

South East Radial MRN Corridors

Introduction

The South East Major Road Network connects some of the largest towns in the South East area to each other and to the Strategic Road Network. It also serves several key international gateways, including the channel ports. Many of the communities served by these corridors are deprived, particularly on the Kent and Sussex coasts. These corridors are expected to support significant housing and employment in future years.

The corridors included in this pack are:

- **SE2:** A28/A299 (Faversham – Ramsgate);
- **SE5a:** A206 (Dartford);
- **SE5b:** A2 (Medway – Faversham); and
- **SE6:** A256 (Dover – Ramsgate).

The International Gateways included in this pack are:

- The Channel Tunnel;
- Medway Port;
- Port of Dover;
- Port of Ramsgate; and
- Thamesport.

South East MRN Radial Corridor SE2

A28/A299 (Faversham – Ramsgate)

Description

This corridor links the motorway network (M2 at Junction 7 at Brenley Corner) to the North Kent coastal towns of Whitstable and Herne Bay and the Thanet towns of Margate, Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

This corridor serves some of the UK's most economically challenged areas. Significant growth in Swale, Canterbury and Thanet districts are dependent on this corridor. It also provides a link to the Port of Ramsgate and the Manston Airport site (which currently do not operate scheduled passenger services), which is awaiting a decision on reopening and currently acts as a standby lorry holding area where there is a disruption to the Channel crossing.

The key issues affecting this corridor are:

- **Deprivation:** This is the most deprived corridor in the South East area, despite its relatively good transport connectivity. It has the lowest average earnings of all the strategic corridors in the South East area.
- **Connectivity:** The Thanet Towns, in particular, are relatively isolated from other major economic hubs in the South East area.

The key opportunities to consider for this corridor are:

- **Patterns of future development:** How can future development in this corridor be planned to ensure that it does not drive unsustainable transport outcomes?

Economic Context

Wealth

Median resident earnings along this corridor are £28,762, which is among the lowest of the 30 Major Road Network corridors in the South East area.

Priority Industrial Sectors

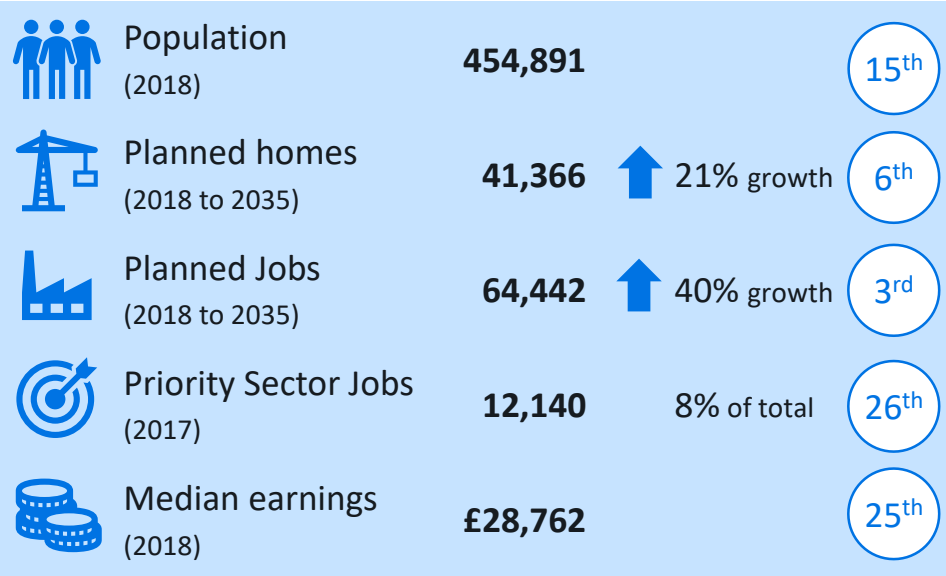
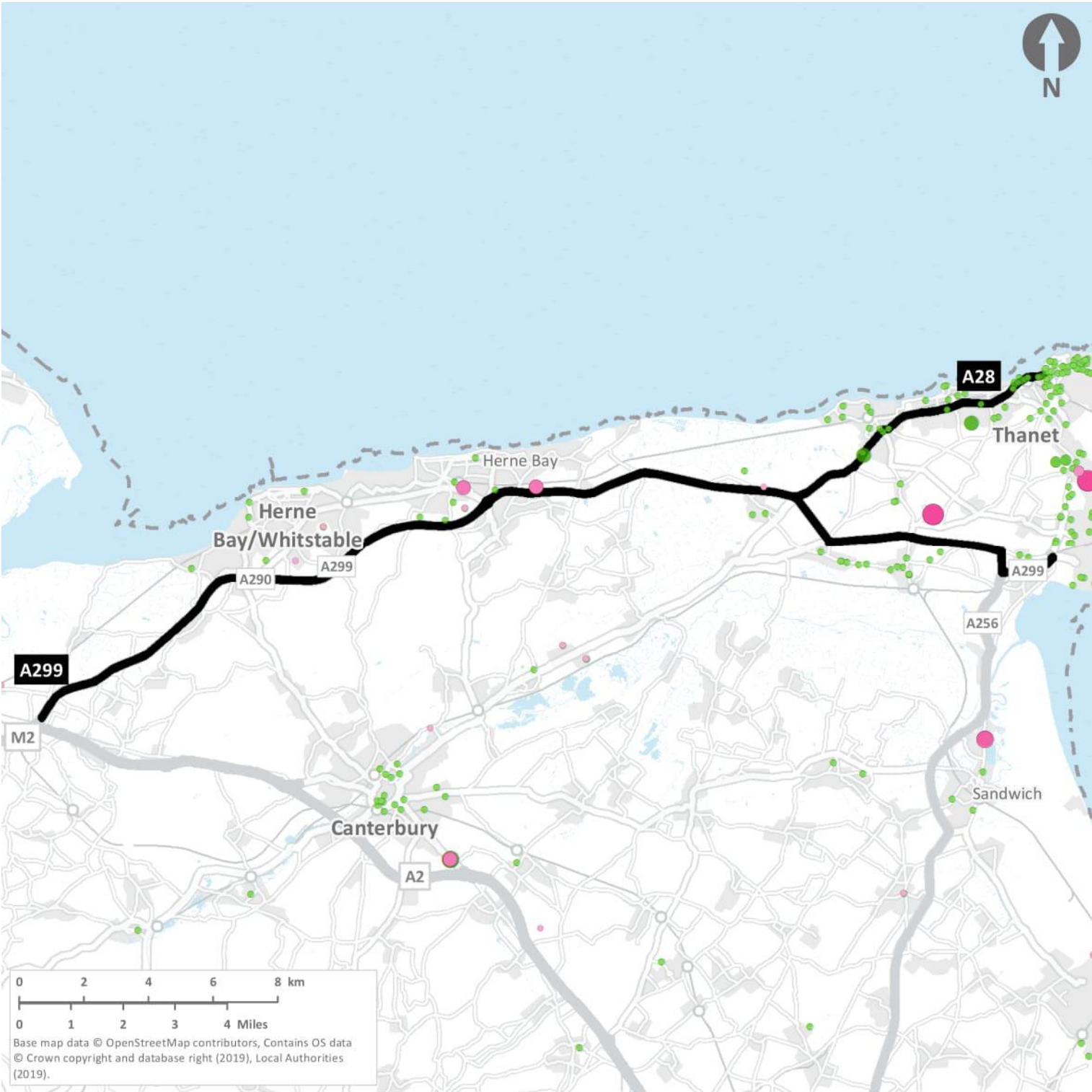
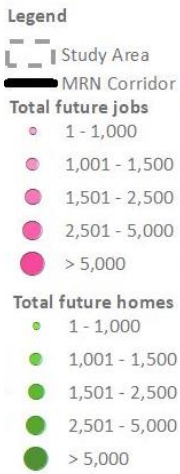
The priority industrial sectors on this corridor are:

- Advanced manufacturing;
- Creative, cultural and media, visitor economy;
- Environmental technology and energy;
- Life sciences and healthcare; and
- Transport and logistics.

8% of jobs on this corridor are in priority industrial sectors, which is significantly below average.

Development

Significant development is planned in this area, some of the highest growth rates in the South East. Housing growth will be focused at the eastern end of the corridor in Thanet. Employment growth is more spread across the corridor, notably in the Herne Bay area and at sites on the edge of the Thanet Towns. This could present a challenge as employment growth appears to be focused on sites that are not currently well served by public transport.



Social Context

Deprivation

This corridor has some of the highest concentrations of deprivation in the South East area. In particular, there are significant areas of deprivation in the Thanet Towns and small pockets of deprivation in Herne Bay, Whitstable and Faversham.

