As in section 5.1.1 above, comments were received relating to overtaking on the A2070, and the possibility of changing the road alignment to reduce the problem.

5.2.4

Response:

This problem is covered by Route Outcome RO1

5.2.5

Comment:

Comments were received regarding the need for improved facilities for travellers along the route.

5.2.6

Response:

This problem has already been identified in Route Outcome RO6.

5.2.7

Comment:

Comments were received regarding the need for junction improvements especially at Rye Harbour and local roads joining the A2070.

5.2.8

Response:

This problem has already been identified and is covered by Route Outcome RO8.

5.3

Signage

Of the total number of respondents 8% of people made comments regarding signage along the A259 and A2070.

5.3.1

Comment:

Comments related to the need for signs to mention local village facilities and tourist areas.

5.3.2

Response:

This problem has already been identified and is covered by Route Outcome RO6.

5.3.3

Comment:

Another issue mentioned, regarding signs, is that the destinations on signs have not changed since the section of the A259 east of Brenzett has been de-trunked and the A2070 has become a trunk road. As a consequence, signs direct users travelling to Hastings along the de-trunked section of the A259 and not via junction 10 of the M20 and the A2070. Additionally signs on junction 10 of the M20 show Brenzett as the main destination and not Hastings.

5.3.4

Response:

This problem was not covered by a Route Outcome in the draft RMS report. However, an additional Route Outcome RO11 has been created, covering the need for a review of signing along the route.

5.3.5

Comment:

Comments were also received regarding sign clutter on the A259. Concerns were that the existing signs were too complicated and confusing, but also not appropriate in such an environmentally sensitive area.

5.3.6

Response:

As mentioned above, Route Outcome RO11 has been created covering the need to review signing along the route. This Route Outcome also suggests a review of existing sign clutter, and that sign clutter is considered when instigating changes to direction signing.

5.4

Maintenance

3% of comments received related to maintenance along the route.

5.4.1

Comment:

The main areas of concern were in relation to the quality of road surface, particularly at South Undercliff and Fishmarket Road in Rye and Guestling Thorn. Comments regarding overgrown vegetation covering signs and obstructing grass verges were also received.

5.4.2

Response:

All comments relating to maintenance issues have been passed on to the Highways Agency Managing Agent Contractor for the route.

5.5

Safety

11% of responses related to safety, similar to those mentioned in previous sections above. Many of these responses were concerned with speed and overtaking on the single carriageway section of the A2070.

5.5.1

Comment:

Additional comments were received voicing concern regarding the safety of junctions on the dual-carriageway section of the A2070 between the Cloverleaf junction and the M20.

5.5.2

Response:

These problems have already been identified in Route Outcome RO6.

5.6

Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)

3% of comments received related to HGVs on the route, with all being in relation to the A259 only.

5.6.1

Comment:

The major concern is that two HGVs are often unable to pass each other at certain locations along the route due to the narrowness of the road.

5.6.2

Response:

This issue has already been identified and is covered by Route Outcome RO4.

5.7

Congestion

Congestion accounted for 7% of comments.

5.7.1

Comment:

The majority of comments related to congestion at Junction 10 of the M20.

5.7.2

Response:

This issue has been identified in the RMS report and is covered by Route Outcome RO10.

5.7.3

Comment:

Additional comments received related to A259 through Rye and the problem with parked cars along South Undercliff.

5.7.4 *Response:*
This issue is now included in Route Outcome RO3, Safety, accident reduction for vulnerable users and RO4, Route alignment.

5.8 **Noise**
3% of people have indicated that noise is a problem along the route.

5.8.1 *Comment:*
Particular areas of concern were Winchelsea and Icklesham. Suggestions included quiet road surfacing and noise barriers.

5.8.2 *Response:*
The problem of noise is now covered by Route Outcome RO5.

5.9 **Non-motorised users (NMU)**
NMU comments totalled 6% with the main issues being related to pedestrians and cyclists.

