

ASHFORD JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD
8 MARCH 2011

Subject:	Ashford Pedestrian Guardrailing Assessment
Director/Head of Service:	Director of Kent Highway Services
Decision Issues:	These matters are within the authority of the Kent County Council
Decision:	Non-key
CCC Ward/KCC Division:	Bockhanger, Godinton, Stour and Victoria
Summary:	<i>The Board is asked to consider and comment on the proposals to manage sections of guard railing in Ashford</i>
To Note	The proposals as identified in the attached report and suggest changes or amendments
Classification:	THIS REPORT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Introduction

On behalf of Kent Highway Services, Jacobs have carried out a survey of pedestrian guardrailing in Ashford and are seeking comments on proposals to remove sections of guardrailing from some sites. The proposals are outlined in Appendix 2.

Background

There is an increasing emphasis on improving the streetscape by removing street clutter and providing better pedestrian accessibility whilst still maintaining road safety. Government is encouraging communities to assess street clutter and determine what improvements can be made.

It is recognised that where pedestrian guardrailing is badly sited or over installed it not only alienates pedestrians but also looks unsightly, easily becomes damaged which in turn leads to increased maintenance costs and complaints. Indeed poor guard railing can lead to an increase in pedestrian crashes.

The main purpose of guardrailing is to improve safety by trying to prevent pedestrians from crossing the road at an inappropriate place or from straying into the road inadvertently. Guardrailing can also be used to offer some protection to pedestrians at locations where the swept path of large vehicles,

such as buses and heavy goods vehicles, takes the vehicles close to the footway, sometimes overhanging it.

Appendix 1 is a report with the recommendations along with illustrated diagrams detailing retention and removals. Ringway would be carrying out the removals with the panels being recycled. If decorative or ornate railings and panels are highlighted for removal the Borough Council will be able to retain these for repairs or future use.

Options available

Members of the Board can:

1. support the proposals to remove guardrailing at the sites identified in Appendix 1
2. recommend amendments to the proposals for re-assessment
3. reject some/all of the proposals

Implications

1. Financial – Funding will be provided by Kent Highway Services. A budget allocation has not been secured next financial year specifically for this commission.
2. Programming - It is proposed to undertake the works on a site by site basis where damage has occurred to existing barrier to achieve value for money and efficiency.

Conclusion

The removal of guardrailing which is not required for pedestrian safety or for other reasons is in line with national guidance to de-clutter streets. It will also reduce on-going maintenance costs and help improve the appearance of the public realm.

Contact Officer

Rachel Best

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Full report by Jacobs
Appendix 2 – Drawing showing locations of guardrailing and summary
of recommendations

Kent Pedestrian Guard Railing Assessment

Ashford – Post Consultation Report




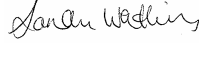


January 2011

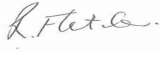
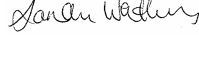


Project Number B1555300

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 Project: Kent Guard Railing Assessment Job No: B1555300
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Contents

1. **Foreword**
2. **Methodology**
3. **Site Conclusions / Recommendations**

1 Foreword

Jacobs UK Ltd has received a request from Kent Highway Services to complete a Pedestrian Guardrail Assessment in Ashford.

There is an increasing emphasis on improving the streetscape by removing street clutter and providing better pedestrian accessibility whilst maintaining road safety. It is recognised that where pedestrian guard railing is badly sited or over installed it not only alienates pedestrians but also looks unsightly, easily becomes damaged which in turn leads to increased maintenance costs and complaints.

Guard railing can be the right solution when the objectives of installing it (and in the right amount) are fully considered. The main purpose of guard railing is to improve safety by trying to prevent pedestrians from crossing the road at an inappropriate place or from straying into the road inadvertently. Guard railing can also be used to offer some protection to pedestrians at locations where the swept path of large vehicles, such as buses and heavy goods vehicles, takes the vehicles close to the footway, sometimes overhanging it.

This report contains recommendations to retain, partially remove or wholly remove pedestrian guard railing from 9 sites across Ashford.