Education

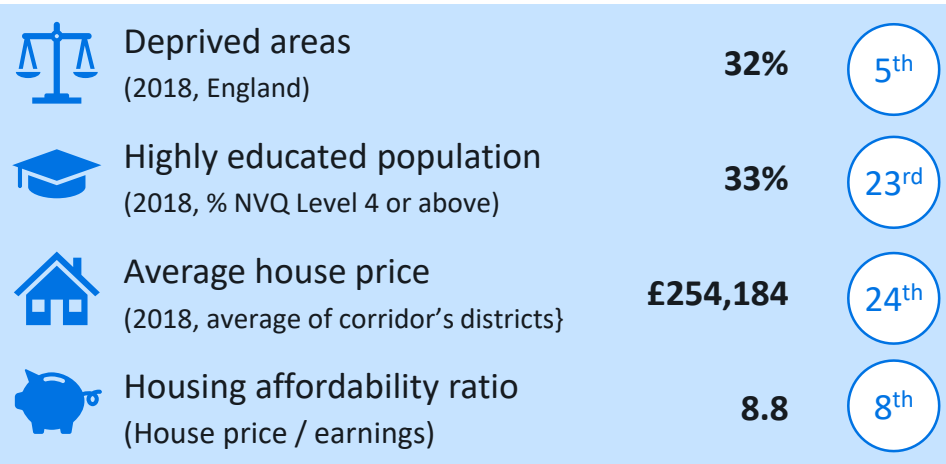
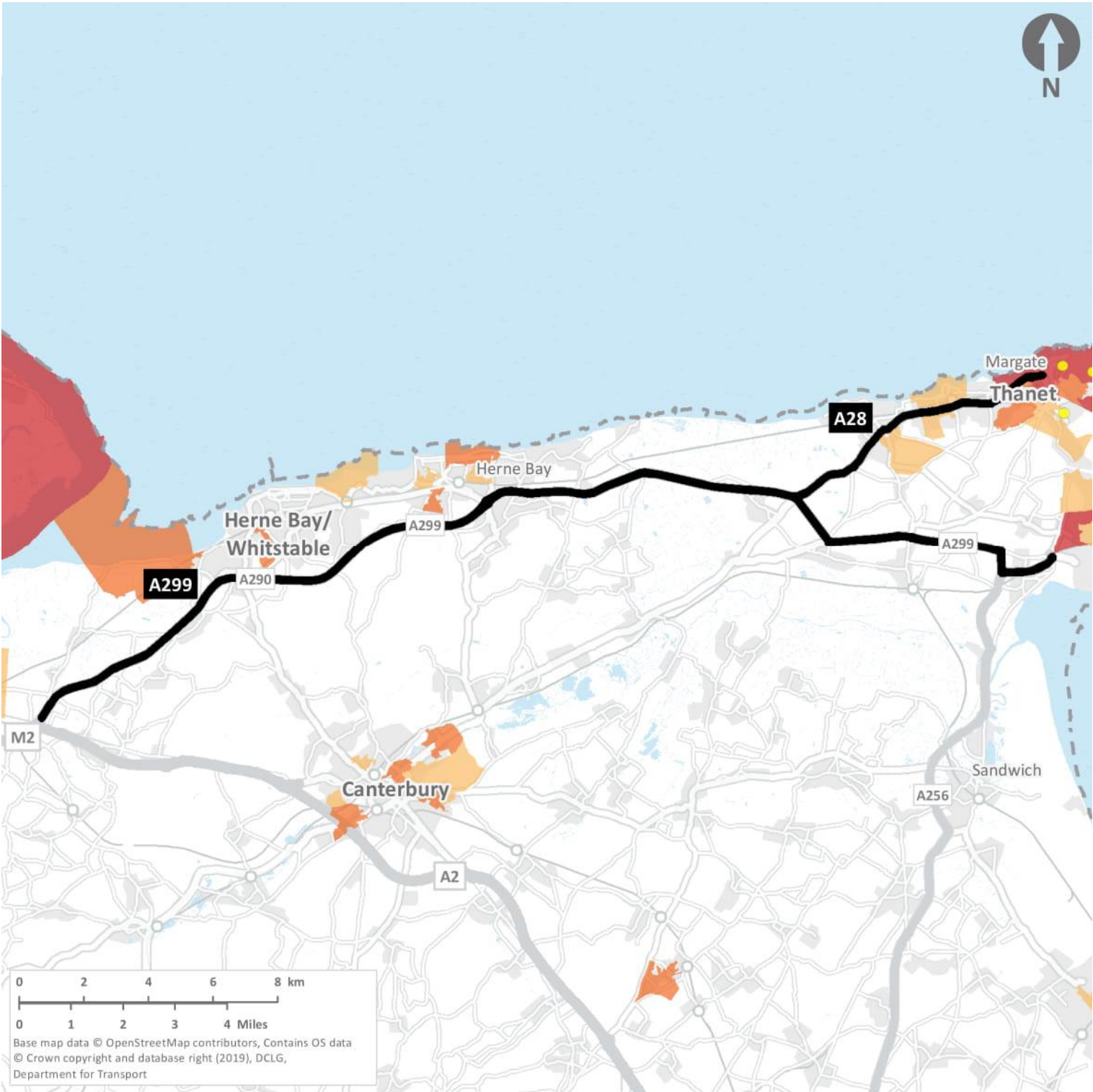
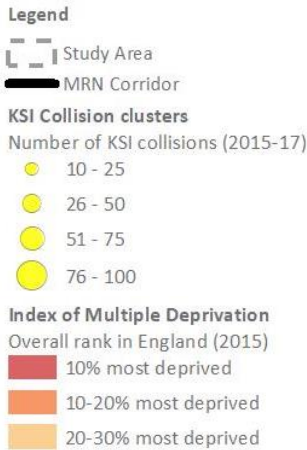
Just 33% of the population on this corridor has a National Vocational Qualification at level 4 or above, which is among the lowest levels of education attainment in the South East area.

Safety

There were several clusters of incidents resulting in people being Killed or Seriously Injured on this corridor during the period 2015-17, notably at the western end of this corridor around the Thanet Towns.

Housing Affordability

Median house prices in the area are the lowest if all the strategic corridors in the South East. Consequently, housing affordability is high in this area, despite relatively low median resident earnings.



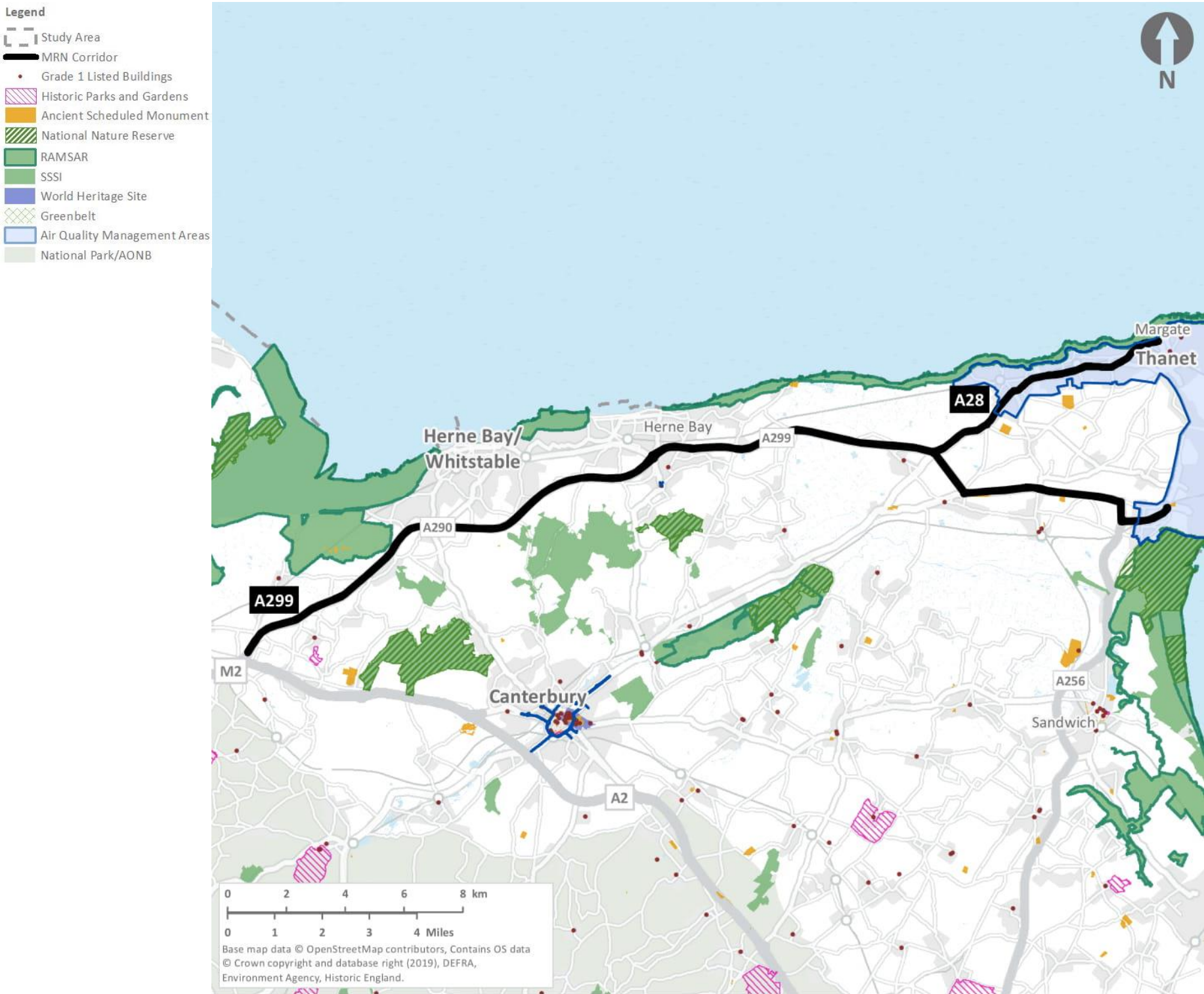
Environmental Context

Protected Areas

This corridor passes close to a number of protected areas, including a Ramsar site immediately to the West of Herne Bay/Whitstable (the Chatham Main Line actually passes through this site). All of the coastline in this area is protected.

Air Quality

The Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate urban area are covered almost wholly by an Air Quality Management Area.



Highways

Demand

It is estimated that this corridor carries **1,820** vehicles per hour on its busiest section during the AM peak.

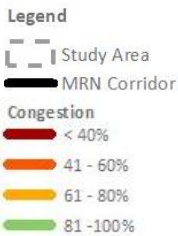
Issues and Opportunities


Overall, this corridor (specifically the A299 road) suffers from relatively little congestion. That said, there are some congestion hotspots on the Major Road Network in this area, particularly on the A28 where it passes through Birchington.

Enhancements

The Department for Transport has recently indicated its support for one of Transport for the South East’s priority Major Road Network Major Schemes, which will provide a relief road for the **A28 to the south of Birchington in Thanet**.

Longer term improvements to the **M2 Junction 7 (Brenley Corner)** – where the A299 joins the M2 – are also being developed by Highways England and Kent County Council. Transport for the South East and Kent County Council are lobbying for this scheme to be adopted by the government’s Road Investment Strategy (RIS2).





