

Braintree Freeport Station  
Footbridge

**Public Report**

**Public Exhibition Report**

Analysis of Responses

September 2010

*Produced for*  
Essex County Council

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# Document Control Sheet

Project Title            Braintree Freeport Station Footbridge

Report Title            Public Exhibition Report – Analysis of responses

Revision                1

Status                  Final

Control Date           31<sup>st</sup> August 2010

## Record of Issue

Issue	Status	Author	Date	Check	Date	Authorised	Date
1	Final	G St Leger	08/10	K Valsamis-Warren	08/10	M Harris	08/10

## Distribution

Organisation	Contact	Copies
Essex County Council	Paul McLean	1
Mouchel	Graeme St Leger	1

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

In November 2009 Essex County Council's (ECC) Planning and Transportation Department undertook a public exhibition exercise as part of the Braintree Freeport Station Footbridge scheme.

## About the Exhibition

The public exhibition consisted of:

- Exhibitions to provide information outlining the proposals. The exhibitions, both staffed and unstaffed, were held at a location local to the scheme and at the main library in Braintree. Staff were available at the staffed exhibitions to answer questions and address concerns.
- Questionnaires to record public opinion.
- A website outlining the main aims of the scheme, electronic copies of the exhibition boards, an online questionnaire and details of the exhibitions.

## Exhibition Attendance

It is highly likely that more people viewed the exhibition as 300 questionnaires were distributed over the exhibition period, however only 43 people signed in at the staffed exhibitions and 23 people at the unstaffed exhibitions. Due to the open nature of the unstaffed exhibitions it was not known how many people attended but did not sign in. 96 questionnaires were received including 14 which were submitted online. In total 300 questionnaires were handed out giving a return percentage on the paper copies of 27.3%. This was considered to be a very good level of response.

## The key findings of the Public Exhibition

Below is a summary of the responses given to the questionnaires;

- 43% of respondents felt that the bridge would be beneficial to the area; however 47% indicated that the bridge would not benefit the area.
- 47% of respondents indicated that the bridge would be suitable in terms of accessibility;
- The majority of respondents considered that security and impact on the local residents were the most important things to be considered at the detailed design stage; and
- People stated that they would use the footbridge for varying reasons including going to Braintree Freeport railway station and accessing the leisure and shopping facilities at Braintree Freeport. It was found though that more respondents stated that they wouldn't use the bridge.

## General Comments

Respondents were invited to make further comments at the end of the questionnaire as well as in a comments book at the exhibition venues. These comments can be broadly grouped as support, opposition, concerns and other comments as follows (in no particular order with the main points only):

- Support the bridge (24% of all comments received)
- Oppose the bridge (19%)
- Concerns about
  - Parking on Mill Park Drive (43%)
  - Anti-Social behaviour (17%)
  - Noise from late night clubbers (17%)

# 1 The Public Exhibition

## 1.1 Introduction

In November 2009 Essex County Council's (ECC) Planning and Transportation department undertook a public consultation exercise for the Braintree Freeport Station Footbridge scheme. The purpose of the public consultation was to present the proposed footbridge scheme to the public.

## 1.2 Why the Consultation was needed

The primary objective of this consultation was to inform the public and thus to obtain public opinion and views on the various aspects of the project at the preliminary design stage. As the proposed footbridge will link a growing residential area to the Freeport retail park and being in close proximity to properties it was important to seek the public's view on the proposals. The final part of the consultation process was the reporting of the key findings from the correspondence and questionnaires. This report will detail this and ultimately be used as supporting material for the planning application.

## 1.3 Publicity

The public exhibition was well publicised. A quarter page colour advert was placed in the two local newspapers, Braintree and Witham Times and The Braintree and Witham Weekly News, for the week commencing Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009. Also posters were sent to Braintree town hall, the Town Clerk responsible for notice boards in the town centre, Braintree Freeport information centre, Braintree Town FC, Braintree rugby club, Tanner Homes sales office at Heathlands and neighbouring schools. In addition to this, posters and questionnaires were sent to Braintree District Council to be displayed and made available to visitors to the Council offices. Letters were either hand delivered or via Royal Mail to local residents, local businesses and local schools. Leaflets, letters and e-mails (copies of these can be found in the appendix) were also distributed to local residents, selected businesses, local schools and other stakeholders. A list of the stakeholders is available in Appendix 5.1.1 alongside a plan showing the extent of the letter drop catchment area. Finally, details of the exhibition along with a copy of the exhibition boards and questionnaire were made available on the Essex County Council website

## 1.4 Venues and Dates

Public exhibitions were held at the following venues on the following dates:

- Braintree Library - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009 during public open hours (Unstaffed);
- Braintree Library - Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November (09:00 – 13:00) (Staffed);  
and
- Braintree Swimming Centre - Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 (15:00 – 20:00) and Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2009 (09:30 – 15:30) (Staffed)

## **1.5 Exhibition Content**

Information for the public was displayed on seven A1 size boards and one A0 size board. The boards described the aim of the exhibition, the objectives of the scheme, and the proposals.

They were titled as follows:

Cover board;

- 1) Welcome to the exhibition;
- 2) Introduction;
- 3) The proposed scheme;
- 4) Bridge Details;
- 5) Residential Impacts;
- 6) Environmental Impacts;
- 7) The way forward; and
- 8) Contact details.

The exhibition materials (reduced size) are contained in Appendix 5.2.

## **1.6 Representation at the staffed exhibitions**

Representatives from ECC, Braintree District Council, Braintree Community Police and Mouchel were available to listen to and take note of the public's views and answer questions.

## **1.7 Getting Public Opinion**

During the consultation period the public were encouraged to give their views on the proposals by filling in a questionnaire. Questionnaires were handed out at the exhibition as well as being made available online.

The design of the questionnaire provided opportunities for both quantitative and qualitative results using tick boxes and allowing respondents to give reasons for some of their answers. Respondents were also invited to write further comments at the end of the questionnaire.

Attendees at the exhibitions were also invited to write their comments and suggestions in comments books. Letters and emails were also received with more detailed information from private organisations and individuals.

Responses to the questionnaire as well as a plot of home postcodes for people who attended the exhibition are presented in Section 2. A summary of the comments

books is presented in Section 3. A summary of respondents' letters, e-mails and telephone calls are presented in Section 4.

### **1.8 Public Exhibition Attendance**

Of the people who attended the exhibition 43 people signed in as having viewed the exhibition material at the staffed exhibitions. 23 people signed in at the unstaffed exhibition however it is not known how many people in total attended at this location. In total 300 questionnaires were taken away from the exhibitions.

## 2 Responses: Questionnaire

### 2.1 Level of Response

During the 2 week consultation period 96 questionnaires were received of which 14 were submitted online. The post codes of the respondents were plotted and revealed a concentration of responses from the vicinity of the scheme.