Following consultation with Ashford District Council, County Members for Ashford and Kent County Council's Transport and Development team this report replaces the "Report for Consultation" issued 14th December 2010. Each of the comments received has been reviewed and changes made accordingly.

2 Methodology

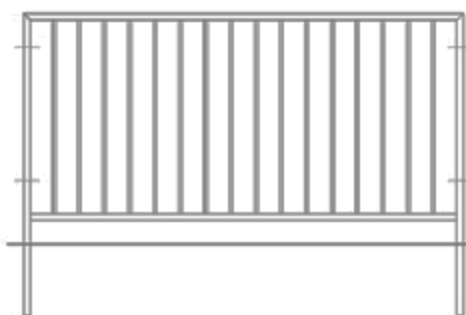
The assessments were conducted within an approximate 750metre (820yard) radius (1 mile diameter) of the High Street to incorporate the main pedestrian thoroughfares in the town centre (see figure 1).

Each site has been assessed by a fully qualified road safety auditor and a road safety engineer. Records of each site will be maintained by the KHS Assessment Management team.

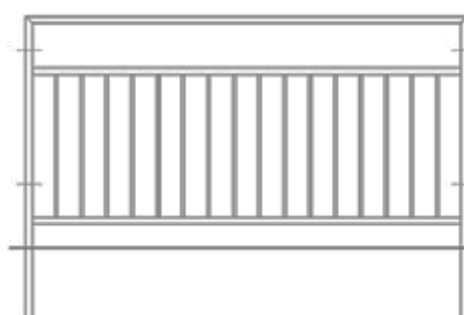
The surveys have allowed sufficient adjacent road space to be included; the exact length of road surveyed to make up a site has been dictated by the existence of side roads, major entrances / exits and the current extent of the existing guard railing.

The type of pedestrian guard railing assessed has been categorised into one of three types as shown below:

Standard type



'See through' type



Decorative type



The decorative type of railing has a number of variations.