5.9.1 *Comment:*
Most pedestrian issues related to difficulties experienced in crossing the route, lack of footpath provision along certain sections of the route and proximity to HGVs. Comments from cyclists were related to the lack of cycle path provision along certain sections of the route and inadequate signing for existing cycle routes. Comments received from equestrians related to difficulty in crossing the route.

5.9.2 *Response:*
These issues have already been identified and are covered by Route Outcomes RO3 and R07.

5.9.3 *Comment:*
In total 10% of all comments received mentioned the need for bypasses of Rye and Winchelsea.

5.9.4 *Response:*
It is not the remit of the RMS to consider bypasses and major improvements to the trunk road network. Government decisions on these larger scale improvements are based on the findings of their multi modal studies. The A259 (T)/A2070 was considered as part of the South Coast Multi Modal Study. This study did not recommend any bypasses for this part of the trunk road; rather it recommended

that smaller scale improvements should be considered to address specific problems on the route.

5.10

General comments

A further 11% of responses made general comments on issues that were not specific to any of the key issues mentioned above.

- Journey Times
- South Coast Dual Carriageway needed to join M27
- Alterations will increase speed
- Straightening the road will require detailed info on Hydrology, Geology, Natural History and Archaeology of the area.
- Environmental considerations
- Appreciation for conducting the survey
- Improve rail link, in order to increase capacity for heavy goods
- Improve link Hastings to M25
- Small improvements are tinkering and will produce no long term benefits
- Educate drivers rather than spending money on small improvements
- In its present state the A259 acts as traffic calming
- HA should spend more money south of London
- Under provision when the A2070 was built, needs to be dual carriageway
- In order to make appropriate comments projected traffic flow data should be provided
- The money should be spent improving the A21 rather than the A259/A2070
- Improving the road will lead to a reduction in the Bus service

5.11

Issues outside the defined area of the RMS

In addition to some of the issues already mentioned, some of the comments received during the consultation referred to issues that were outside the area of the study, as follows.

- Issues relating to the A259 through Hastings, this section of the A259 is not a trunk road, and is the responsibility of the Local Authority and not the Highways Agency
- Issues relating to the A26, this road is not under consideration in this particular RMS

6 Council responses

Formal responses have been received from the following Councils:

- Kent County Council,
- East Sussex County Council,
- Rother District Council,
- Shepway District Council,
- Lydd Town Council

Copies of these responses are included in Appendix C.

All of the responses have been summarised below.

6.1 ***Kent County Council***

Kent County Council (KCC) submitted a report referring to sections 3, 4 and 5 of the RMS, as these are the sections that pass through Kent. Generally KCC are supportive of the proposals outlined and the need to address local safety and accessibility issues along the particular route. They re-iterate the importance the trunk road will play in the planned growth of Ashford.

A representative of KCC attended the A259 / A2070 seminar in Rye on 30 June 2004 and the Council remains supportive of the proposals at the seminar, and asks that the comments made by the syndicate groups at the seminar are incorporated into the final RMS report. Issues of particular concern are as follows.

6.1.1 *Issue:*

There is a need to review the signing to encourage the use of the A2070 as opposed to the de-trunked section of the A259. It is noted that KCC are considering modifications to the de-trunked section of the A259 to discourage traffic that would be better served by the trunk road route.

6.1.2 *Response:*

This problem has been identified and is covered Route Outcome RO11.

6.1.3 *Issue:*
KCC expressed concern regarding the number of accidents on the Cloverleaf junction and also the inappropriate speeds and overtaking on the single carriageway sections of the A2070.

6.1.4 *Response:*
These problems have been identified and are covered by Route Outcomes RO1 and RO2.

6.1.5 *Issue:*
Severance of communities in south Ashford may be caused by the A2070 as the proposed developments evolve in this area.

6.1.6 *Response:*
This issue is covered by Route Outcome RO7.

6.1.7 *Issue:*
KCC question the suitability of the existing route for HGVs between Guldeford Lane Corner and Brenzett.

6.1.8 *Response:*
The RMS has identified that there may be scope to improve the carriageway alignment at certain locations along the route, particularly in the East Guldeford area. This is detailed in Route Outcome RO4.