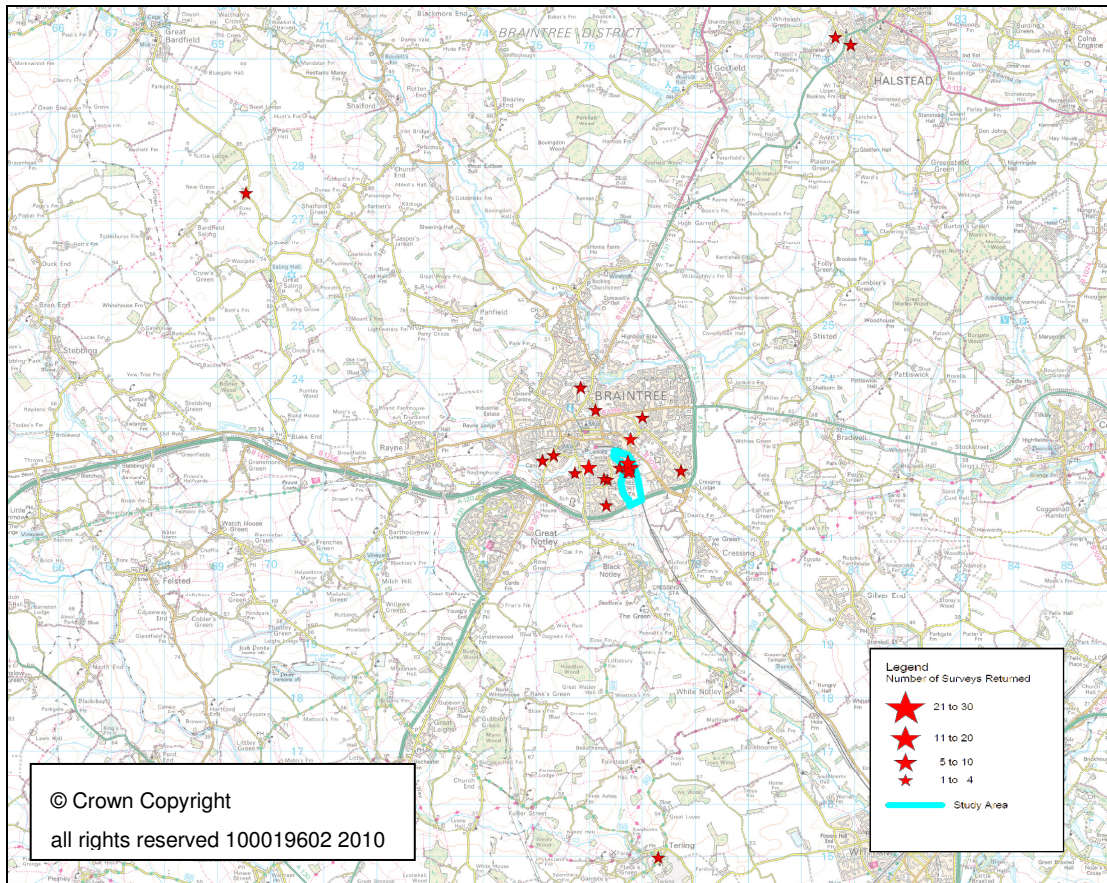


Figure 1: Postcodes of respondents who completed a questionnaire – Whole area



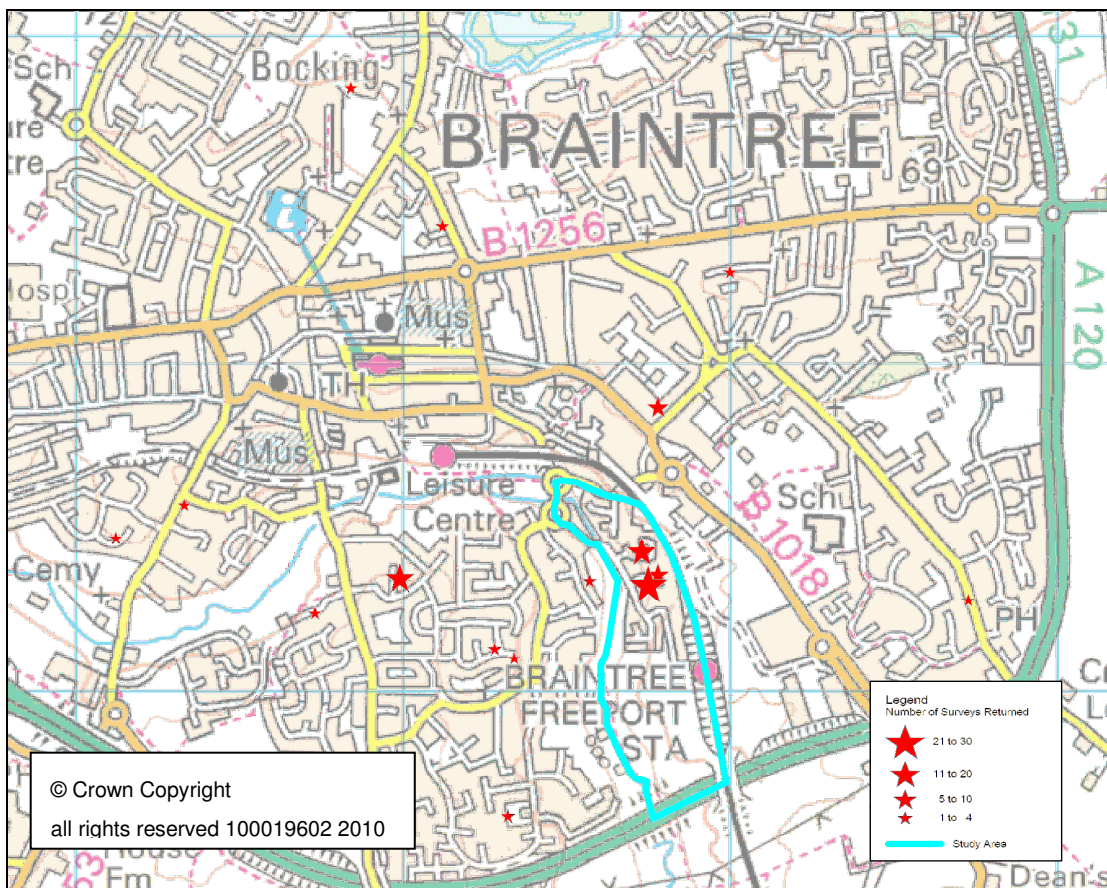


Figure 2: Postcodes of respondents who completed a questionnaire – Braintree

## **2.2 How the Data was analysed**

The questionnaire provided asked the respondent to answer questions by ticking boxes which allowed for quantitative data and statistical analysis. A number of the questions also gave the respondent the opportunity to give a written reason for their answer. These comments were grouped broadly into common themes to allow them to be quantified. Respondents were also invited to write further comments at the end of the questionnaire which have again been categorised into broad groups.

## **2.3 Results of Data Analysis**

The Questionnaire comprised of four sections as follows;

- Section 1: About you (Questions 1 – 5)
- Section 2: The Bridge (Questions 6 – 9)
- Section 3: About the bridge (Questions 10 – 11)
- Section 4: Further comments (Comments only)

A copy of the Questionnaire is provided in Appendix 6.3. The results of the data analysis are as follows.

## Section 1: About you

### Question 1: Age

The greatest response from any of the groups was the 60+ group (42%) and the smallest response was from the 18 or under group who did not respond. See Figure 3 below.

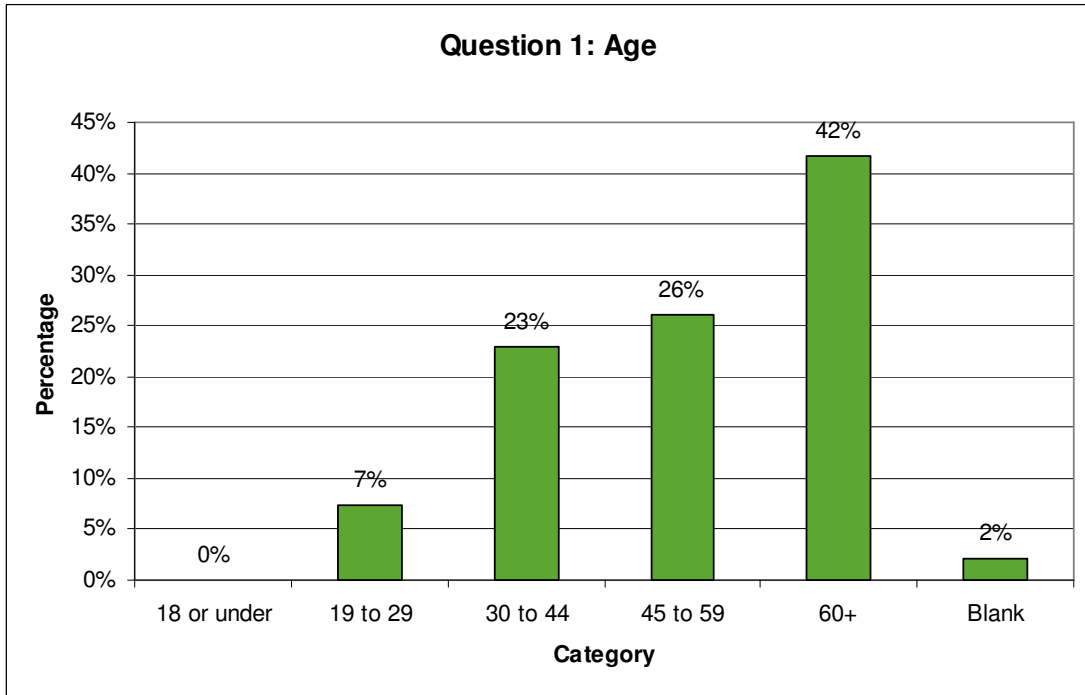


Figure 3: Age of Respondents

### Question 2: Gender

The majority of respondents were male (54%) compared to females (41%). See Figure 4 below.

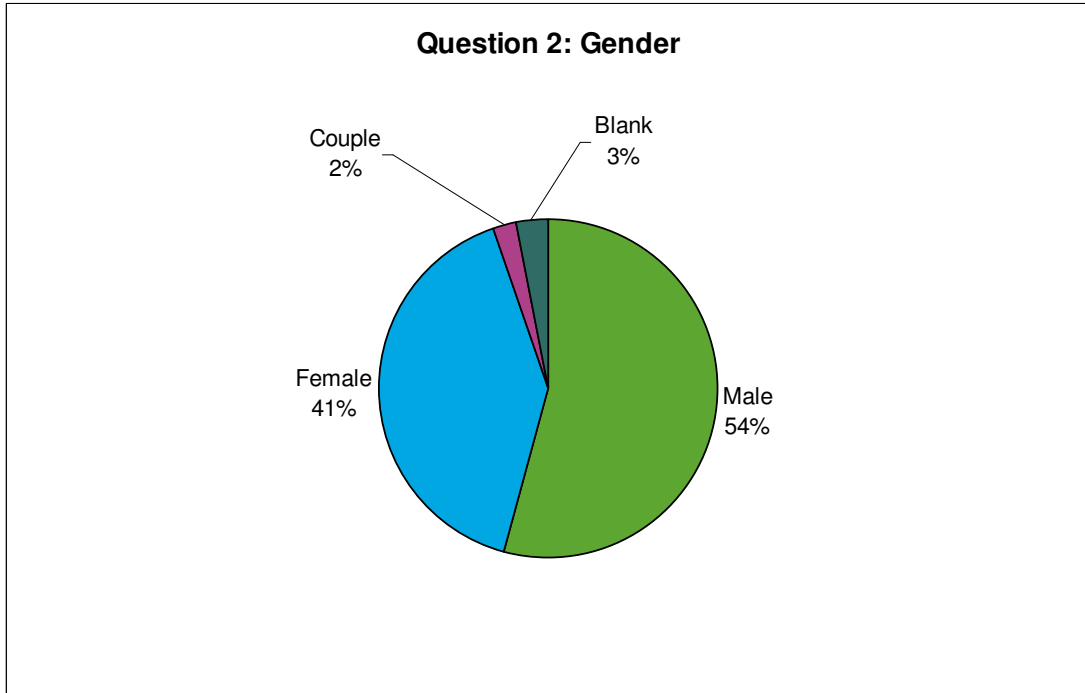


Figure 4: Responses by gender

### Question 3: Home postcode

The responses to this question can be found in Figures 1 and 2.

### Question 4: How do you travel to work?

The highest response was from those who travel by car to work (33%). The second highest response was those who travelled to work by train (11%). See Figure 5 on the next page. Those who responded with 'Not applicable' it can be assumed that these are people who work at home or do not work such as students and senior citizens. 18 respondents stated that they use more than one mode:

- Car and/or train

- Car and/or bus
- Car and/or walk
- Car and/or train
- Train and/or walk
- Car, bus and/or walk
- Cycle and/or walk

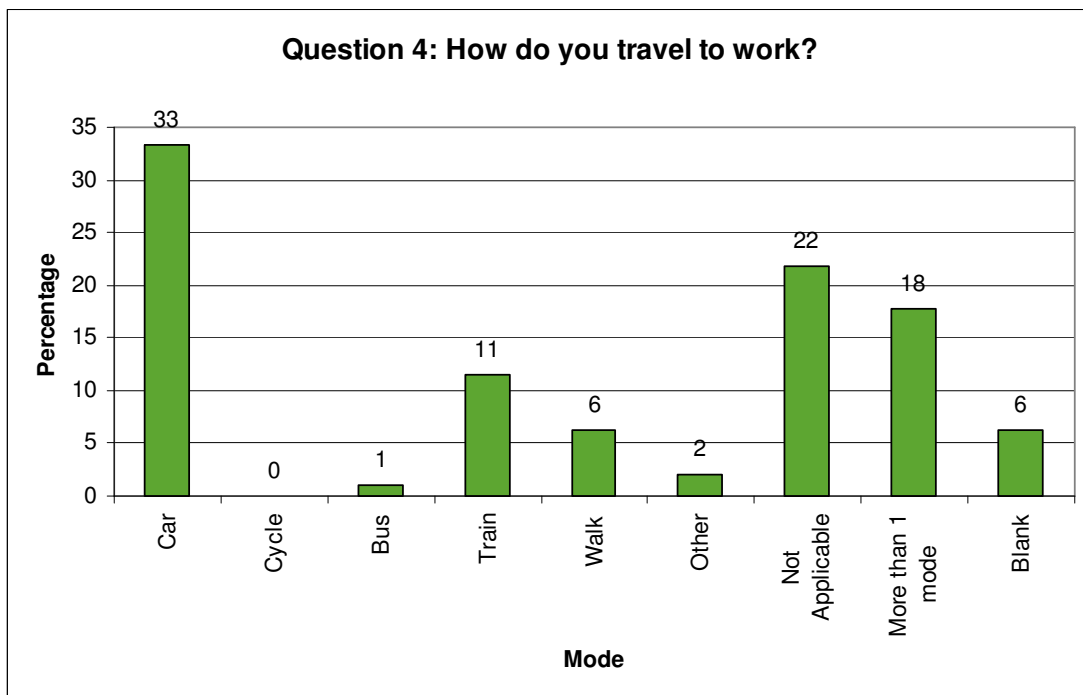


Figure 5: Mode of travel to work

*Question 5: Which forms of transport do you MOST frequently use?*

The majority of trips used for leisure and shopping purposes were made using a car at 61% and 63% respectively. For both trip purposes the second most frequently used mode was walking. It was found that the majority of responses for education were blank, considering that all respondents were over the age of 18, this is a fair response. Finally, the main mode of transport for work trips was the car at 38%. Overall, the majority of trips for all activities were carried out using the car