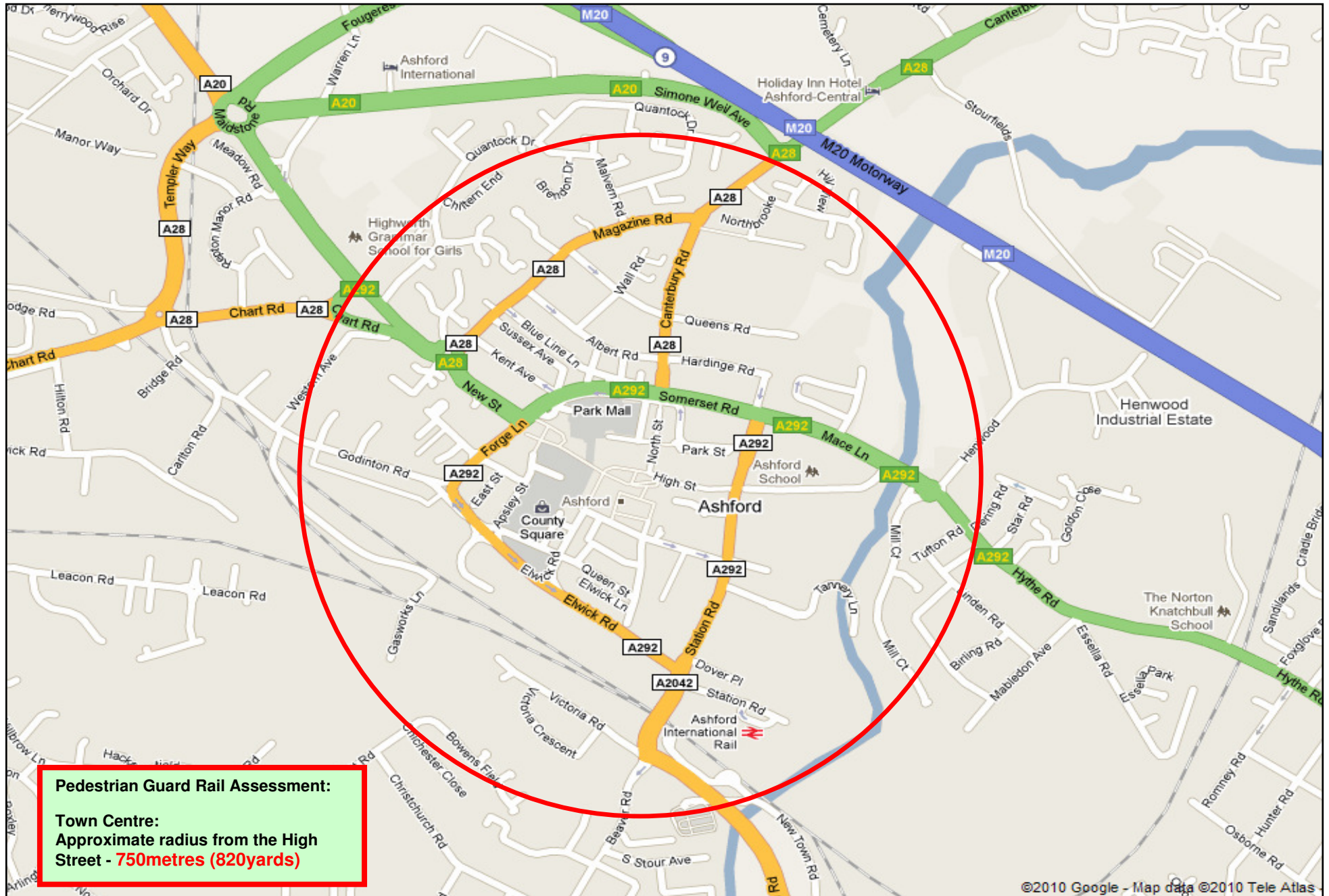
The site assessment was conducted by assessing the effectiveness of individual guardrails within the site and effectiveness as a whole. Photographs were taken and all technical data pertaining to the site was recorded including guard rail measurements, carriageway and footway width, proximity of junctions, type of pedestrian crossing and proximity to other crossings etc. Local trip attractors and generators have also been identified to assess pedestrian desire lines.

Where appropriate the width of the carriageway and its arrangement into lanes has been recorded as this relates to the degree of difficulty that people have in crossing.

The width of the available footway has also been taken and consideration given to the effect the guard railing has on reducing the effective footway width.

As the width of the carriageways and footways varied considerably within a site and where that was noted, just one measurement was recorded.

Illustrated diagrams indicating pedestrian guardrail locations, any proposals to install additional guardrail panels, the replacement of any damaged panels and to remove or retain the guardrails have been included.



3

Site 1 Location:

Site 1 is located from the roundabout junction with A292 Maidstone Road/New Street/Magazine Road/Chart Road and St Teresa' Close to just passed the St Mary's Nursery School on Chart Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