Peak hour highway demand

(Vehicles/hour on busiest section)

1,820

20rd

South East MRN Radial Corridor SE5a

A206 (Dartford)

Description

This corridor is a relatively short highway that runs to the north of Dartford town between Junction 1A of the M25/A282 and the boundary with Greater London (London Borough of Bexley). This corridor passes through a relatively industrialised area and also serves a much wider population connecting the London Borough of Bexley. It supports significant growth in Bexley and Dartford, as part of the Thames Estuary growth area.

The key issues affecting this corridor are:

- **Significant housing and employment growth:** Although this highway currently performs well (in terms of peak hour congestion), it is expected to serve significant development in the near future, which risks undermining its connectivity benefits.

The key opportunities to consider for this corridor are:

- **Impact on London:** How can the future development of this corridor support sustainable economic growth in Greater London, as well as the local area it serves?

Economic Context

Wealth

Median resident earnings along this corridor are £34,612, which is relatively high for the South East.

Priority Industrial Sectors






The priority industrial sectors on this corridor are:

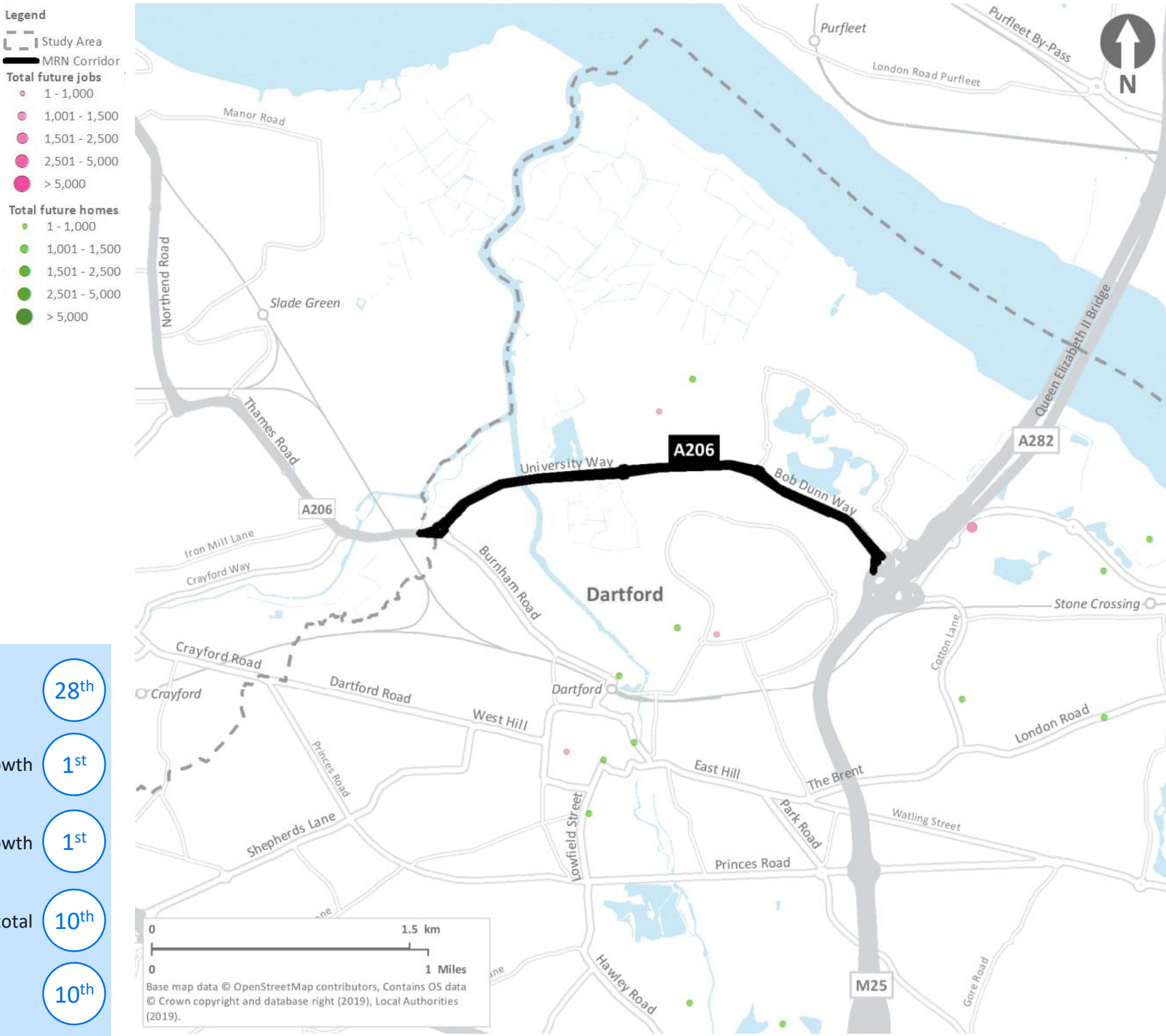
- Advanced manufacturing;
- Transport and logistics;
- Life sciences and healthcare;
- Environmental technology and energy; and
- Creative, cultural and media and the visitor economy.

13% of jobs on this corridor are in priority industrial sectors, which is around average for the South East.

Development

This corridor is expected to support the highest percentage increase in homes and jobs of all the Major Road Network corridors in the South East area. This development includes some of the largest sites in the South East, including the Western Quarry and Ebbsfleet developments in Dartford/Gravesham.

	Population (2018)	109,709		28 th
	Planned homes (2018 to 2035)	24,847	↑ 54% growth	1 st
	Planned Jobs (2018 to 2035)	32,261	↑ 57% growth	1 st
	Priority Sector Jobs (2017)	7,050	13% of total	10 th
	Median earnings (2018)	£34,612		10 th



Social Context

Deprivation

This is a relatively deprived corridor, particularly to the north of the A206 highway, which is also a heavily industrialised area.

Education

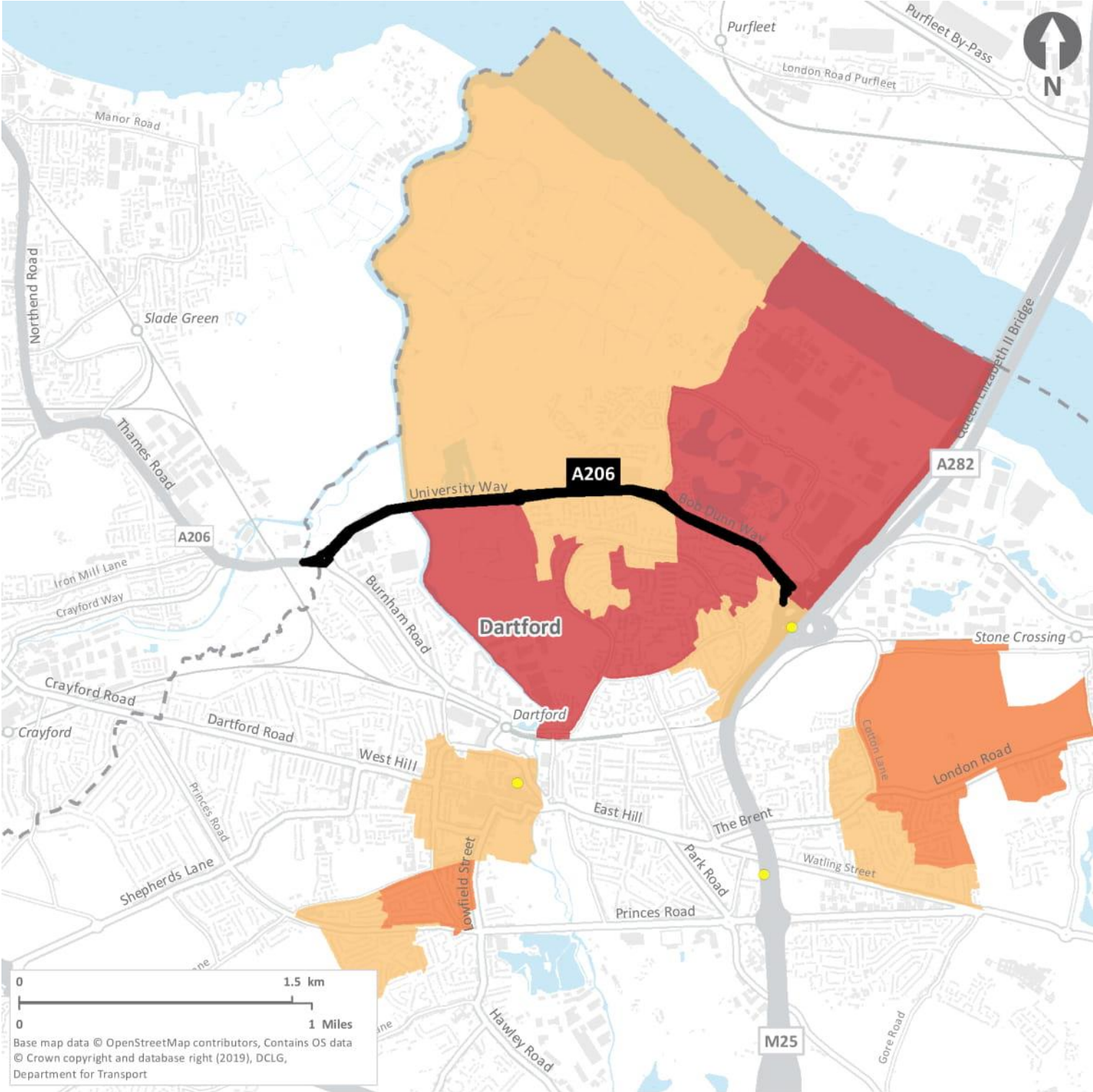
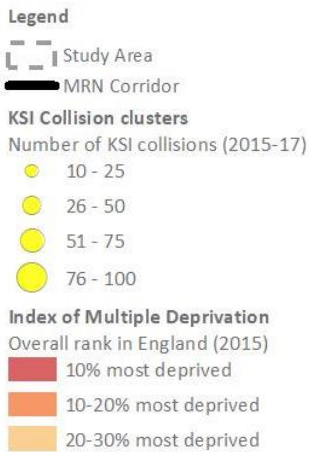
46% of the population is educated to National Vocational Qualification at level 4 or above, which is relatively high for the South East area.