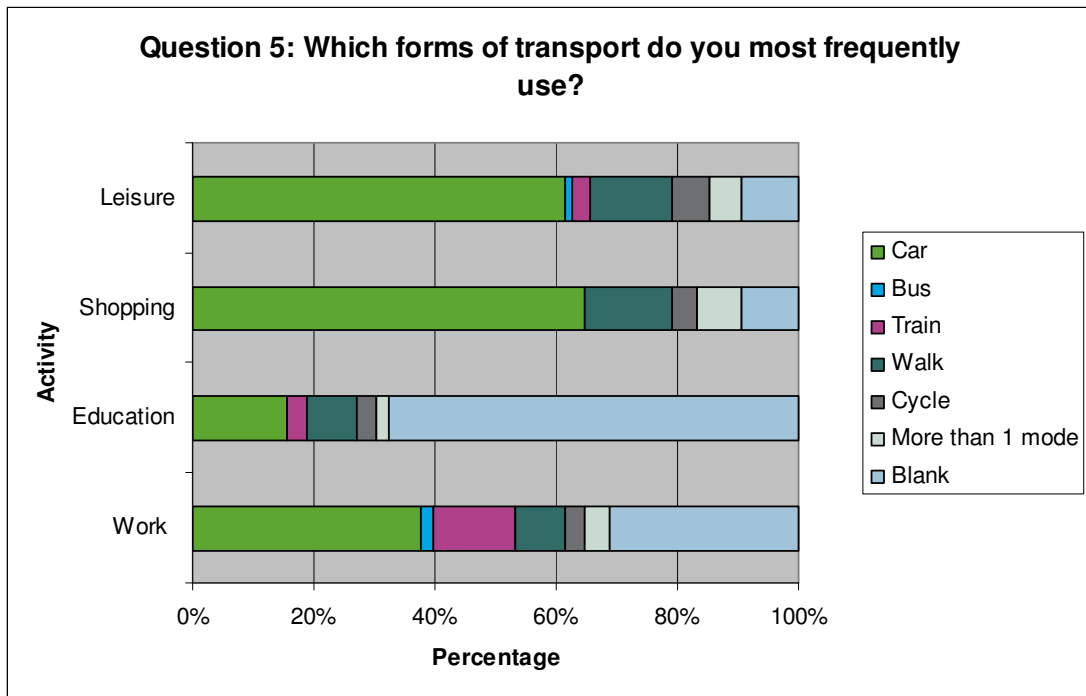


Figure 6: Mode of travel for different activities

## Section 2: The Bridge

Question 6: Do you believe the bridge will be beneficial for the local area?

47% of respondents felt that the bridge would not be beneficial to the local area. However 43% of respondents felt that the opposite was true stating that the bridge would be beneficial to the local area. See Figure 7 below.

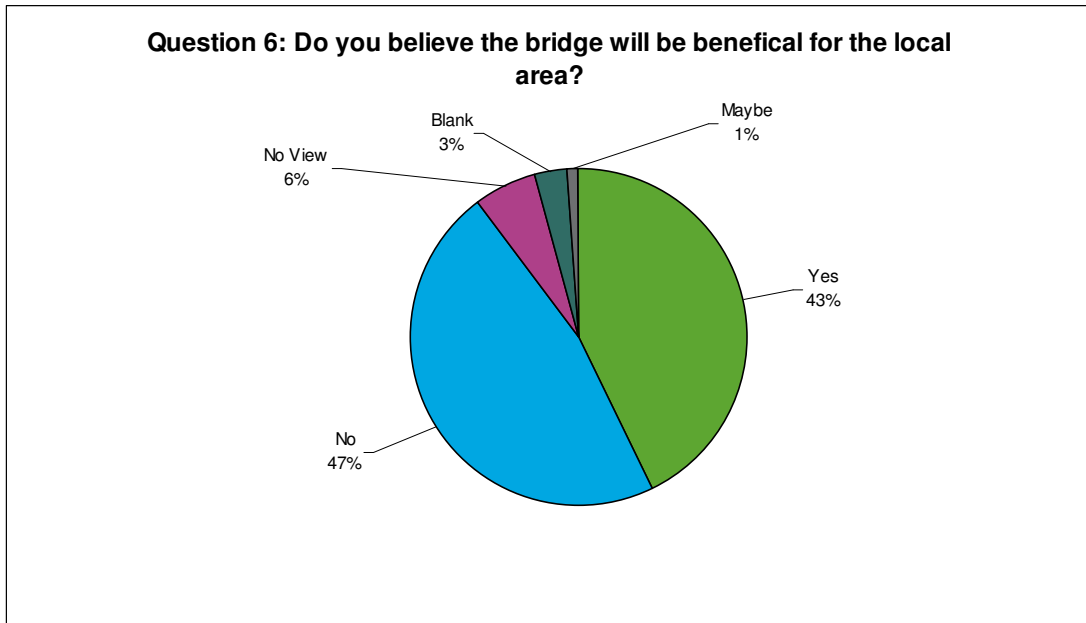


Figure 7: Is the bridge beneficial to the local area?

Question 7: Do you think the proposed bridge is suitable in terms of its accessibility?

47% of respondents felt that the bridge would be suitable in terms of its accessibility. However a further 44% of respondents felt that the opposite was true stating that the bridge would be not suitable in terms of its accessibility.

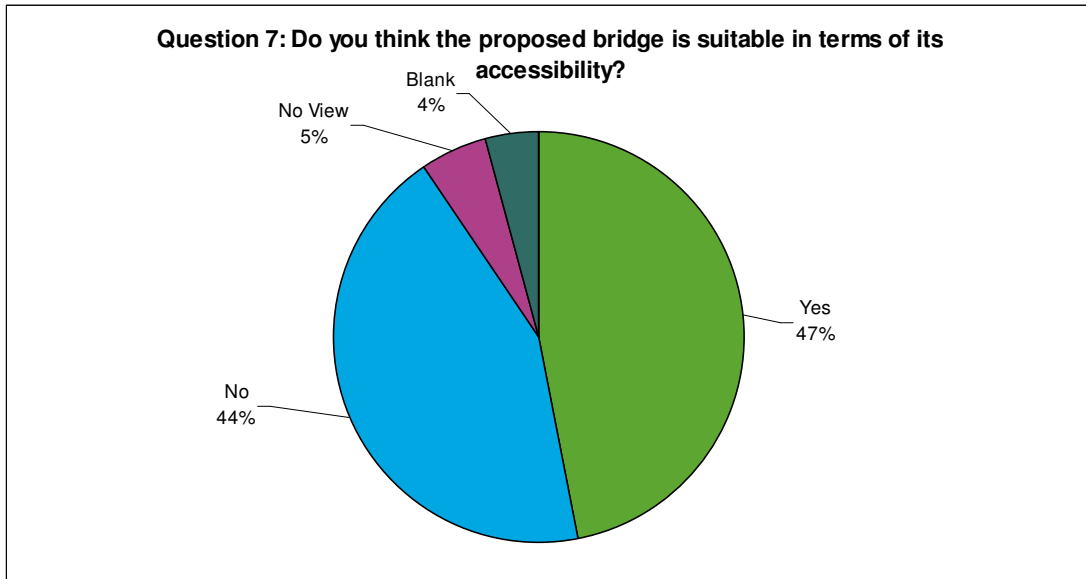
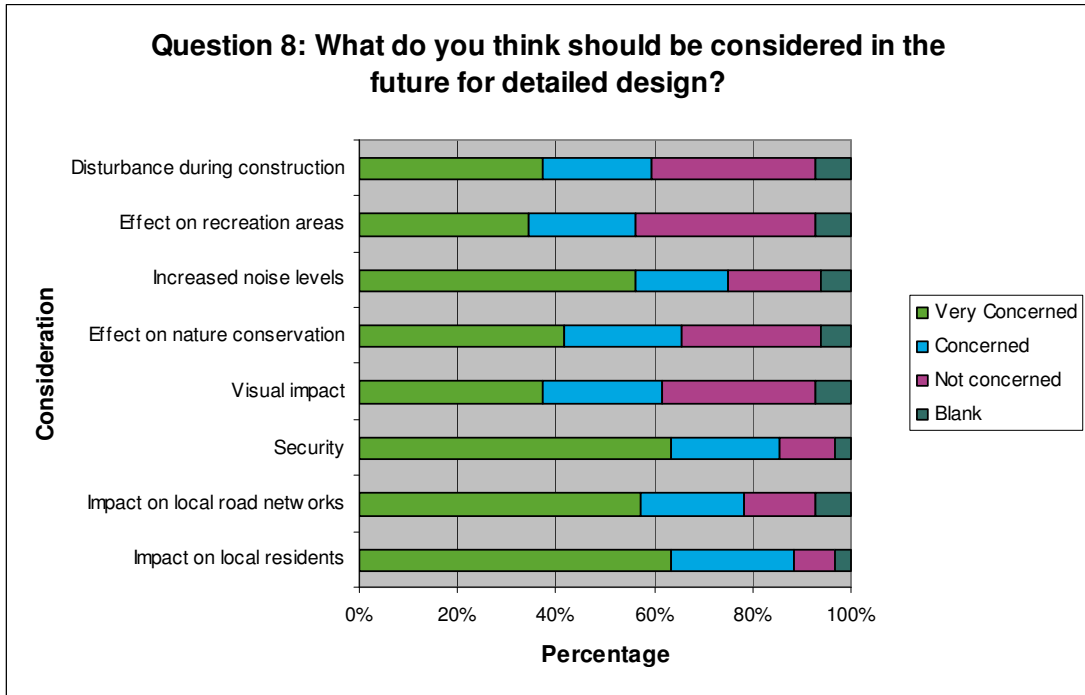


Figure 8: Is the bridge accessibility suitable?