6.1.9 *Issue:*
There is a lack of pedestrian crossing facilities at Brookland.

6.1.10 *Response:*
This issue is covered by Route Outcome RO7.

KCC has also made some strategic comments, but it is beyond the scope of the RMS to deal with these comments.

6.2 ***East Sussex County Council***

East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) Lead Cabinet Member for Transport & Environment, Councillor Matthew Lock, considered the strategy's proposals on 6 November 2004.

The main comments from ESCC on the draft RMS report are as follows:

6.2.1

Comment:

To re-emphasise to the Highways Agency the vital role of the A259/A2070 in supporting the regeneration of the Hastings/Bexhill area through the link with the Ashford Growth Area, in meeting requirements for development identified in emerging regional planning policies and linking Hastings with Rye Harbour Industrial Area.

6.2.2

Response:

The importance the A259/A2070 has on the regeneration of Hastings and Bexhill and also the future development of Ashford is noted. Within the limits of the RMS, as much as possible has been done to improve the link between these two areas.

6.2.3

Comment:

To draw the Highways Agency's attention to the urgent need for a comprehensive improvement programme for the A259 in order to provide a route of a consistent, high standard between Hastings and Ashford.

6.2.4

Response:

This comment is noted, however this type of improvement programme is not within the remit of the RMS.

6.2.5

Comment:

To request the Highways Agency to carry out as a matter of urgency an environmental analysis of the effects of trunk road traffic on properties in Rye and Winchelsea with a view to early implementation of appropriate mitigation measures.

6.2.6

Response:

This issue is covered by Route Outcome RO5 of the RMS, "To reduce the visual & noise intrusion caused by the route and the traffic using it."

6.2.7

Comment:

ESCC supports proposals to enhance safety on the route, but requests further consideration of the needs of non-motorised users.

6.2.8 *Response:*
Route Outcome RO7 covers improvements to non-motorised user facilities. The outcome also details possible actions. This should not be seen as a definitive or indeed definite list of works to be carried out. The target for this outcome is to carry out a study of the entire route to determine which areas would benefit most from improved facilities.

6.2.9 *Comment:*
To support proposals to straighten the road between East Guldeford and Guldeford Lane Corner, and to request the Highways Agency and the rail authorities to consider the role of this improvement in bringing forward the upgrading of the Ashford- Hastings railway.

6.2.10 *Response:*
This issue is covered under Route Outcome RO9, “To eliminate the need for diversions and consequent delays associated with road maintenance”.

6.2.11 *Comment:*
ESCC supports proposals to partially widen the route.

6.2.12 *Response:*
This issue is covered under Route Outcome RO9, “To eliminate the need for diversions and consequent delays associated with road maintenance”.

6.2.13 *Comment:*
To remind the Highways Agency of the Secretary of State’s instructions, following the SoCoMMS, and the need, therefore to extend the RMS westwards to Pevensey, ensuring it includes the A259 within the Hastings Borough and the Bexhill area.

6.2.14 *Response:*
This issue is beyond the scope of this RMS.

6.3 ***Rother District Council***
Rother District Council’s (RDC) response to the report concentrated on reviewing the ten route outcomes. The key emphasis was on those outcomes that relate to safety, environment, economic growth and the improving of the route as a strategic link. All of RDC’s comments regarding the proposed route outcomes have been considered in preparing the final RMS report.

6.3.1 *In addition RDC recommended an additional route outcome:*
That ‘*ameliorates* the impact of the traffic on the living conditions of the residents that live close to the route, including traffic speed, noise and vibration. Account must also be taken of the impact of the route on the historic environments of Rye and Winchelsea.’

6.3.2 *Response:*
This is reflected by the inclusion of RO5 in the final RMS report.

6.4 *Shepway District Council*

6.4.1 *Comment:*
Shepway District Council’s main issue was regarding the need to review the signing along the route as a consequence of the de-trunking of parts of the A259 and the trunking of the A2070.