Safety

There were several clusters of incidents resulting in people being Killed or Seriously Injured on this corridor during the period 2015-17, notably at the eastern end of this corridor (near the Dartford Crossing).

Housing Affordability

House prices are relatively low in this corridor, which means housing is relatively affordable. This is likely to remain (or improve) as the housing stock is expected to increase significantly in this area.















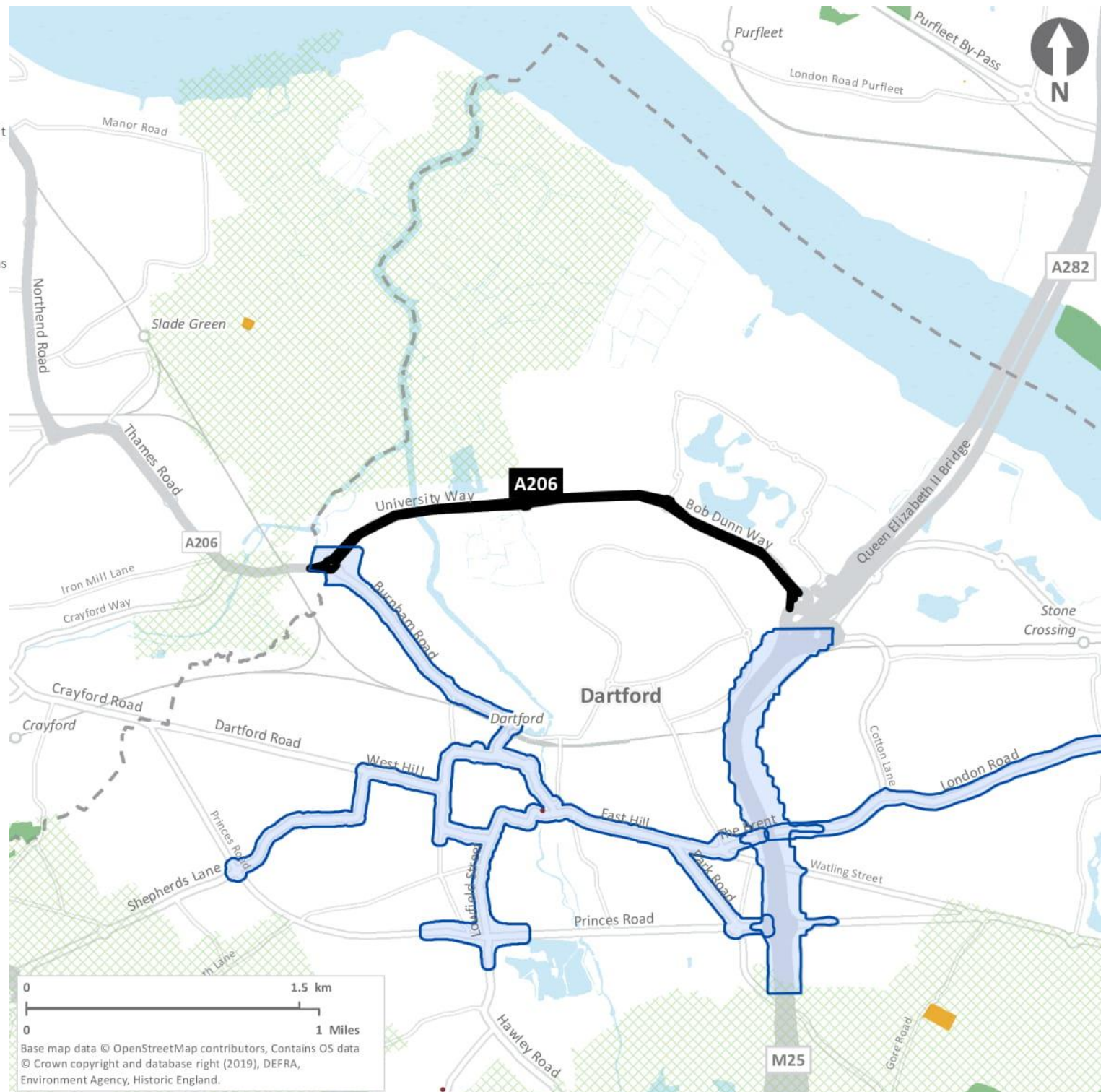
	Deprived areas (2018, England)	19%	11 th
	Highly educated population (2018, % NVQ Level 4 or above)	46%	9 th
	Average house price (2018, average of corridor's districts)	£304,000	20 th
	Housing affordability ratio (House price / earnings)	8.8	7 th

Protected Areas

Air Quality

Legend

-  Study Area
-  MRN Corridor
-  Grade 1 Listed Buildings
-  Historic Parks and Gardens
-  Ancient Scheduled Monument
-  National Nature Reserve
-  RAMSAR
-  SSSI
-  World Heritage Site
-  Greenbelt
-  Air Quality Management Areas
-  National Park/AONB



Highways

Demand

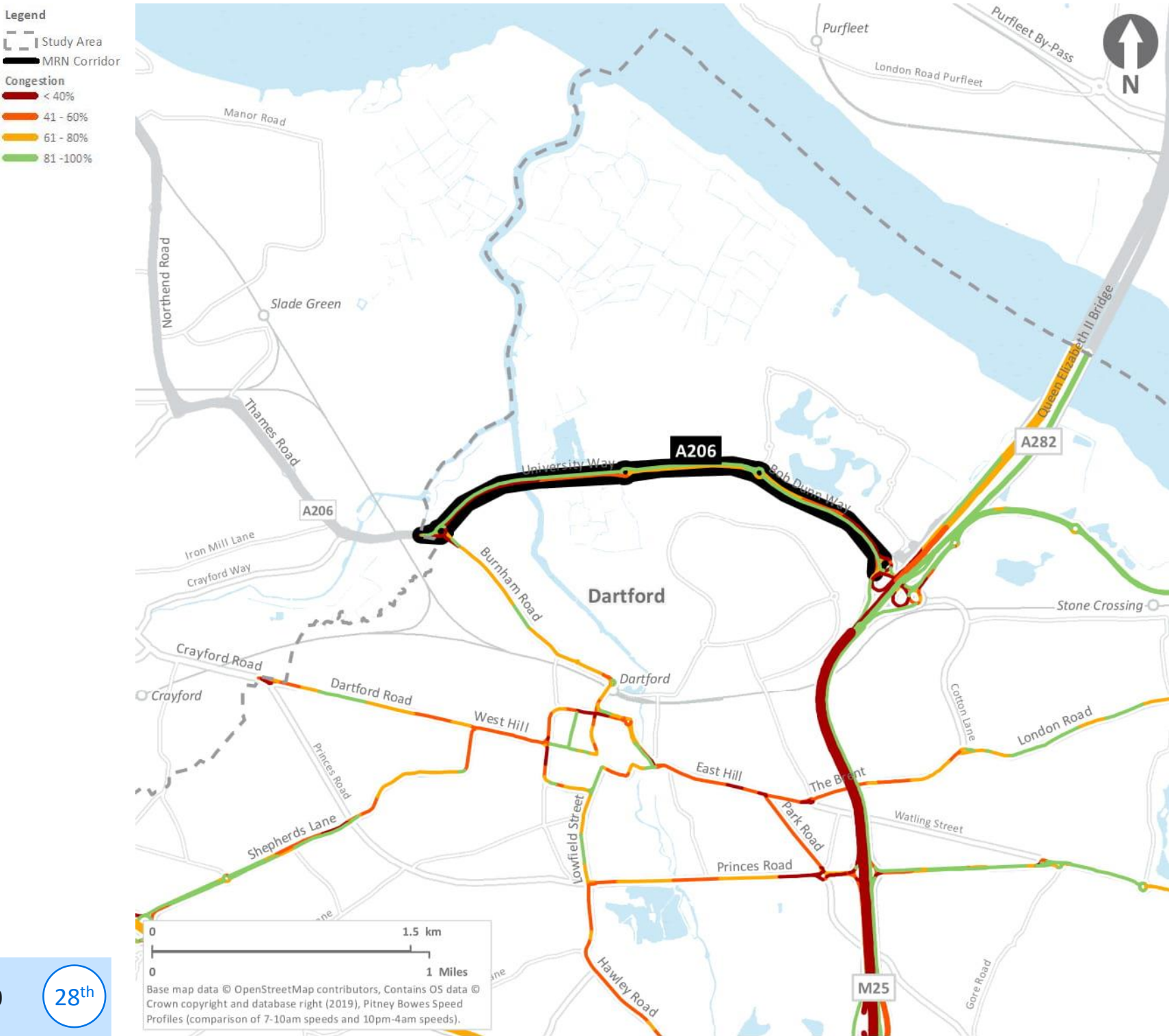
It is estimated that this corridor carries 1,110 vehicles per hour on its busiest section during the AM peak, making this one of the quieter major roads in the South East area.

Issues and Opportunities

While the A206 performs relatively well, there are significant issues with congestion on the Strategic Road Network nearby, on the approach to the Dartford Crossing. Here, the AM peak speed is less than 40% of the average night-time speed.

Enhancements

Although there are no enhancements planned for the A206, this corridor will be impacted by the **Lower Thames Crossing**, which should relieve pressure on the M25 motorway in this area.



Peak hour highway demand
(Vehicles/hour on busiest section)

1,110

28th

South East MRN Radial Corridor SE5b

A2 (Medway – Faversham)

Description

This corridor is formed of the A2 from the Medway Towns through Sittingbourne and Faversham to the M2 and Junction 7 (Brenley Corner) and the connection with the A299. This highway, which follows the route of a Roman Road, is a single carriageway road that provides important local connectivity through these towns. It also passes through many town centres, and therefore plays an important role in defining the character and townscape of the towns it services.

The A2 highway suffers from significant congestion and poor air quality. These problems are exacerbated when there are problems on the M2, which forces traffic on to the A2 as a diversionary route.