*Question 8: What do you think should be considered in the future for detailed design?:*

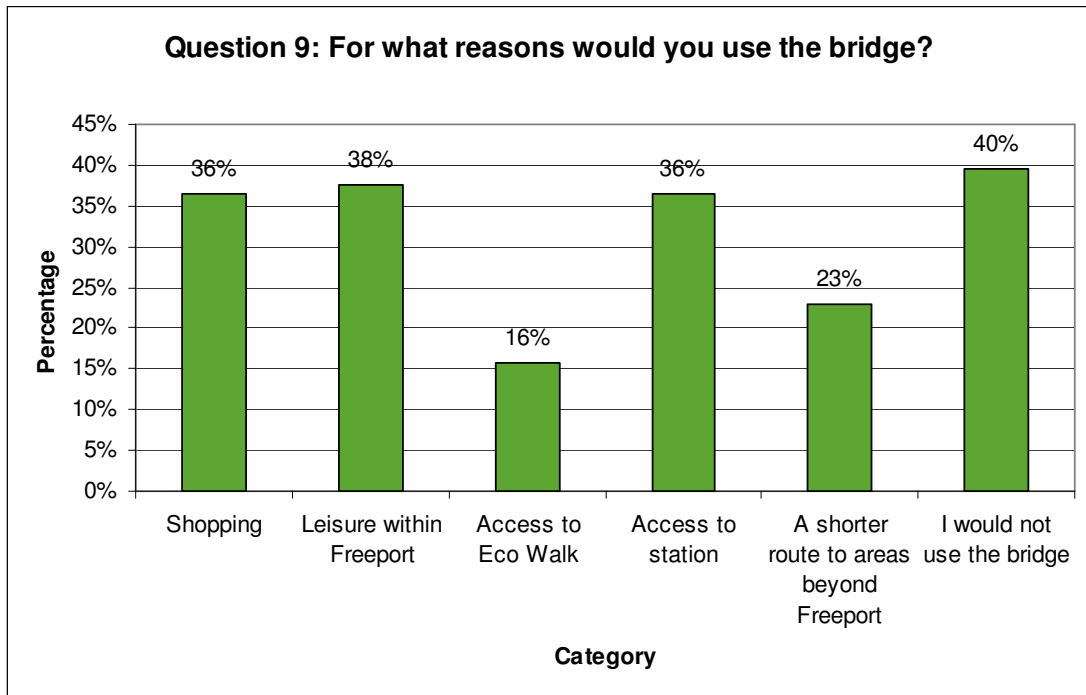
The majority of respondents identified that security and the impact on local residents were important for consideration in the detailed design stage. Respondents were least concerned about the effect on recreation areas.



*Figure 9: Main issues that should be considered for detailed design*

*Question 9: For what reason would you use the bridge?*

It was identified that the bridge would be used for shopping, leisure within Freeport and access to the station. However 40% of respondents stated that they would not use the bridge. Other reasons given for this question included using the bridge to walk to work at Freeport and for occasional leisure walks. See Figure 10 below.



*Please note that respondents were able to tick multiple responses as the percentages don't total 100*

*Figure 10: Reasons for using the bridge*

### Section 3: About the Exhibition

Question 10: Did the Exhibition:

- a) Provide you with the information you needed?
- b) Give you the opportunity to register your views?
- c) Provide information that is easy to understand?

The majority of respondents agreed that the exhibition did provide them with the information they needed (73%), did provide an opportunity to register their views (76%) and was easy to understand (78%). See Figures 11, 12 and 13 below.

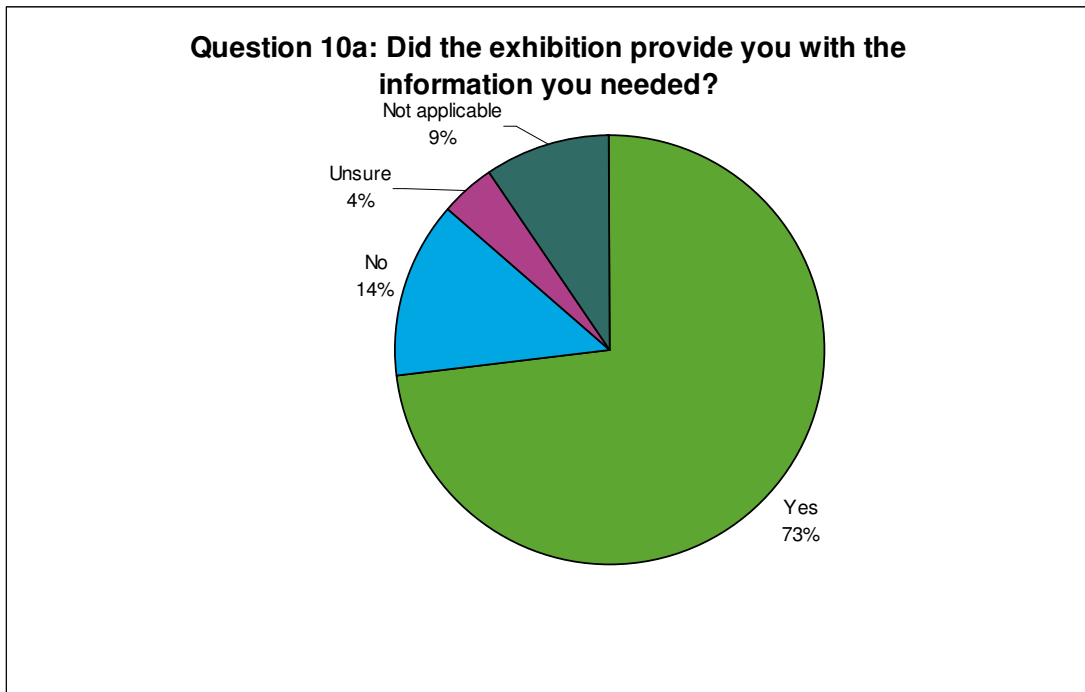


Figure 11: Did the exhibition provide you with the information you needed

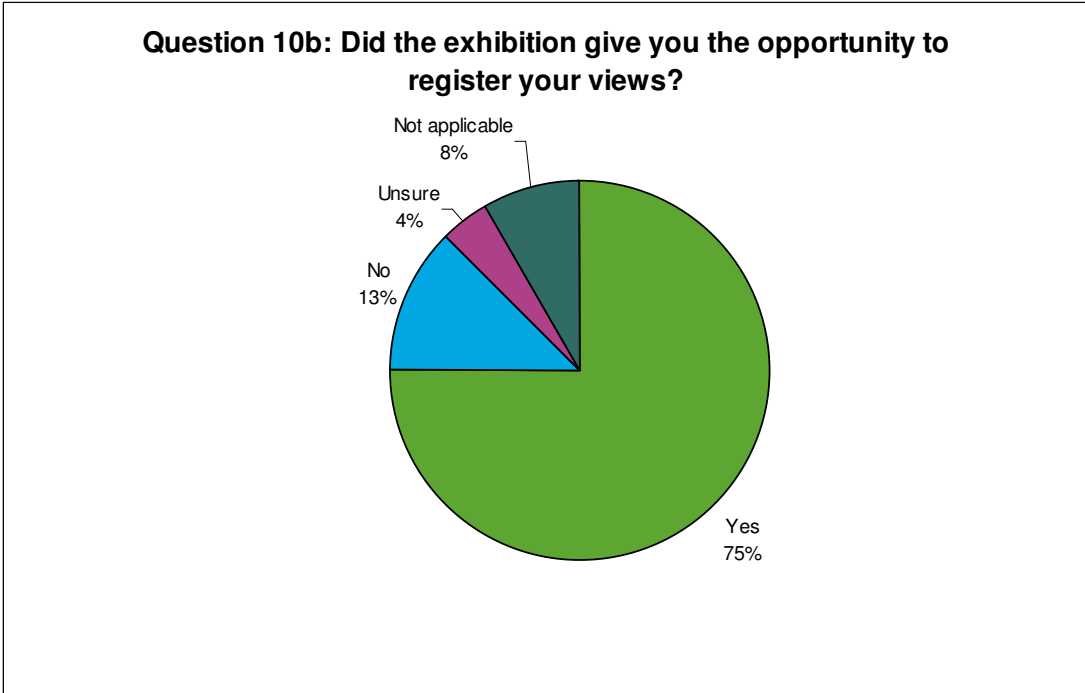


Figure 12: Opportunity to register views

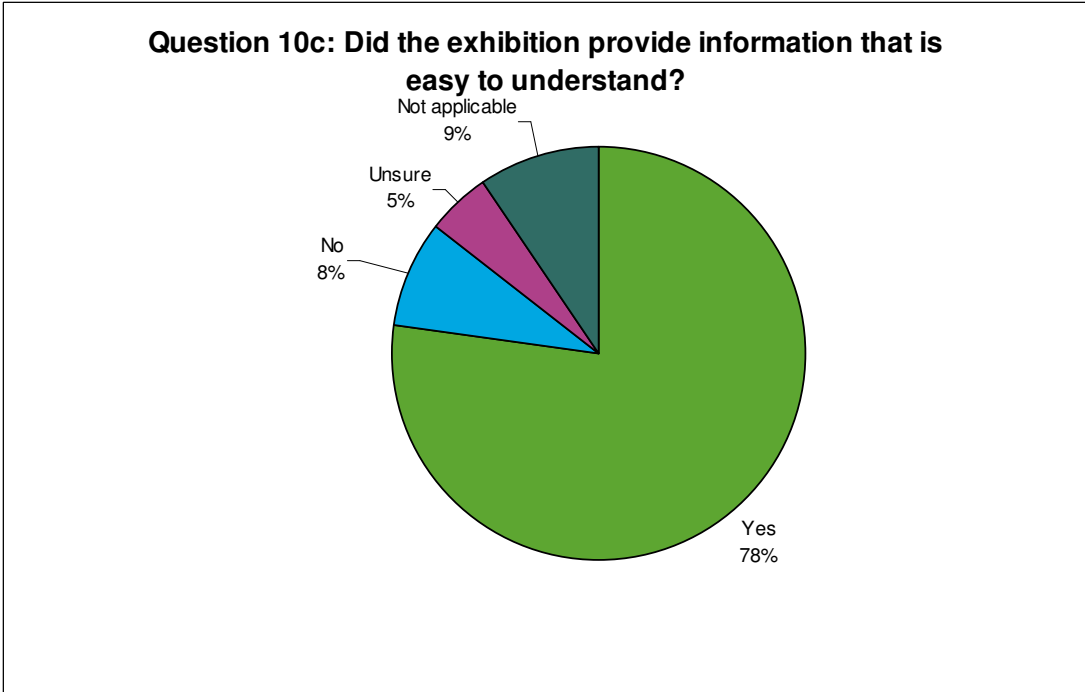
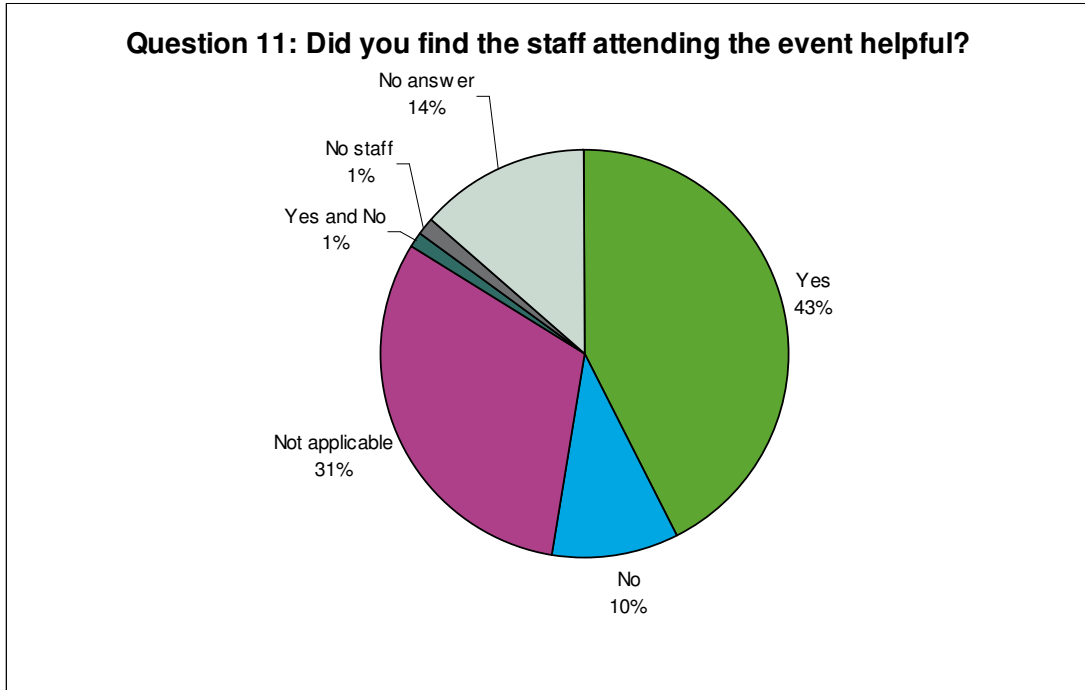