6.4.2 *Response:*
This issue is covered by RO11 in the final RMS report.

6.5 *Lydd Town Council*

In response to the RMS the Town Council agreed that Councillors would make their own individual response to the document if they wished.

7 Other Stakeholder and Consultee Responses

In addition to Local Councils, responses have also been received from other stakeholders and consultees, as follows:

- South East England Regional Assembly
- South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
- Seaspaces – Bexhill and Hastings Renaissance
- Strategic Rail Authority
- Winchelsea Town Plan: Traffic & Transport Working Group
- Friends of the Brede Valley

Copies of these responses are included in Appendix D.

All of the responses have been summarised below.

7.1 ***South East England Regional Assembly***

The response from the South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) concentrated mainly on the strategic level issues relating to the RMS, with particular regard to:

- 7.1.1 *Comment:*
Providing a primary link between the growth and regeneration areas of Hastings and Ashford
- 7.1.2 *Response:*
This is a broad strategic issue, which, while recognised, may not be fully resolved within the scope of the RMS.
- 7.1.3 *Comment:*
Linking Hastings and other East Sussex towns to Ashford International, the Channel Tunnel, and the Port of Dover
- 7.1.4 *Response:*
This is recognised under the route functions described in the RMS.

- 7.1.5 *Comment:*
The route provides a link to other sub regional areas of population and employment.
- 7.1.6 *Response:*
This is recognised under the route functions described in the RMS.
- 7.2 *South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)***
- 7.2.1 *Comment:*
SEEDA emphasised the importance of the route in connecting the Hastings area with Ashford, and the need for good transport links to enable the regeneration of Hastings.
- 7.2.2 *Response:*
This is a broad strategic issue, which, while recognised, may not be fully resolved within the scope of the RMS.
- 7.2.3 *Comment:*
Concerns were also expressed regarding the suitability of the route between Hastings and Ashford, as a trunk road.
- 7.2.4 *Response:*
It is beyond the scope of the RMS to recommend substantial changes beyond those recommended by the South Coast Multi-Modal Study, and accepted by the Secretary of State. The RMS aims to assist the HA in planning and optimising investment in the existing trunk road network, and in the delivery of HA strategic plans and ten year transport strategy. The Secretary of State's response to the South Coast Multi-Modal Study was to use the Hastings to Ashford RMS to review safety and other local issues along the route. Having said this, the RMS has identified that there may be scope to improve the carriageway alignment at certain locations along the route, particularly in the East Guldeford area. This is detailed in Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3 *Seaspace – Bexhill and Hastings Renaissance***
- 7.3.1 *Comment:*
As SEEDA above, Seaspace also emphasised the role the route has to play in connecting Hastings and Ashford and the importance of good transport provision to the regeneration of the Hastings and Bexhill area.

- 7.3.2 *Response:*
This is a broad strategic issue, which, while recognised, may not be fully resolved within the scope of the RMS.

Other particular issues raised by Seaspaces are:
- 7.3.3 *Comment:*
Priority should be given to the route between Hastings and Brenzett
- 7.3.4 *Response:*
Although the emphasis on improving the alignment of the route has been placed on this section of the route, priority on safety and accessibility issues can not be given to one section only but be applied fairly throughout the length of the route.
- 7.3.5 *Comment:*
The alignment of the carriageway at Ferry Hill Winchelsea, and visibility problems at Strand Hill Winchelsea
- 7.3.6 *Response:*
This problem has been identified and is covered by Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3.7 *Comment:*
Rye – South Undercliff
- 7.3.8 *Response:*
The need to review the on street parking in this area has been identified and is covered in Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3.9 *Comment:*
Guldeford area Bends and level crossings
- 7.3.10 *Response:*
Comment is noted. This is covered by Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3.11 *Comment:*
Brookland bends near Woolpack Public House.
- 7.3.12 *Response:*
Comment is noted. This is covered by Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3.13 *Comment:*
Improvements to the carriageway alignment between Hastings and Icklesham