The key issues affecting this corridor are:

- **Road safety:** There are several clusters of road safety incidents on this corridor, which in part reflects the high density populations it serves.
- **Congestion:** Many parts of this corridor suffer from severe congestion during peak hours.

The key opportunities to consider for this corridor are:

- **Placemaking:** How can this corridor be developed to better serve the places it transects (i.e. by promoting more pedestrian and cyclist friendly streetscapes)?
- **Road safety:** How can this corridor develop to improve road safety, particularly for vulnerable users?

Economic Context

Wealth

Median resident earnings along this corridor are £30,622 which is low for the South East area.

Priority Industrial Sectors

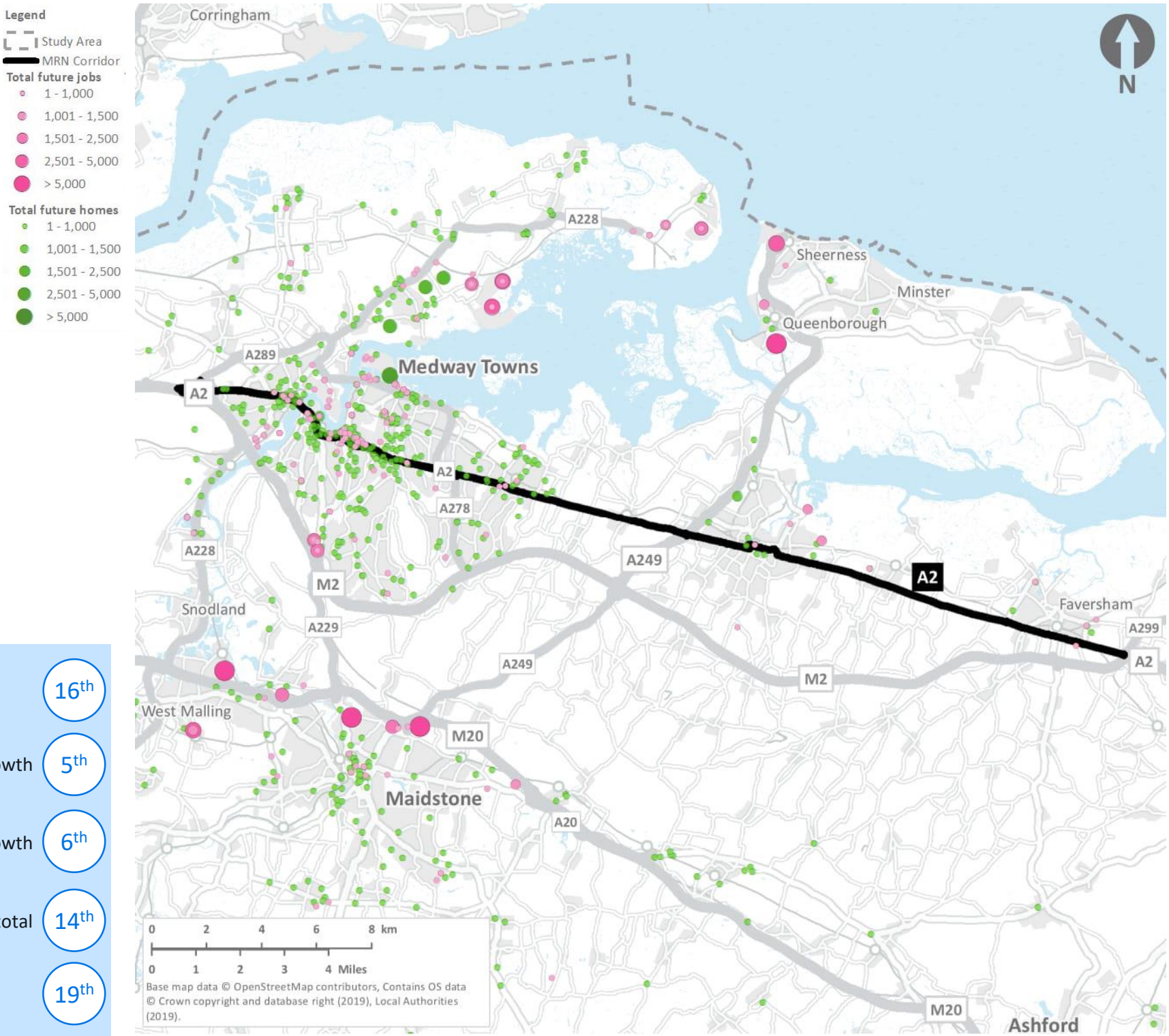
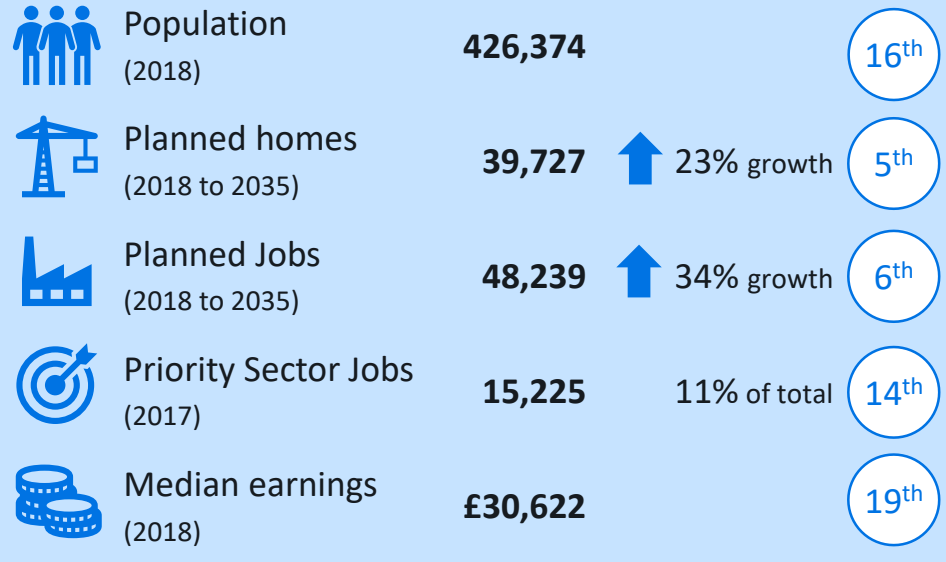
The priority industrial sectors on this corridor are:

- Advanced manufacturing;
- Transport and logistics;
- Life sciences and healthcare;
- Environmental technology and energy; and
- Creative, cultural and media and the visitor economy.

11% of jobs on this corridor are in priority industrial sectors, which is average for the South East area.

Development

Significant housing and employment development is planned along this corridor, particularly in the Medway Towns and in Sittingbourne. Additionally, the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid for Swale will unlock significant development. Less development is planned for Faversham. Employment growth is also expected to be high in this area, although it will be less focussed on the A2 highway.



Social Context

Deprivation

This is one of the most deprived corridors in the South East area. This deprivation is clustered at the western end in the Medway Towns and in the middle around Sittingbourne.

Education

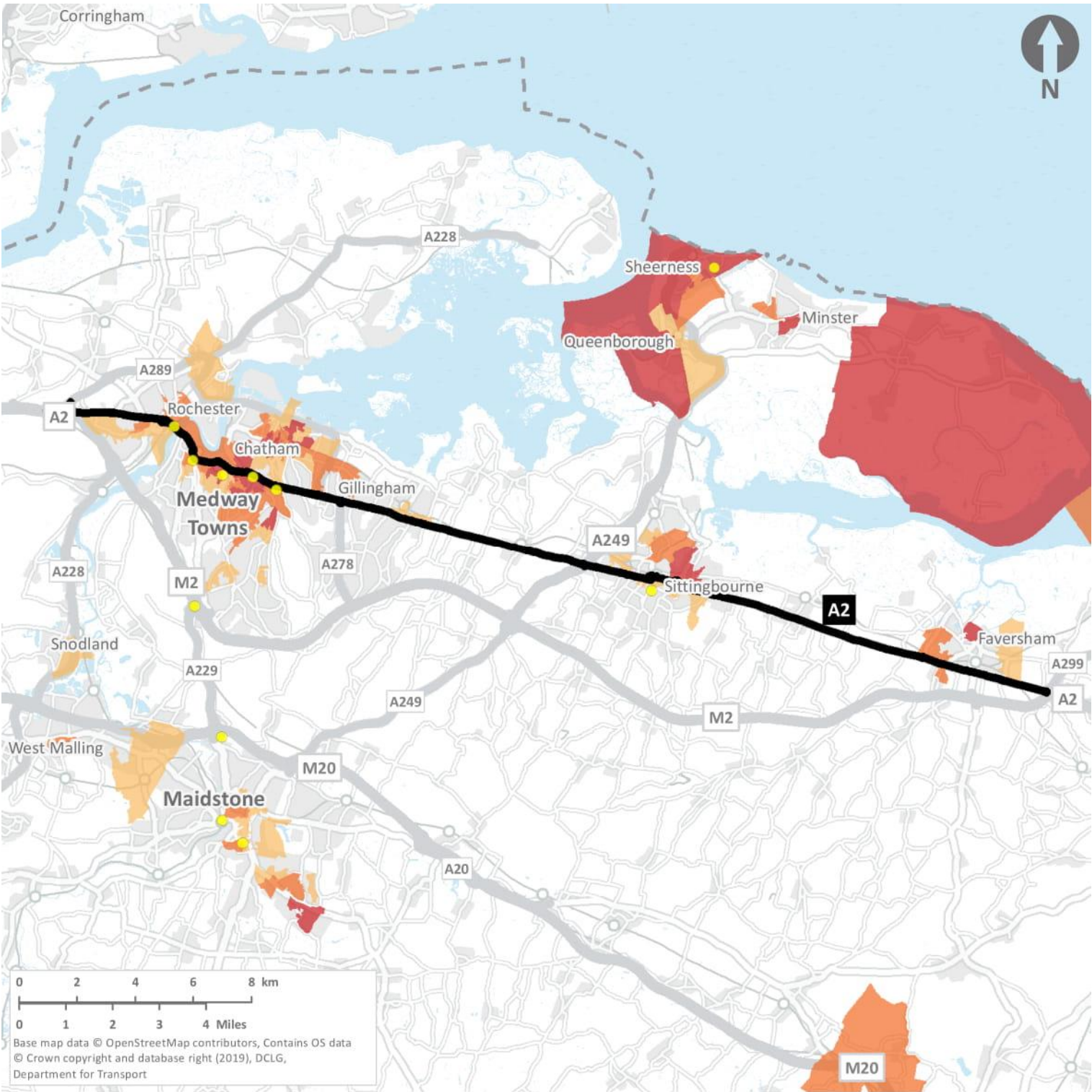
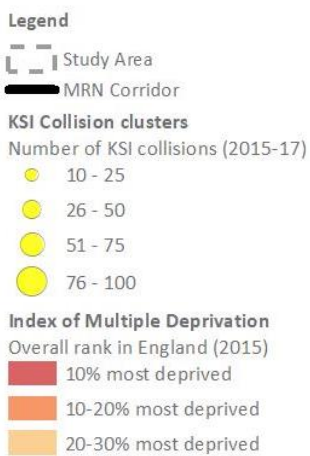
29% of the population is educated to National Vocational Qualification at level 4 or above, which is the second lowest level of education attainment in the South East area.