Figure 13: Exhibition easy to understand

*Question 11: Did you find the staff attending the event helpful?*

43% did find the staff in attendance at the events helpful. It should be noted that the respondents who stated that the question was not applicable were likely to have viewed the exhibition either online or at the unstaffed venue. See Figure 14 below.



*Figure 14: Helpfulness of staff attending events*

### Section 4: Further Comments

80 of the 96 questionnaire respondents chose to make further comments in Section 4. These comments can be grouped broadly as support, oppose, concerns or other comments as follows (in no particular order).

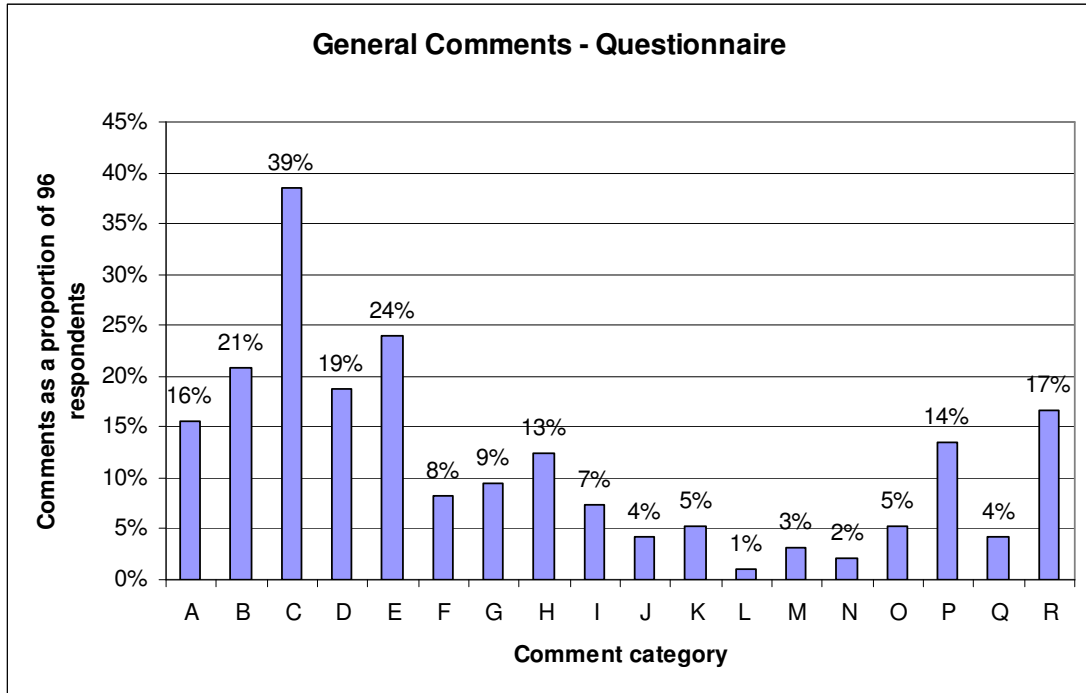


Figure 125: Categorisation of comments from questionnaire

Key for Figure 15	
Letter No.	Comment
A	Support for bridge
B	Opposition against bridge
C	Concerns about parking on Mill Park Drive
D	Concerns about anti social behaviour
E	Concerns about noise/clubbers
F	Concerns about parking at Freeport
G	Concerns about security
H	Concerns about other issues (Design, cost, environment)
I	Requests for CCTV/Police patrols
J	Requests for bus route
K	Requests for lockable gate on bridge
L	Residents already knew about bridge when bought property
M	Comments about Planning Application process
N	Bridge should have been built at beginning of constructions of Heathlands
O	Exhibition comments
P	Other (specific comments unable to categorise)
Q	Other (unrelated comments/questions/concerns/complaints/requests)
R	No Comment

The key comments are summarised below;

Would like the proposed scheme to be implemented

- Comments supporting the bridge (16% of respondent's comments)

Opposition to the scheme

- Comments opposing the bridge (21%)

Concerns

- Parking on Mill Park Drive (39%)
- Anti social behaviour (19%)
- Noise/clubbers (24%)
- Concerns about other issues (13%)

## 3 Responses: Correspondence

### 3.1 Letters and E-mails on behalf of organisations

No letters or e-mails were received from any organisation with regards to the Braintree Freeport Station Footbridge public exhibition.

### 3.2 Letters and E-mails from private individuals

In total two correspondences were received from private individuals with one supporting the scheme and the other voicing concerns about it. The correspondence can typically be split into the following categories:

- Concerns that the footbridge would create parking problems on Mill Park Drive especially if the parking charges are introduced in the car park in the retail park; and
- The footbridge is welcome as it would provide access from the estate to Freeport and town for everyone, and any disturbance would be from local residents.

A copy of both the letter and e-mail can be found in Appendix 5.6.

### 3.3 Telephone Calls

No telephone calls from members of the public with regards to the Braintree Freeport Station Footbridge public exhibition were received.

### 3.4 Petitions

During the consultation process it was stated by some residents of Heathlands that a petition was circulating. However ECC have never seen or received a copy of the petition.

### 3.5 Comments Book

Attendees at the exhibitions were invited to make comment in the comments book (see Appendix 5.4.4 for full details). There were 48 entries in total which have been broken down and grouped as support, oppose, concerns and other comments. The comments are shown as follows (in no particular order):



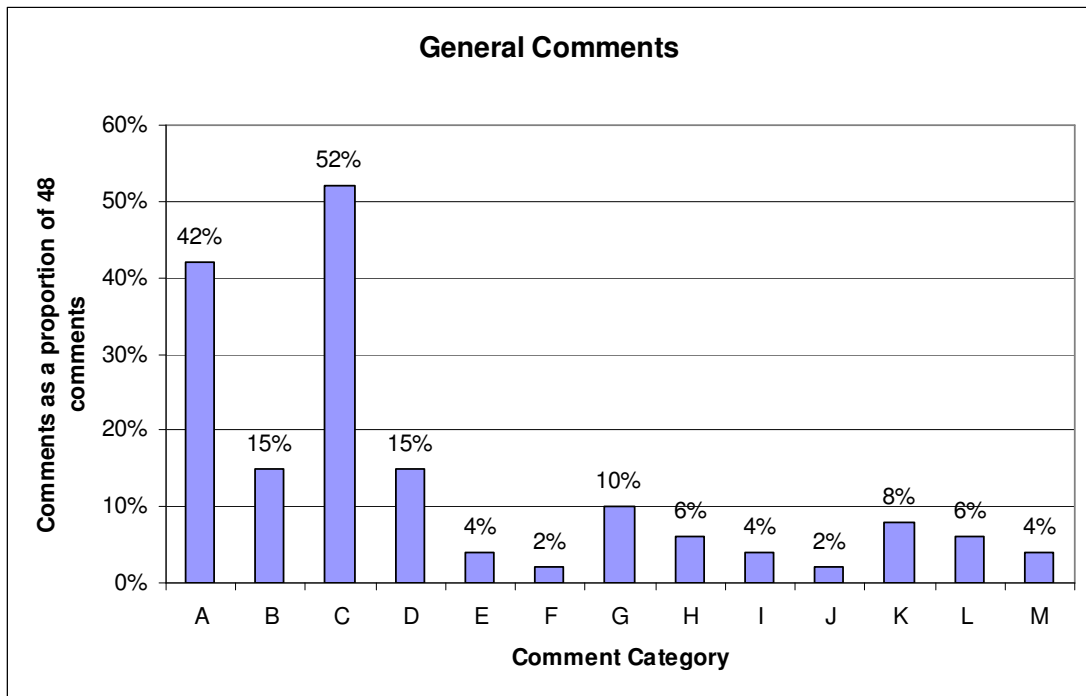


Figure 136: Categorisation of comments from the attendee comment book

Key for Figure 16	
Letter No.	Comment
A	Support for bridge
B	Opposition against bridge
C	Concerns about parking on Mill Park Drive
D	Concerns about anti social behaviour
E	Concerns about noise/clubbers
F	Concerns about parking at Freeport
G	Concerns about other issues
H	Requests for CCTV/Police patrols
I	Requests for bus route
J	Requests for lockable gate on bridge
K	Other (specific comments unable to categorise)
L	Other (unrelated comments/questions/concerns/complaints/requests)
M	Residents already knew about bridge when bought property

The key comments are summarised below.

#### Support

- Comments supporting the bridge (42% of respondents comments)

#### Oppose

- Comments opposing the bridge (15%)

#### Concerns

- Parking on Mill Park Drive (52%)

- Anti social behaviour (15%)

## 4 Conclusions

### 4.1 Background

The responses within the questionnaire allow us to draw conclusions about the respondents. The majority of respondents:

- Live near to the site of the proposed bridge on the Heathlands estate;
- Travelled by car for work, leisure and shopping, and;
- Are aged sixty or above.