- 7.3.14 *Response:*
Comment is noted. This is covered by Route Outcome RO4.
- 7.3.15 *Comment:*
Parts of the route are unsuitable for HGVs
- 7.3.16 *Response:*
Route Outcome RO4 suggests improvements to the worst section for HGVs between East Guldeford and Guldeford Lane Corner. Other areas of localised carriageway widening may also be identified following studies suggested in RO4.
- 7.3.17 *Comment:*
Narrowness of the route is noted leading to the need to close the road to carry out maintenance.
- 7.3.18 *Response:*
Route Outcome RO4 suggests improvements to the section between East Guldeford and Guldeford Lane Corner. This is one of the narrowest sections of the route.
- 7.3.19 *Comment:*
Joint funding of junction improvements to the junction of Rye Harbour Road with the A259 is requested.
- 7.3.20 *Response:*
This issue is noted under Route Outcome 8, which relates to the facilitation of development. However, it is not within the scope of the RMS to recommend funding of any particular scheme.
- 7.4 *Strategic Rail Authority***
The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) mentioned the introduction of the Ashford to Brighton direct service that is planned to start in December 2005 and the subsequent changes to the timetable between Ashford and Hastings and all intermediate stations.
- 7.5 *Winchelsea Town Plan: Traffic & Transport Working Group***
The working group submitted a very detailed response giving a history of the route and other consultations that have taken place. They recognised the need to consider a wider view of the problems and not just the immediate vicinity of the town. Their primary concern is the safety of road users, and those crossing the A259 in order to access the town, public facilities, residential properties, adjacent

roads and footpaths. The group identified Ferry Hill as a problem area with its narrow sections and sharp corner, as well as other safety problems at specific “hotspots” along the route.

The main issues are as follows:

7.5.1 *Comment:*
The Working Group consider that there should be improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities at Ferry Hill.

7.5.2 *Response:*
Provision of improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians is covered by RO7 which has been edited to ensure that Ferry Hill is listed as a problem location.

7.5.3 *Comment:*
The Working Group detailed particular locations where it is difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the A259.

7.5.4 *Response:*
These locations have been considered in revising Route Outcome RO7.

7.5.5 *Comment:*
The Working Group asks that safety schemes are prepared as requested in 7.5.3 above without creating inordinate amounts of sign clutter.

7.5.6 *Response:*
This issue is covered in Route Outcome RO11.

7.5.7 *Comment:*
Comments from the Wider View Group were submitted that looked at the short-term and the long-term. The comments regarding the short-term idea of limiting HGVs and coaches and improving signing from Brighton and Folkestone to discouraging the use of the route have been noted. However, these suggestions are not within the scope of the RMS.

7.6 *Friends of the Brede Valley*
The response submitted included a letter from April 2003 which detailed the group’s opposition to the A2070 trunking order and the A259 de-trunking order. This was reiterated in this response with the A259 route being described as totally

unsuitable for HGVs. The group stated that even with possible improvements suggested in the RMS it would be hard to see how problems of routing HGVs around Winchelsea and Rye could ever be properly solved to an acceptable economic & environmental cost.

7.6.1

Response:

This is a broad strategic issue, which, while recognised, may not be fully resolved within the scope of the RMS.

8

Conclusion

The many responses received during the public consultation have helped to verify the existing Route Outcomes proposed in the draft RMS report. As a response to comments received during the consultation many of the Route Outcomes have been edited and an additional Route Outcome RO11 has been created. It is hoped that all the key issues that were identified from the public consultation, and are within the scope of the RMS to address, are covered by the final set of Route Outcomes.

Concerns regarding the suitability of the route as a trunk road have been noted, however, there is no scope within the remit of this particular RMS to address this issue. Similarly requests for by-passes of Rye and Winchelsea have been noted, but as with the status of the trunk road this issue is outside the scope of the RMS.

Another key issue that has come out of the consultation is the importance the route plays as a link between the regeneration area of Hastings and Bexhill and the growth area of Ashford. The RMS has identified areas for improvement which will support this end, however due to the remit of the RMS these are mostly limited to safety and local schemes along the route.