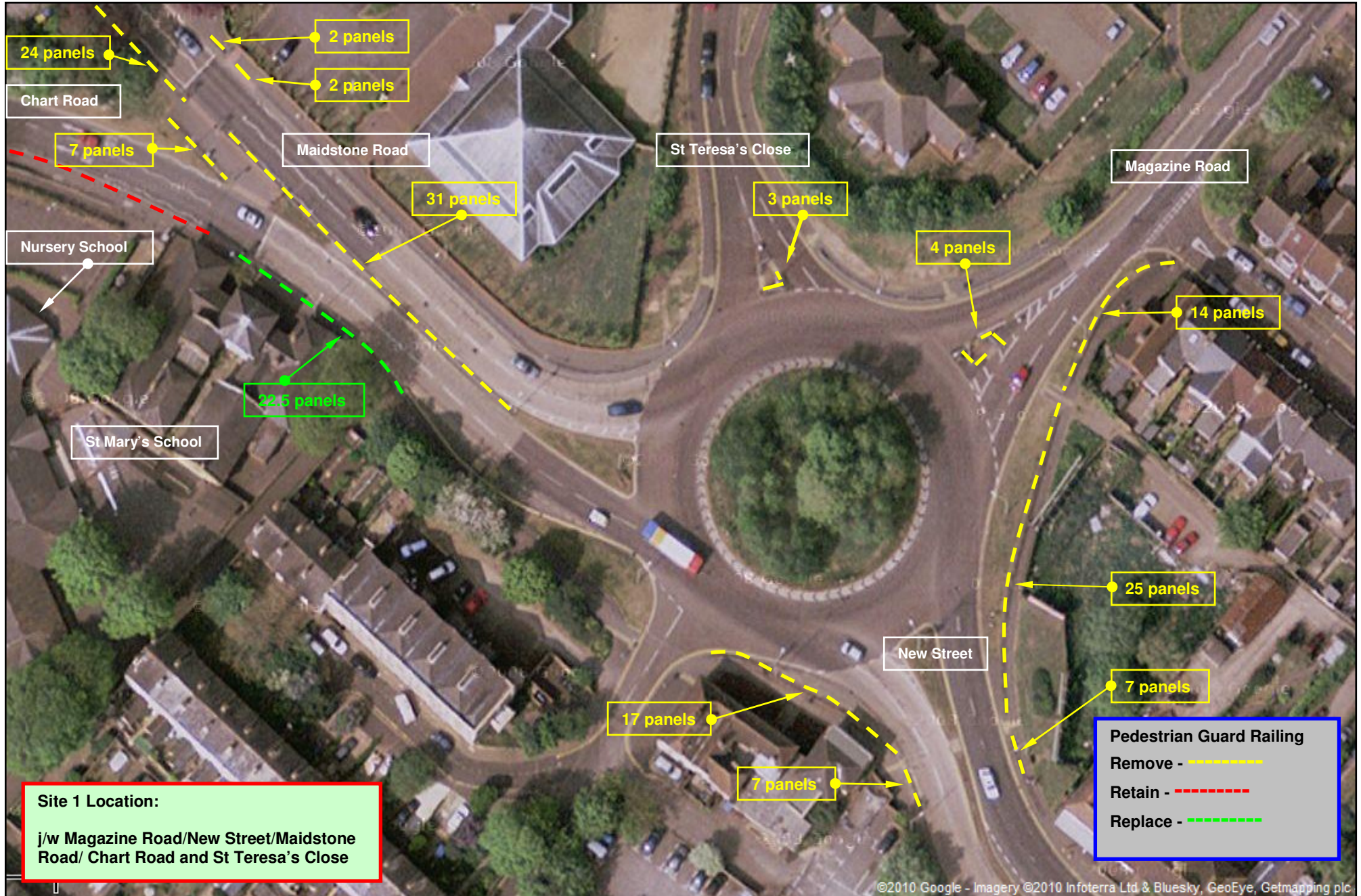
There are mainly residential properties located around the site with a Primary school and nursery school located on Chart Road.

For the majority of the site the pedestrian guard railings offer little benefit as a guide or protective device except outside both the primary school and the nursery school where these guard railings should be retained. The 22.5 railings that are to be retained are on the edge of a shared footway / cycleway and should therefore be 1.4m high.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as moderate.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 1.**
- **22.5 panels to be retained on Chart Road on the shared footway/cycleway should be replaced with panels 1.4m high.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 1



Site 2 Location:

Site 2 is located from the junction with A292 Maidstone Road and Chart Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