The fact that the majority of respondents live close to the footbridge and Braintree Freeport retail park could suggest that the visitors to the venues and respondents to the questionnaire were interested in the scheme from the perspective of a local resident with concerns about the possible impacts. As a result of this, one may conclude that the respondents are representative of those with an interest in using the footbridge or those that may be encouraged to use it.

The choice of Braintree Library as a venue may have assisted in gaining the opinion of those from a wider geographical area, including those who use Braintree Freeport Railway station for work and leisure trips.

### 4.2 Response to the Proposals

43% of respondents believed that the bridge would be beneficial for the local area and 47% of respondents thought that it was suitable in terms of its accessibility. Once the bridge was constructed the majority of respondents stated that they would use the bridge and the key purposes identified were for shopping, accessing the leisure facilities at Freeport and accessing Freeport station.

It was also found that 47% of respondents did not think that the bridge would not be beneficial to the area and 44% felt the bridge was not suitable in terms of accessibility. When those who completed the questionnaire were asked why they would use the bridge, 40% stated that they would not use the bridge.

### 4.3 Concerns and Points Raised

The majority of respondents are very concerned about security and the impact on local residents. The main trend that was expressed in the general comments section was concerns about parking on Mill Park Drive (39% of all respondents).

The most specific points raised both within the general comments section and in discussion at the exhibitions were;

- Parking on Mill Park Drive;
- Noise from clubbers;
- Anti-social behaviour, and;

- Security.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

There is support for a footbridge linking the Heathlands housing estate and Braintree Freeport. However there is also opposition and concerns. In addition to the proposals for the bridge, these concerns will be addressed by the project team and working in partnership with Braintree District Council and other stakeholders.

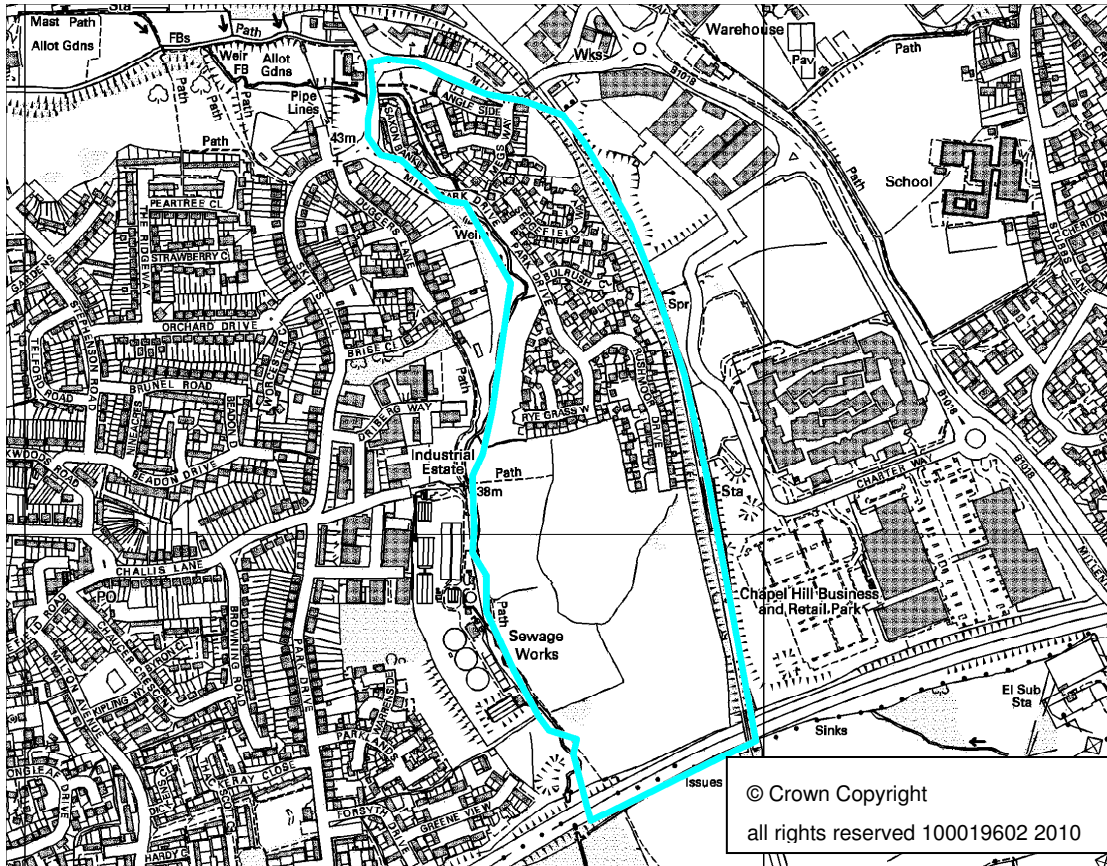
# 5 Appendices

## 5.1 Public Consultation Invitation Letters

### 5.1.1 Selected private and public organisations and stakeholders

Position	Organisation	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Town	County	Post code
Centre Manager	Realm	Braintree Freeport,	Charter Way	Chapel Hill	Braintree	Essex	CM77 8YH
Site Sales Negotiator	Tanner Homes	Sales Office	Heathlands	Mill Park Drive	Braintree	Essex	CM7 1XA
Town Clerk	Braintree Town Council	The Town Hall Centre	Town Hall	Fairfield Road	Braintree	Essex	CM7 3YG
Secretary	Braintree and Witham Rail Group		Maldon Road		Witham	Essex	CM8 1HP
Head of Service: District Development	Braintree District Council	Causeway House	Bocking End		Braintree	Essex	CM7 9HB
President	Braintree Rugby Club	The Clubhouse	Robbswood	Beckers Green	Braintree	Essex	CM7 3PR
The Manager	Braintree Football Club Ltd	The Cressing Road Stadium	Clockhouse Way		Braintree	Essex	CM7 3RD
Head Teacher	Cressing Primary School	Tye Green	Cressing		Braintree	Essex	CM77 8JE
Head Teacher	Beckers Green Primary School	Beckers Green Road			Braintree	Essex	CM7 3PR
Head Teacher	John Ray Junior School	Notley Road			Braintree	Essex	CM7 1HL
Head Teacher	John Ray Junior School	Notley Road			Braintree	Essex	CM7 1HL
Head Teacher	Notley High School	Notley Road			Braintree	Essex	CM7 1WY
Head Teacher	Alec Hunter Humanities College	Stubbs Lane			Braintree	Essex	CM7 3NR

*Properties of residents and businesses within the letter drop catchment area*



*Figure 14: Extent of letter drop catchment area*

*Distribution of Posters*

Location	Address	No. of A4 posters	No. of A3 posters
Braintree Swimming Centre	Charter Way, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8YJ	1	
Braintree Library	Fairfield Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3YL	1	
Braintree District Council	Causeway House, Bocking End, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9HB	3	1
Heathlands Sales Office	Mill Park Drive, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1XA		1
Braintree Freeport visitor centre	Charter Way, Chapel Hill, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8YH	1	
Braintree Rugby Club	The Clubhouse, Robbswood, Beckers Green, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3PR	1	
Braintree Town Football Club Ltd	The Cressing Road Stadium, Clockhouse Way, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3RD	1	
Cressing Primary School	Tye Green, Cressing, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8JE	1	
Beckers Green Primary School	Beckers Green Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3PR	1	
John Ray Junior School	Notley Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1HL	1	
John Ray Infant School	Notley Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1HL	1	
Notley High School	Notley Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1WY	1	
Alec Hunter Humanities College	Stubbs Lane, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3NR	1	

## 5.2 Exhibition Material

### 5.2.1 Residents and business exhibition invitation letters

Essex County Council  
**Director of Highways and Transportation**  
Planning and Transportation  
Environment, Sustainability & Highways  
County Hall, Chelmsford  
Essex, CM1 1QH

Dear Occupier

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Our Ref: ZA.43.110

Your Ref:

Dear Sir/Madam,

#### **PUBLIC EXHIBITION – Braintree Freeport Footbridge**

You are invited to a public exhibition showing the County Council's proposals for a new footbridge over the railway line near Braintree Freeport station. The proposed footbridge will link the Heathlands residential development with Braintree Freeport Leisure Park.

The proposals for the scheme include:

- A new bridge for cycle and pedestrian usage;
- New footways including ramps.

The exhibition will give you an opportunity to view the proposals in detail and to talk to members of the County Council's project team. It will also provide an opportunity for you to give us your views. The exhibition will be held at the locations and times set out below:

**The Meeting Room, Braintree Swimming Centre, Charter Way, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8YJ**

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009

15:00 – 20:00

**The Meeting Room, Braintree Swimming Centre, Charter Way, Braintree, Essex, CM77 8YJ**

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2009

10:00 – 16:00

The exhibition will also be available for viewing at **Braintree Library, Fairfield Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3YL** between Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November and Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

Monday to Friday

09:00 – 19:00



Saturday

09:00 – 17:00

Sunday

13:00 – 16:00

There will be a member of Essex County Council at this exhibition on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November between 09:00 – 13:00. Otherwise this exhibition will be unstaffed.

If you are unable to attend the exhibition but would like more information or to discuss the proposals, please email or telephone us using the details below. The exhibition will also be available to view online at [www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport) from Wednesday 18th November

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Bird', is written over a horizontal line.

**Paul Bird**  
**Director of Highways & Transportation**

For information please contact Paul McLean  
Telephone: 0845 6037631  
Internet: [www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport)  
Email: [majorschemes@essex.gov.uk](mailto:majorschemes@essex.gov.uk)

Essex County Council  
**Director of Highways and Transportation**  
Planning and Transportation  
Environment, Sustainability & Highways  
County Hall, Chelmsford  
Essex, CM1 1QH

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009  
Our Ref: ZA.43.110  
Your Ref:

Dear Sir,

**PUBLIC EXHIBITION – Braintree Freeport Footbridge**

I am writing to invite you, your staff and students to a public exhibition. The exhibition shows the County Council's proposals for a new footbridge over the railway line near Braintree Freeport station. The proposed footbridge will link the Heathlands residential development with Braintree Freeport Leisure Park.

The proposals for the scheme include:

- A new bridge for cycle and pedestrian usage;
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I have enclosed an A4 poster for you to put up in your school to advertise the exhibition.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Bird', written over a horizontal line.

**Paul Bird**  
**Director of Highways & Transportation**

For information please contact Paul McLean  
Telephone: 0845 6037631  
Internet: [www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport)  
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Essex County Council  
**Director of Highways and Transportation**  
Planning and Transportation  
Environment, Sustainability & Highways

County Hall, Chelmsford  
Essex, CM1 1QH

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009  
Our Ref: ZA.43.110  
Your Ref:

Dear Sir,

### **PUBLIC EXHIBITION – Braintree Freeport Footbridge**

I am writing to invite you as well as staff as you consider to be appropriate to a public exhibition. The exhibition shows the County Council's proposals for a new footbridge over the railway line near Braintree Freeport station. The proposed footbridge will link the Heathlands residential development with Braintree Freeport Leisure Park.