Safety

There were several clusters of incidents resulting in people being Killed or Seriously Injured on this corridor during the period 2015-17, particularly in the Medway Towns, where this corridor passes through a densely populated area.

Housing Affordability

This corridor has the most affordable housing of all the Major Road Network corridors in the South East area. This is driven by particularly low house prices in this area (set against slightly below average earnings).



	Deprived areas (2018, England)	34%	4 th
	Highly educated population (2018, % NVQ Level 4 or above)	29%	29 th
	Average house price (2018, average of corridor's districts)	£240,000	25 th
	Housing affordability ratio (House price / earnings)	7.8	1 st

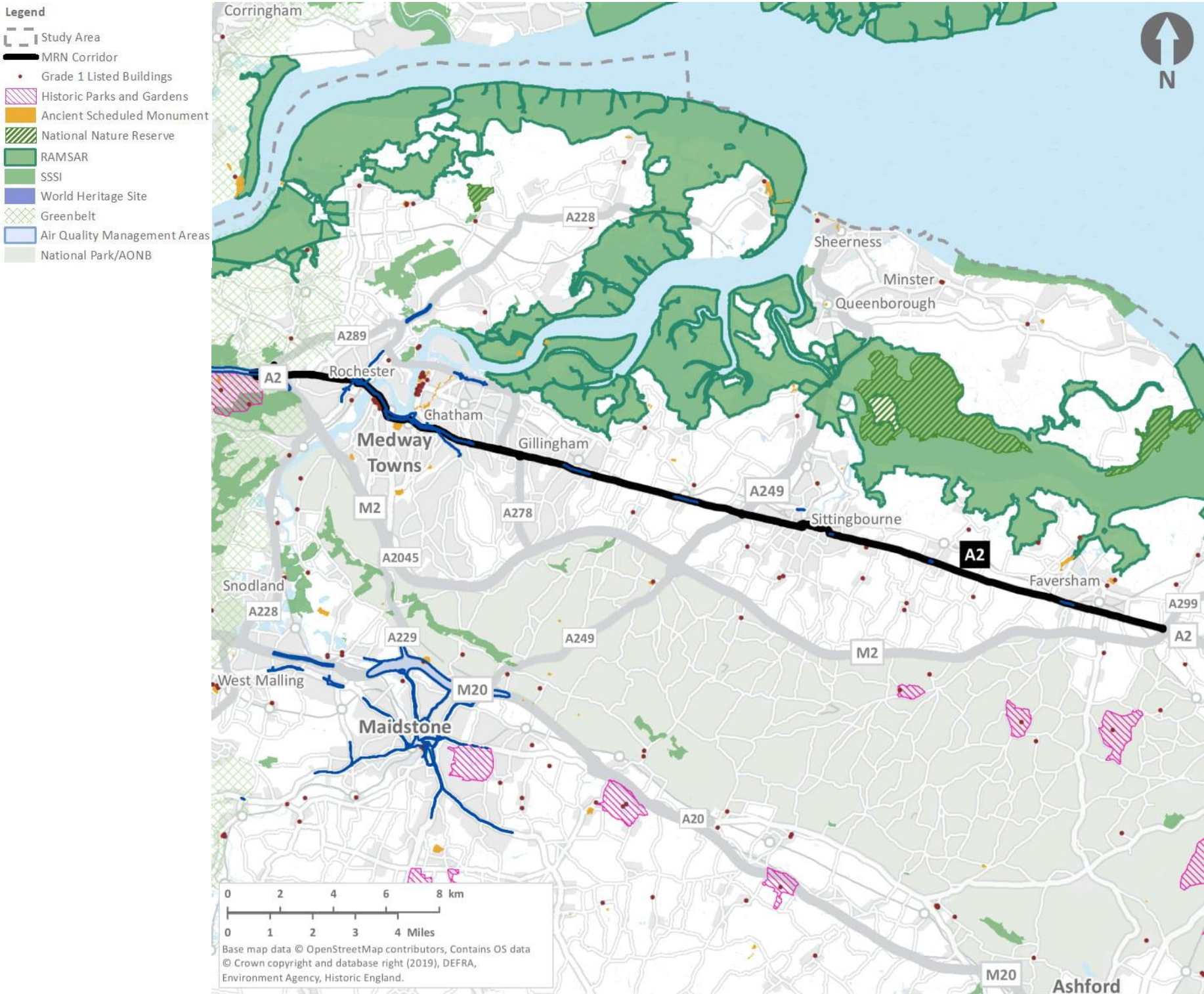
Environmental Context

Protected Areas

This corridor does not run through any protected landscapes (apart from a very small section to the west of Strood). However, it lies relatively close to the northern edge of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Air Quality

There are several Air Quality Management Areas on this corridors, notably where the A2 highway passes through the Medway Towns.



Highways

Demand

This is one of the busiest parts of the Major Road Network in the South East area. It is estimated that this corridor carries 3,886 vehicles per hour on its busiest section during the AM peak.

Issues and Opportunities

This route has significant issues with congestion along its length, with significant portions of the route seeing AM peak free flow speeds of less than 40% of the night-time free flow speed.

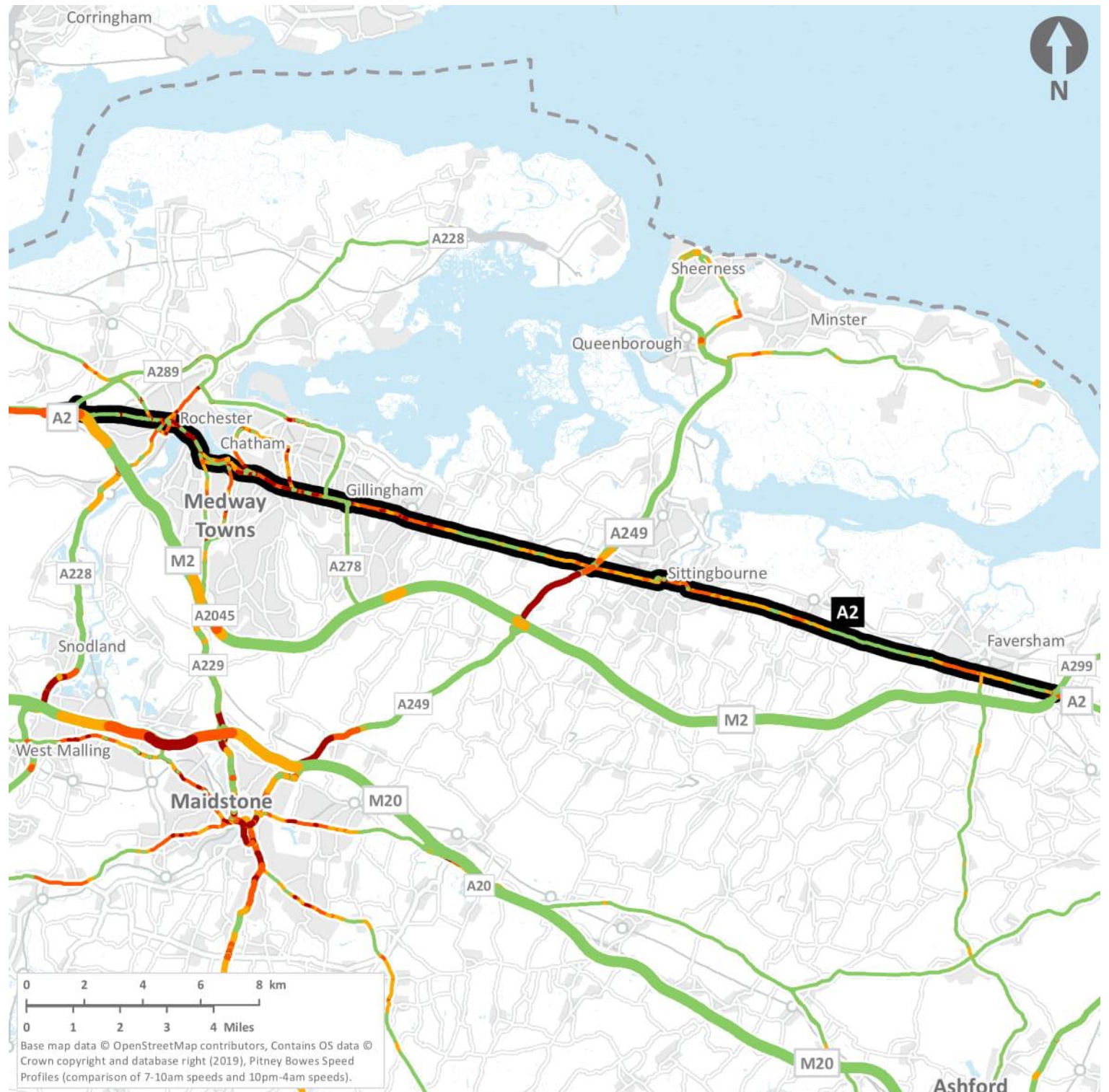
Enhancements

Highways England is planning to improve the **A2/M2 Junction 5** at Stockbury, to the east of Sittingbourne.