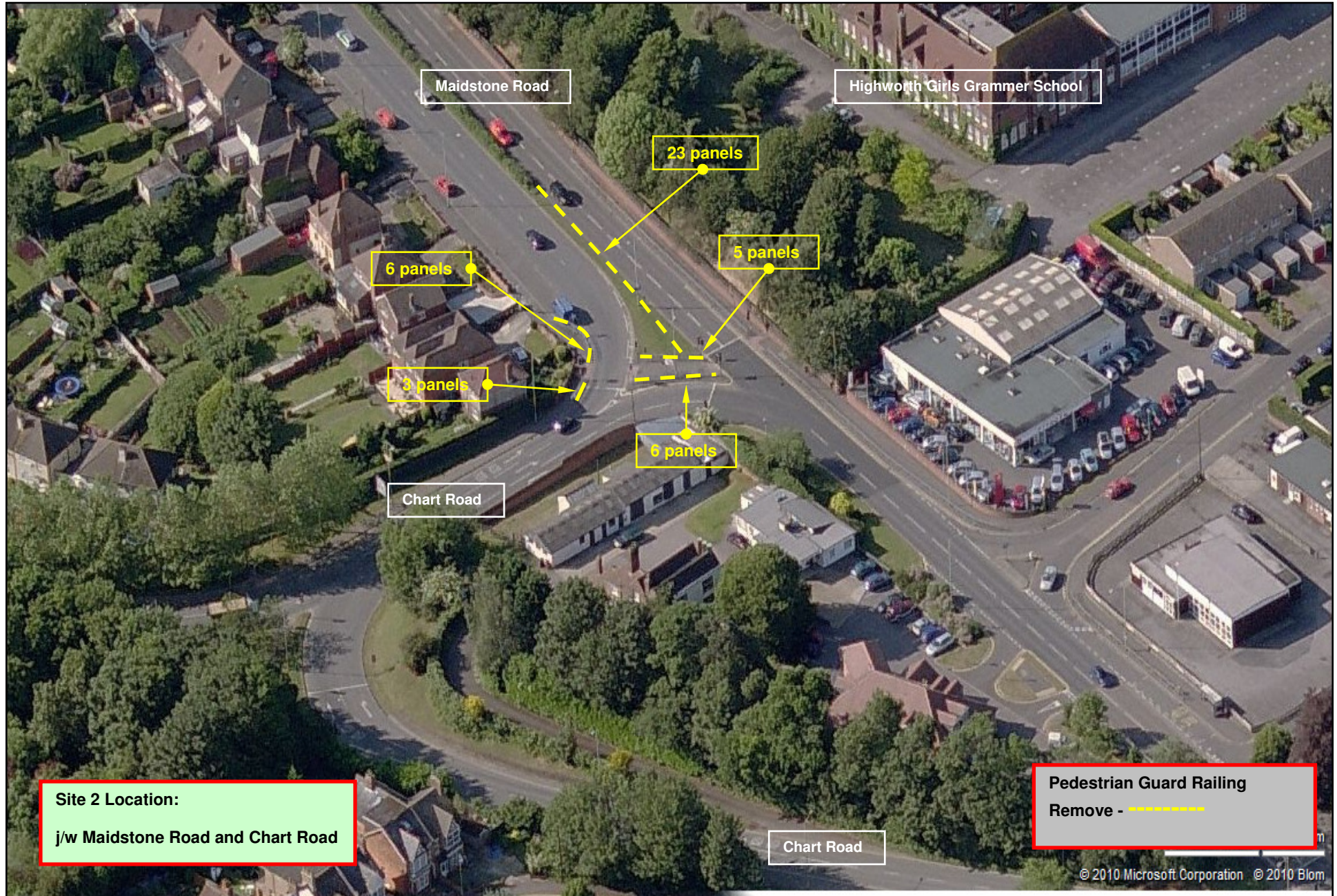
The site has mainly residential properties on the western side and the Highworth Girls Grammar School and some small business outlets on the eastern side.

The pedestrian guard railings offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as moderate.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 2.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 2



Site 3 Location:

Site 3 is located on Chart Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

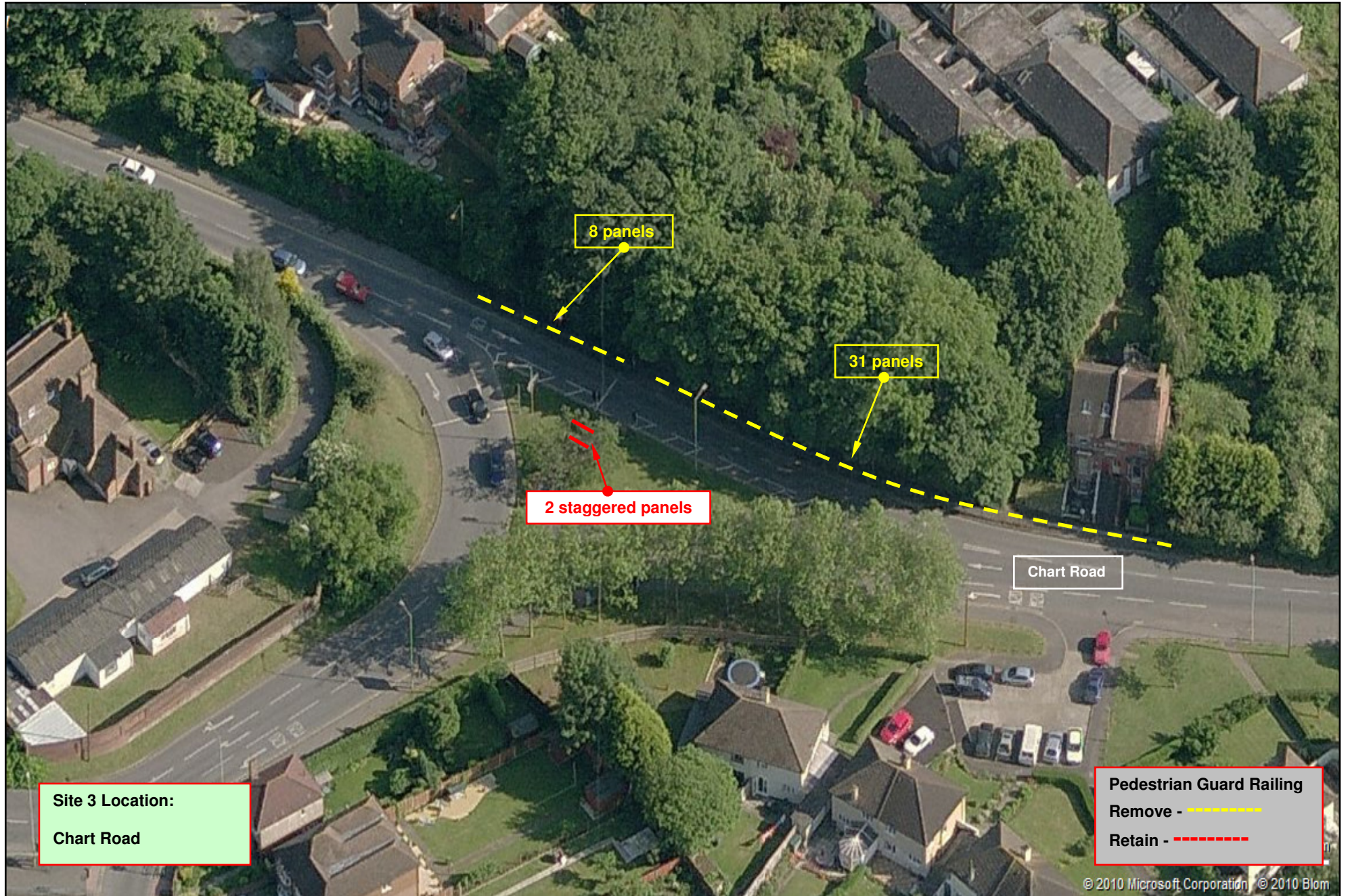
The site is located in a residential area and the pedestrian guard railings located on the western side footway offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The large grassed central island has 2 staggered panels positioned approximately 1.5 metres apart on an incline to stop uncontrolled pushchairs and these panels should be retained.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as low.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 3.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 3



Site 4 Location:

Site 4 is located on Somerset Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