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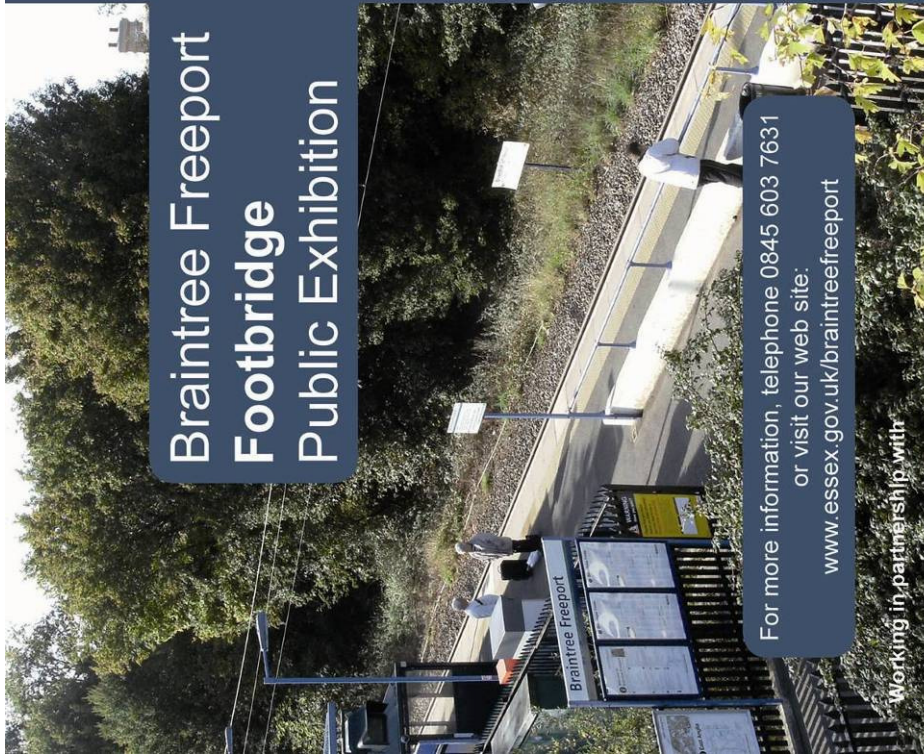
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Email: [majorschemes@essex.gov.uk](mailto:majorschemes@essex.gov.uk)

5.2.2 *A4 Poster and newspaper advert*



# Braintree Freeport Footbridge Public Exhibition

For more information, telephone 0845 603 7631  
or visit our web site:  
[www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport)

Working in partnership with



Essex County Council is currently designing a footbridge over the railway line near Braintree Freeport Station. It will link the residential areas to the west to the leisure and retail facilities, schools and railway station to the east. The scheme will also assist in promoting sustainable transport and the reduction in car use.

Our exhibition will give you the opportunity to view the scheme in greater detail and talk to members of the project team.

The exhibition will take place at:

**Braintree Swimming Centre,  
Charter Way, Braintree, CM77 8YJ**  
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(Staffed at all times)

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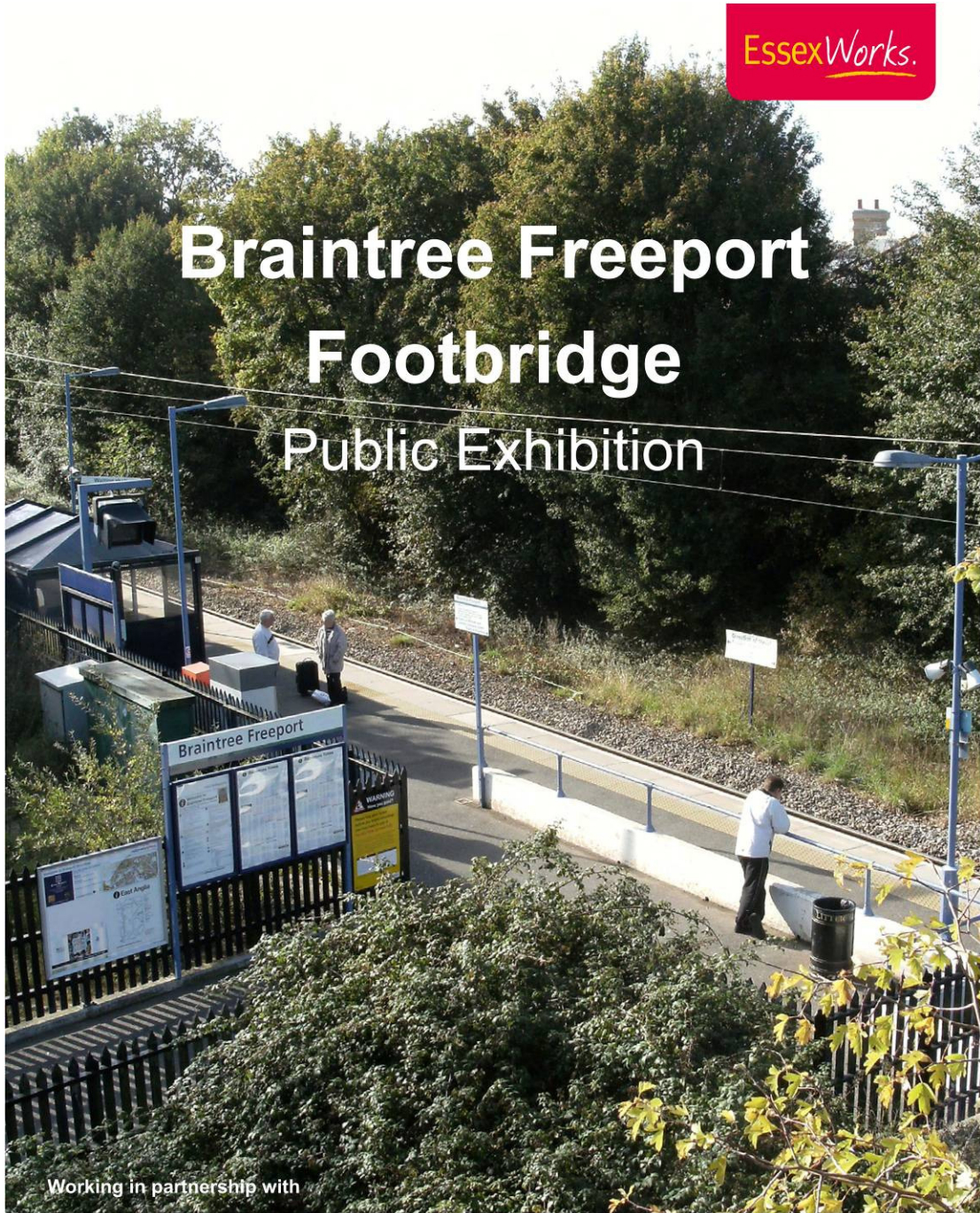
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# Braintree Freeport Footbridge Public Exhibition



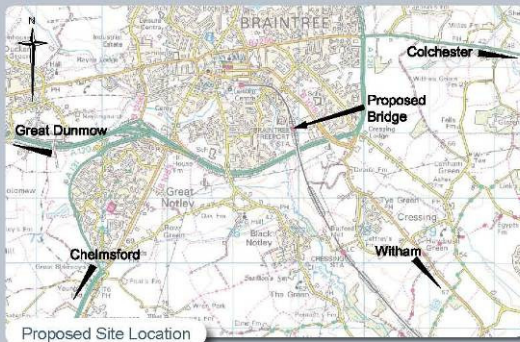
Working in partnership with





01

## Welcome to the Braintree Freeport Footbridge Public Exhibition



The aim of this exhibition is to inform you how plans for the proposed footbridge are going, as well as show how the project will progress in the future. It will also allow you to voice your opinion about the scheme.

The bridge has been proposed to enable better access for local residents to neighbouring community facilities and to promote the use of sustainable forms of transport.



The bridge will cost approximately £700,000 and the aim is to be open to the public by Spring 2011.

The scheme will include a cycleway, footway and a bridge over the railway.

All data are based upon Ordnance Survey material and the jurisdiction of Ordnance Survey in relation to the Crown Copyright of the Ordnance Survey. Unauthorised reproduction without Crown Copyright may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Essex County Council 12011002 2010

02

## Introduction

The scheme will provide a link between the new Heathlands development and Braintree Freeport. Proposals are for the construction of a new footbridge, which will link the pedestrian and cycle routes on either side of the railway line. It is estimated that the improvements could increase usage of Braintree Freeport Station by up to 840 passengers per day.

### Background

- Residents of the Heathlands development have no direct access to Braintree Freeport and the railway station. Currently the railway line forms a physical barrier between the station and the residential area;
- The majority of residents are currently reliant on private cars or taxis to access the station and the retail and leisure facilities, and;
- The bridge location was planned as part of the planning application for the Heathlands development and identified in Braintree District Council's Local Plan as part of the proposals for the district.