Highways England is also developing plans to improve the **M2 Junction 7 (Brenley Corner)** where the A2 intersects with the M2 and the A299. Kent County Council and Transport for the South East believe this scheme should be adopted by the government's Road Investment Strategy (RIS2).

Kent County Council has submitted a **Housing Infrastructure Fund bid** to improve junctions on the A249 (Swale).

All these schemes may have some impact on traffic flows on the A2.



Peak hour highway demand
(Vehicles/hour on busiest section)

3,886

2nd

South East MRN Radial Corridor SE6

A256 (Dover – Ramsgate)

Description

This corridor connects the Thanet towns to Sandwich and Dover. It has benefitted from investment in the recent past. The East Kent Access project added a section of dual carriageway from the Manston Airport site to Sandwich to support growth at Discovery Park Enterprise Zone. That said, there are still sections of single carriageway. Improvements are essential to the delivery of Dover's Local Plan and it is the route to the Port of Dover from the lorry holding zone at Manston as part of the Operation Brock Brexit contingency plans.

This corridor will also serve a planned new railway station, Thanet Parkway, near Cliffsend village, which will provide good access to the Discovery Park development at Sandwich.

The key issues affecting this corridor are:

- **Deprivation:** This corridor connects two of the most deprived areas in Kent together (Thanet and Dover).

The key opportunities to consider for this corridor are:

- **International Gateways:** How can this corridor help smaller international gateways in this area (such Kent International Airport at Manston and the Port of Ramsgate, which are currently not operating scheduled passenger services) develop?

Economic Context

Wealth

Median resident earnings along this corridor are £26,596, which is among the lowest level for the South East area.

Priority Industrial Sectors

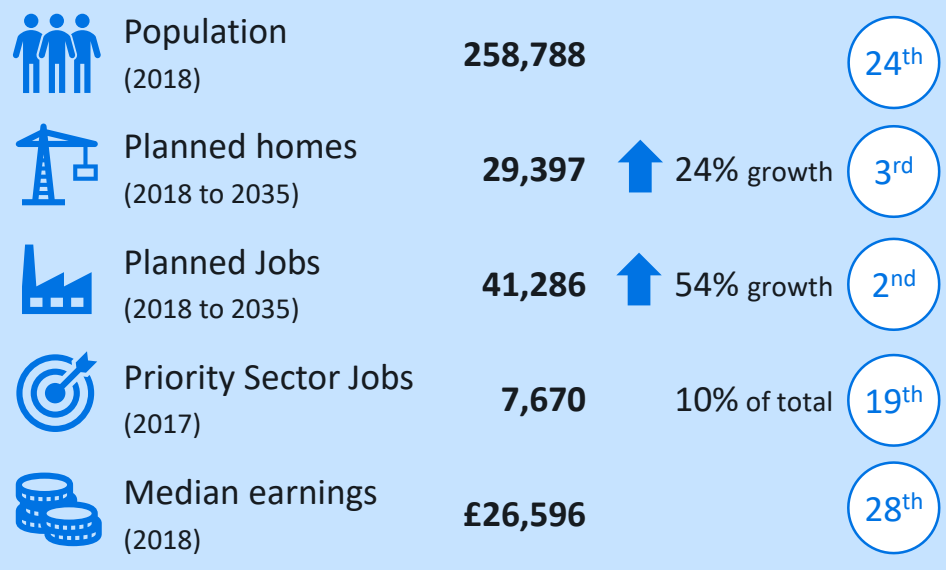
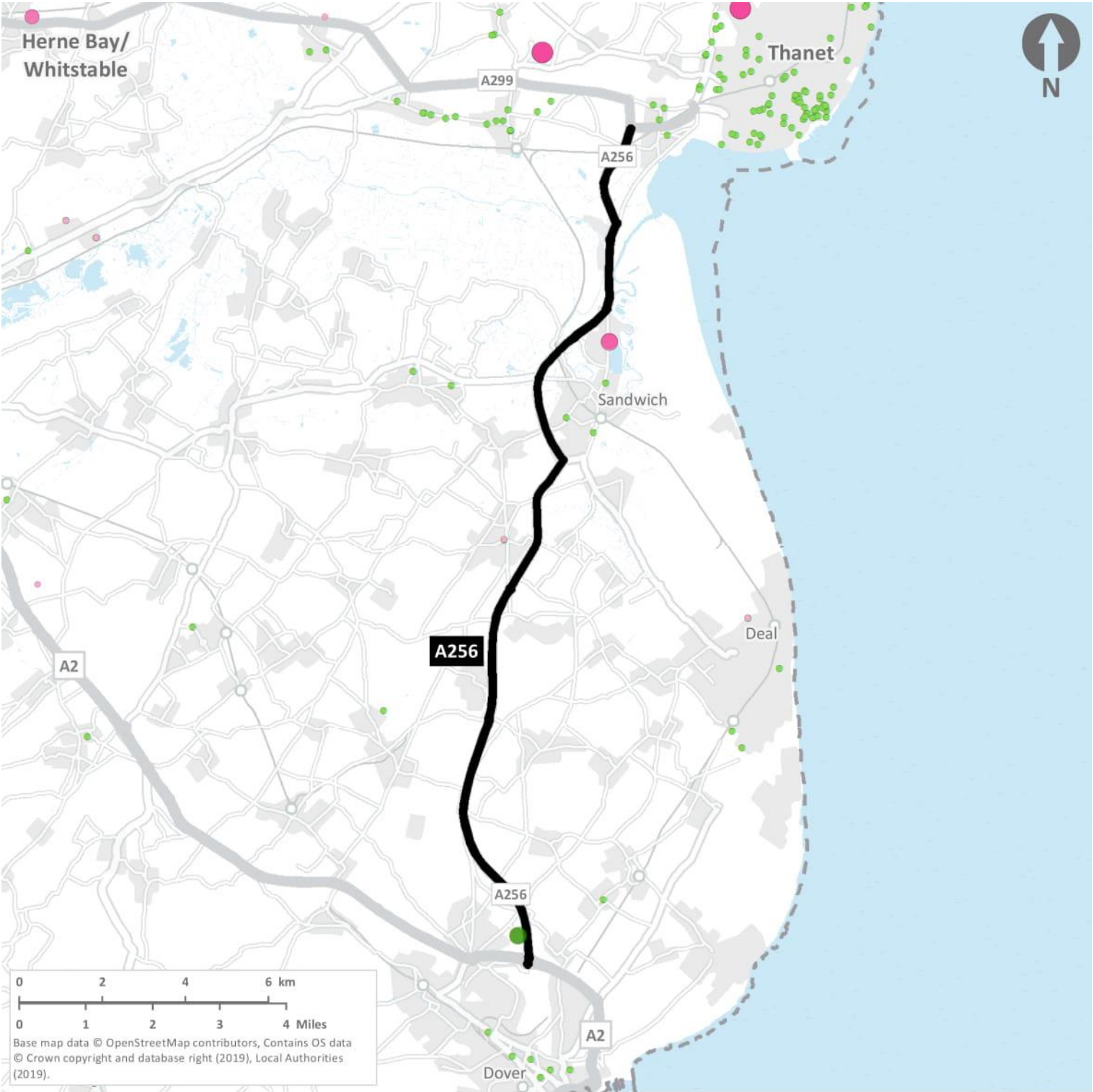
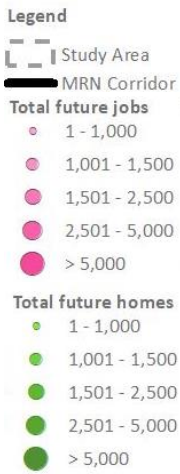
The priority industrial sectors on this corridor are:

- Advanced manufacturing;
- Transport and logistics;
- Life sciences and healthcare;
- Environmental technology and energy; and
- Creative, cultural and media and the visitor economy.

10% of jobs on this corridor are in priority industrial sectors, which is low for the South East area.

Development

Significant housing and employment growth is planned for this corridor – among the highest of all the Major Road Network corridors in the South East area. This growth is generally concentrated towards the north of the corridor in the Ramsgate area.



Social Context

Deprivation

This is the second most deprived corridor in the South East area. Deprivation is particularly concentrated to the north of the corridor in the Ramsgate and Dover areas.