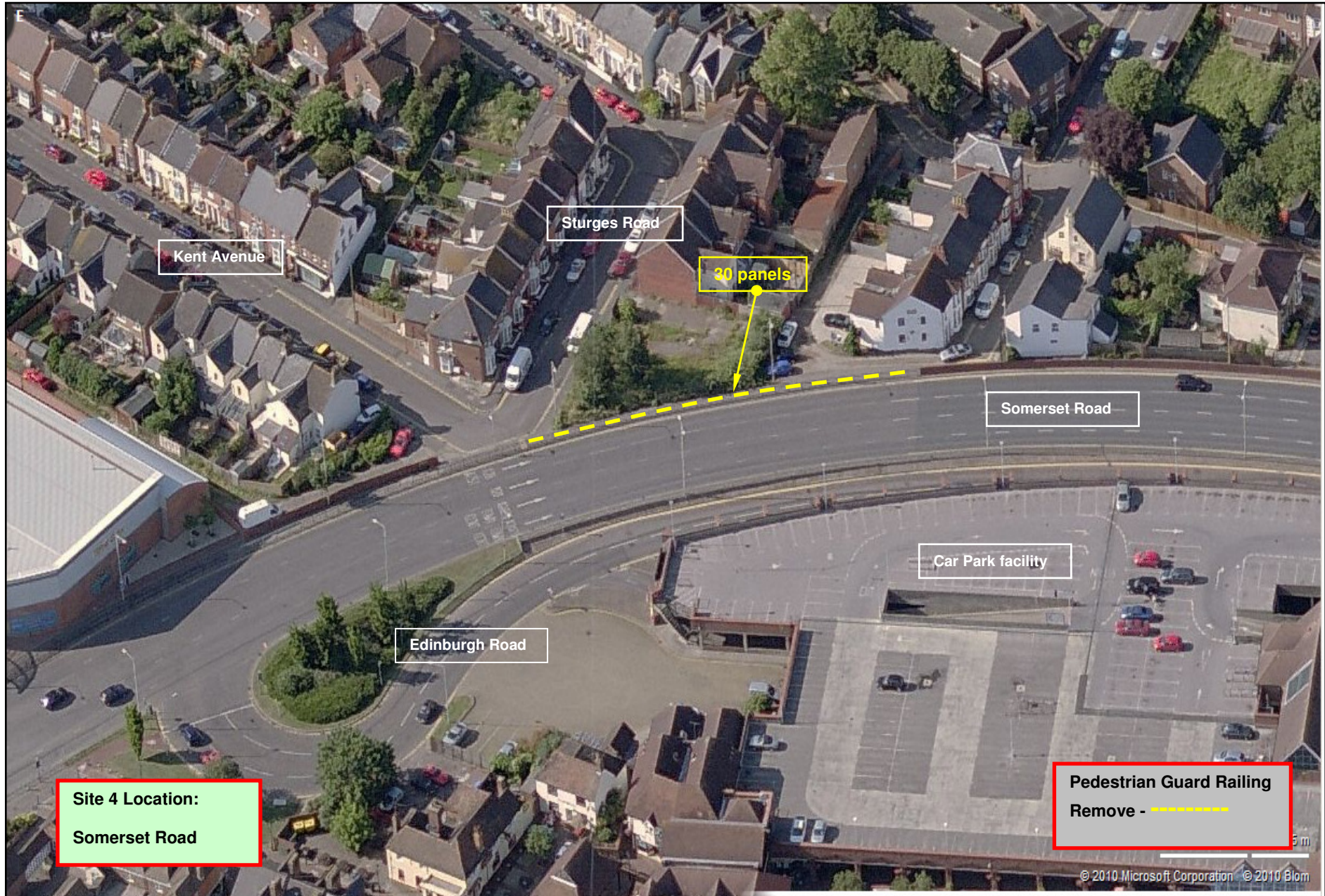
The northern side of the site has mainly residential properties and on the southern side Edinburgh Road runs parallel to Somerset Road and a car park.