Heathlands Development



Braintree Freeport Station



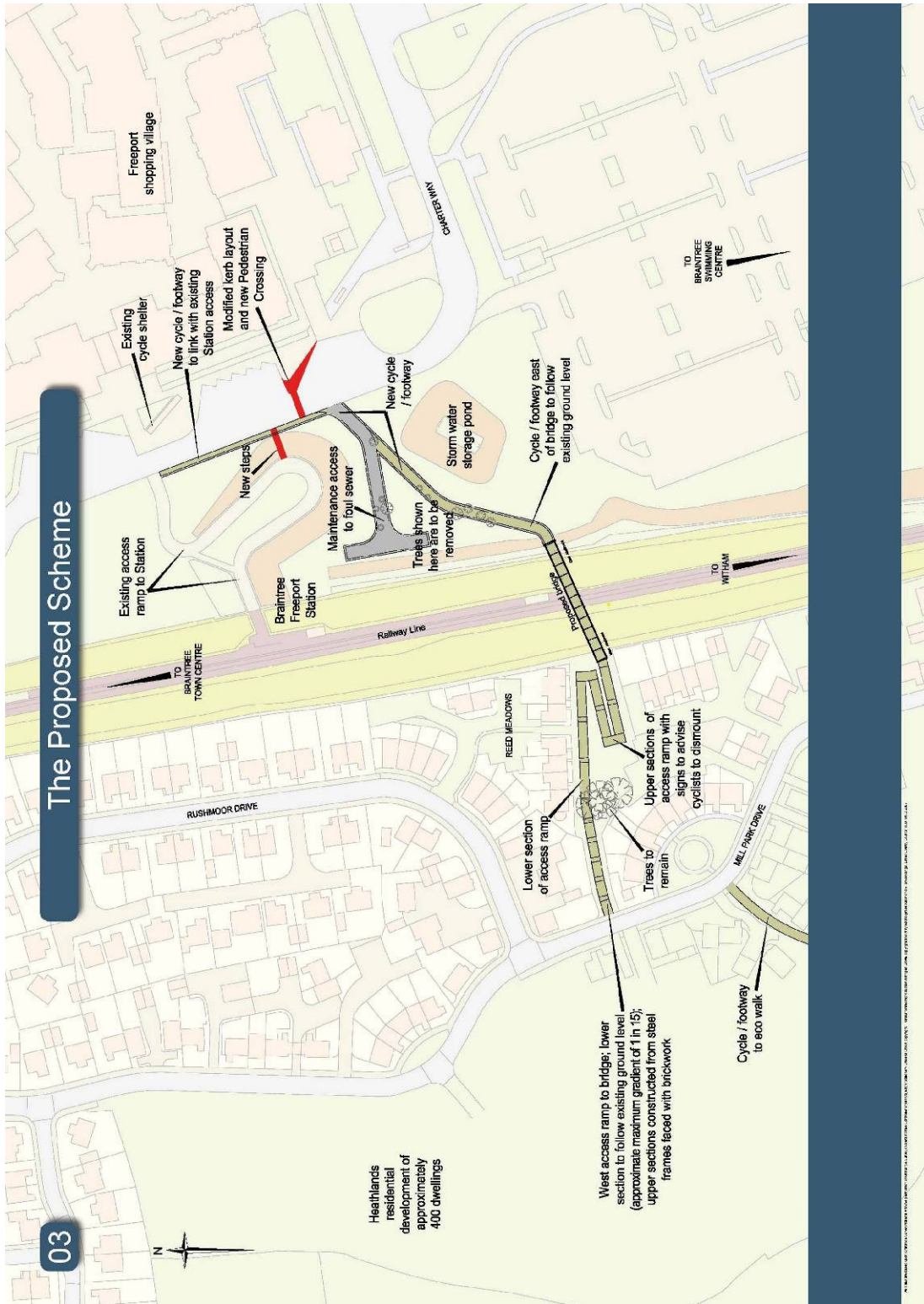
Freeport Shopping Village

### Objectives

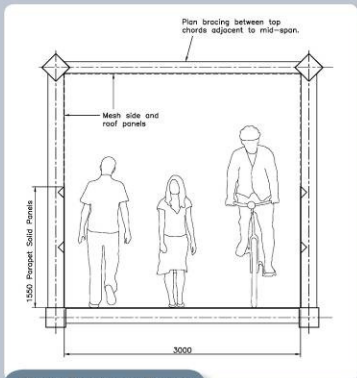
- To improve accessibility to Braintree Freeport Station;
- To improve the accessibility of the station for the mobility-impaired and those with buggies by providing step free access and ramps;
- To eliminate unnecessary car trips;
- To provide personal safety and security through the possible deployment of surveillance systems and lighting near the footbridge;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle access to recreational facilities for local residents;
- To link a strategic gap in the Braintree cycle network;
- Provide access to employment areas, schools, retail and recreation facilities;
- Provide social inclusion across the local community;
- Promote sustainable travel habits, and;
- To increase passenger numbers which could assist in future rail improvements.



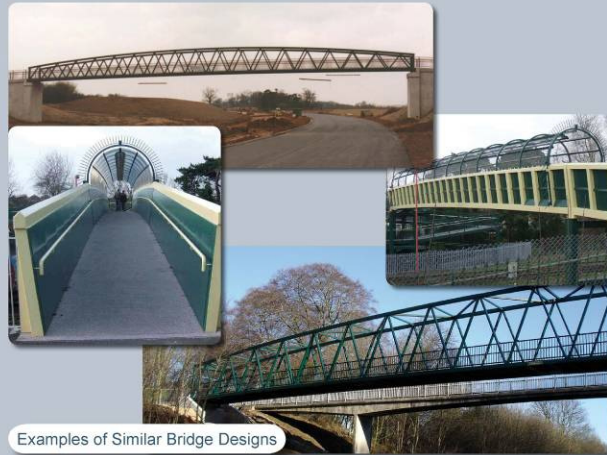
5.2.6 Board 3



# 04 Bridge Details

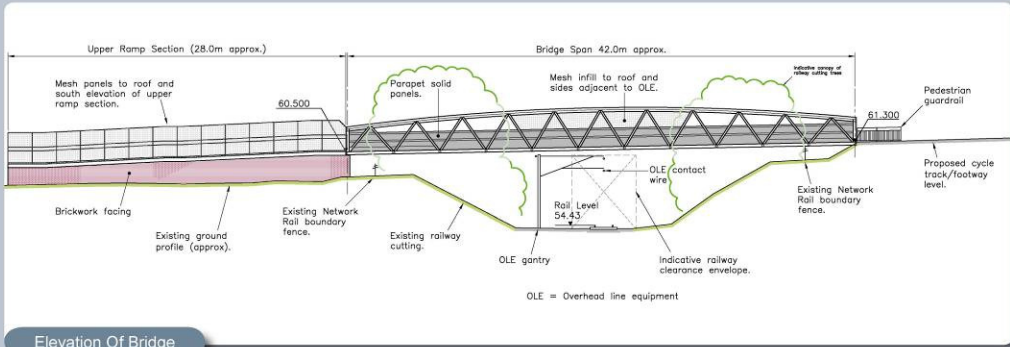


Cross-Section of Bridge



Examples of Similar Bridge Designs

- Several options were considered for the design of the bridge. The recommended solution is a truss design constructed of steel. This is due to its light weight, and economic form of construction;
- The floor of the bridge will be surfaced with a non-slip material;
- The bridge will accommodate a 3 metre wide shared use cycle track and pedestrian path;
- The bridge will be built in line with the requirements of Network Rail, and;
- It is expected that the bridge will be lifted into place by a crane located on the Freeport side.



Elevation Of Bridge

# 05 Residential Impact



Example of Bridge Design

Although there are many positive aspects of delivering the bridge there are some potential negative impacts that will be mitigated.

**Noise:** Complaints have been received regarding the noise from Freeport Leisure Park, particularly on weekend evenings. To reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour options are being investigated for the erection of surveillance systems in the area and how these can best be monitored.

**Security:** Parts of the cycle/footway which lead to the bridge could be considered secluded and unsafe, particularly on dark evenings. To alleviate the feeling of vulnerability the bridge and footways will be lit. In addition, surveillance system options are being considered to provide security for users and residents.

**Traffic:** Residents neighbouring the bridge may be concerned that there could be an increase in traffic, particularly in parts of Mill Park Drive where people may choose to use the bridge to gain access to Braintree Freeport and the station. Although there is ample parking available at Braintree Freeport, non-residents' parking will need to be monitored to consider whether residents wish restrictions to be put in place.

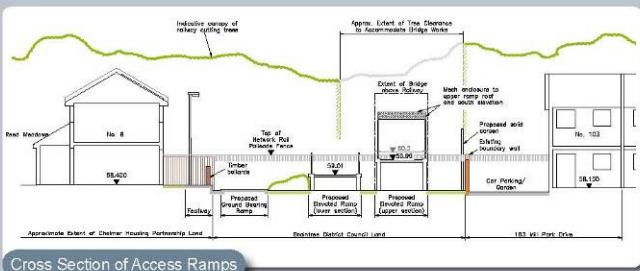


Example of Bridge Lighting



Example of a Surveillance Camera

**Anti Social behaviour:** Residents neighbouring the bridge may be concerned that objects and litter could be thrown into their properties. Shielding and mesh may be used in locations to protect specific properties. The bridge itself will be designed in line with Network Rail's requirements to minimise any opportunity for objects to be thrown from the bridge on to the rail track and neighbouring properties.



Cross Section of Access Ramps



06

## Environment / Sustainability

To minimise the environmental impact a preliminary survey, by an environmental specialist, was carried out in Spring 2009 to investigate the potential impacts on wildlife.

**Wildlife:** The site was surveyed for signs of legally protected or otherwise noteworthy species and assessed for habitats that might support protected species.

Ongoing surveys will be carried out to assess the wildlife habitat patterns through the seasons.



Existing Landscaped Area



Possible Local Wildlife

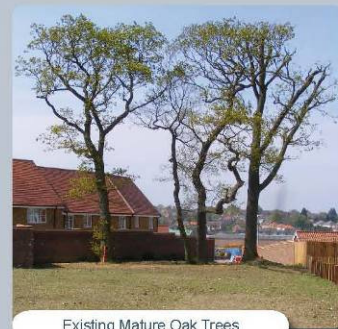
### Summary of Wildlife Interest

- The mature oak trees adjacent to Reed Meadow were assessed as having high potential for roosting bats;
- The scrub and trees are likely to provide nesting habitat for birds during the breeding season, and;
- There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest or other sites of recognised wildlife value within one kilometre of the site and no habitats of local or county significance will be affected by the works.

**Vegetation:** The notable mature trees contained within the site are the four Oak trees adjacent to Reed Meadow. These are expected to be retained and protected during the development.

The scheme would result in the loss of some trees and shrubs, and a small area of landscaping, representing an overall loss in wildlife habitats. Several Oak trees and Hawthorn bushes will be felled along the eastern and western railway embankments to accommodate the new footbridge.

In the vicinity of the new bridge abutment some local replanting may be required, this will also apply at Charter Way. Shrubs and trees will not be damaged beyond the areas required for new build. Damaged grassed areas will be repaired and new earthworks soiled and seeded.



Existing Mature Oak Trees

07

The Way Forward

The project programme detailed below outlines the key activities and the estimated timescale.

Activity	Timescale
Preliminary Estate Design Planned	circa 2000
Planning of Heathlands Estate	2006
Preliminary Design of Bridge	2008
Transfer of Land	Spring 2009
Outline Design	Spring 2009
Public Consultation	Winter 2009
Submission of Planning Application	Spring 2010
Planning Approval	Summer 2010
Construction Starts	Autumn 2010
Completion	Spring 2011



WE ARE HERE

The £700,000 funding budget will be drawn from several sources, including developer contributions and Growth Area Funding from Braintree District Council, which will be matched by Essex County Council.

08

## Contact Details

Essex County Council would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in this scheme.

Please take the time to complete a questionnaire to let us know your thoughts on the scheme. If a paper copy is not available today, or if you would prefer, the questionnaire is also available for completion online, on the website below.

If you would like more information about this scheme please contact us:

**By Post:**

Braintree Freeport Footbridge,  
Planning & Transportation (P&T),  
Essex County Council,  
FREEPOST CL3636,  
County Hall,  
CHELMSFORD,  
CM1 1QH.

**By Telephone:**

0845 6037631

**By Email:**

[majorschemes@essex.gov.uk](mailto:majorschemes@essex.gov.uk)

**Visit our Website:**

[www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport](http://www.essex.gov.uk/braintreefreeport)