Education

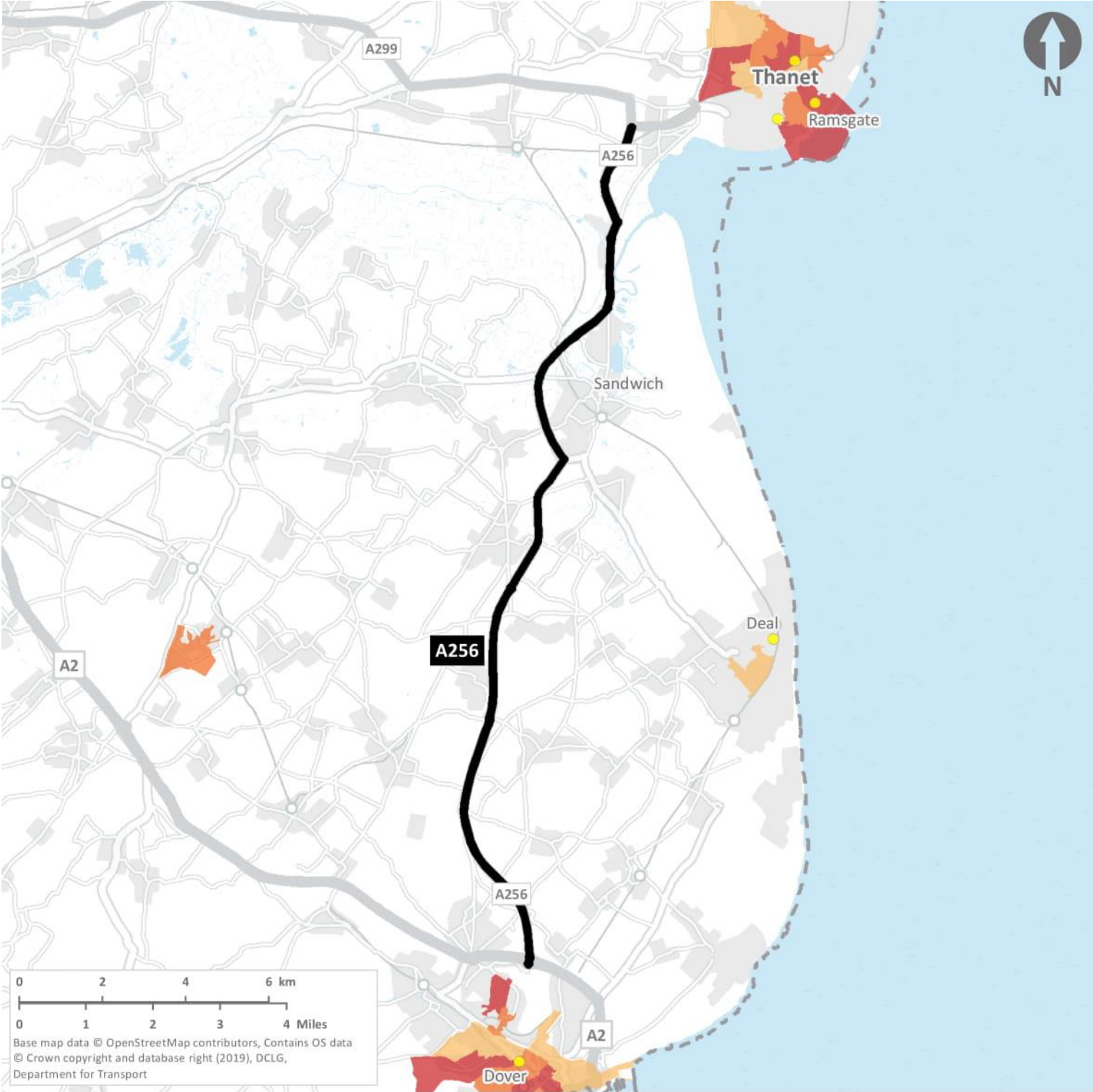
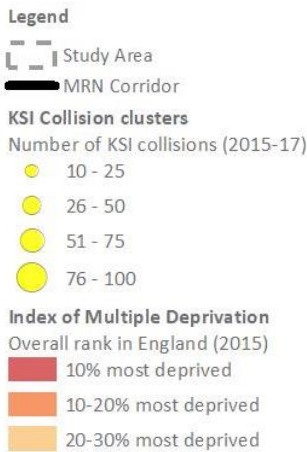
33% of the population is educated to National Vocational Qualification at level 4 or above, which is low for the South East area.





Safety

There were relatively few clusters of incidents resulting in people being Killed or Seriously Injured on this corridor during the period 2015-17. That said, there are clusters just beyond this corridor in Ramsgate and Dover.

Housing Affordability

This corridor has among the lowest house prices and earnings in the South East area. It is also among the most affordable areas in the South East.



	Deprived areas (2018, England)	36%	2 nd
	Highly educated population (2018, % NVQ Level 4 or above)	33%	24 th
	Average house price (2018, average of corridor's districts)	£231,121	28 th
	Housing affordability ratio (House price / earnings)	8.7	6 th

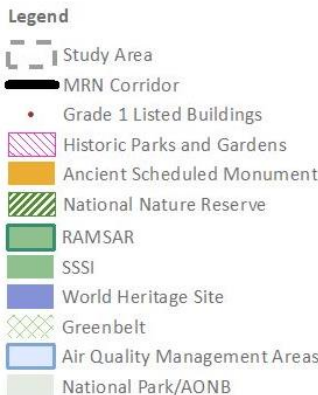
Environmental Context

Protected Areas

The northern part of this corridor runs close to Sandwich Bay, which is a Ramsar site and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Air Quality

There is a significant Air Quality Management Area at the northern end of this corridor, which covers most of the Thanet Towns urban area.



Highways

Demand

It is estimated that this corridor carries 1,126 vehicles per hour on its busiest section during the AM peak.

Issues and Opportunities

There are several portions of the A256 (particularly around Sandwich) where the average morning free flow speed falls below 60% of the night-time free flow speed.

Enhancements

East Kent Access project recently added a section of dual carriageway to the **A256** from Manston Airport to Sandwich to support growth at Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

In the longer term, Kent County Council and Transport for the South East would like to see the **A2 upgraded to a dual-carriageway**, which may require some intervention where this road intersects with the A256.



Peak hour highway demand
(Vehicles/hour on busiest section)

1,126

26th

South East MRN Radial Corridors

International Gateways

International Gateways

This part of the South East has some of the largest international gateways in the UK. These include the Port of Dover, which is the busiest Roll-on Roll-off port in the world. It also includes the Channel Tunnel, which carries international rail services for passengers London and shuttle services for vehicles, passengers, and freight. There are also several ports on the Medway estuary and smaller international gateways in Thanet. Many of the Major Road Network corridors described in this pack support access to these international gateways.

Issues and Opportunities

Any disruption Dover has the potential to impact on local, major and strategic roads in this area. This disruption can be significant and has the potential to be seriously economically detrimental.

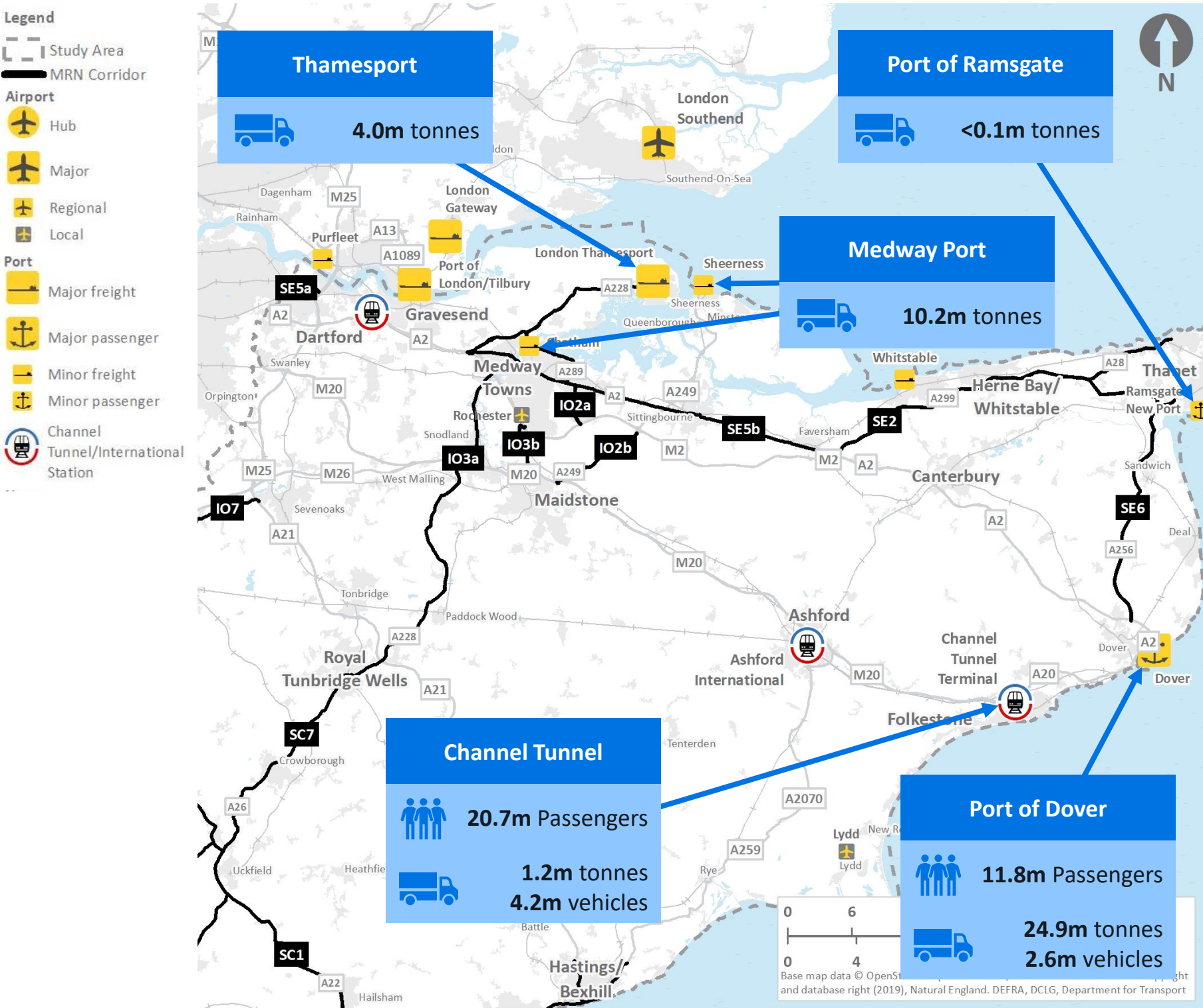
Since April 2015, traffic restrictions have been in place to minimise disruption and improve air quality in the town. This scheme, known as **Dover TAP**, includes a 40mph speed restrictions and other traffic measures.

Cross channel operations are particularly at risk of disruption from the UK's departure from the European Union, although this will depend hugely on the nature of the UK's future relationship with the EU.

Enhancements

The Port of Dover is expanding its activities to **Dover's Western Docks**, which will shift cargo operations to this side of the port. This will generate more traffic on local, major, and strategic roads in this area. This could present some challenges as the corridor already suffers from significant congestion when disruption occurs at Dover.

Both Kent County Council and Transport for the South East believe this corridor would benefit from any improvement in resilience at the Port of Dover. For example, **dualling the A2** would allow the TAP arrangement put in place for the A20 to be applied to this corridor as well.



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