The pedestrian guard railing located on the northern footway offers little benefit as a guide or protective device as pedestrians were observed crossing Somerset Road at the point where Sturges Road and Kent Avenue merge at the footway on the northern side.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as moderate.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 4.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 4



Site 5 Location:

Site 5 is located on Edinburgh Road/Park Street.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
Yes		

Conclusions / Recommendations

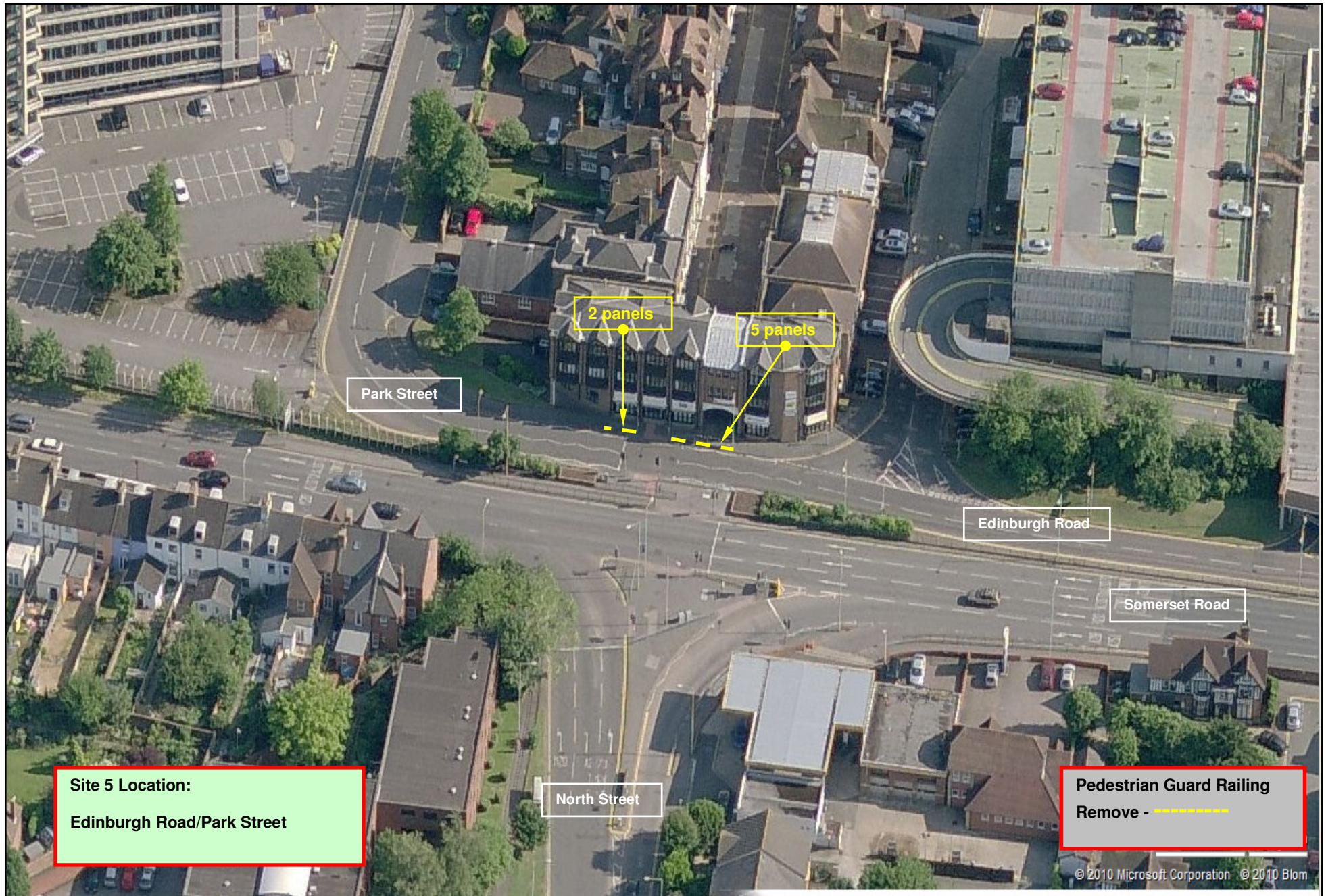
The site is located on the southern footway outside a block of offices with an arched access to a lane on the southern side.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as moderate.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 5.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 5



Site 5 Location:
Edinburgh Road/Park Street

Pedestrian Guard Railing
Remove - - - - -

Site 6 Location:

Site 6 is located on Elwick Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

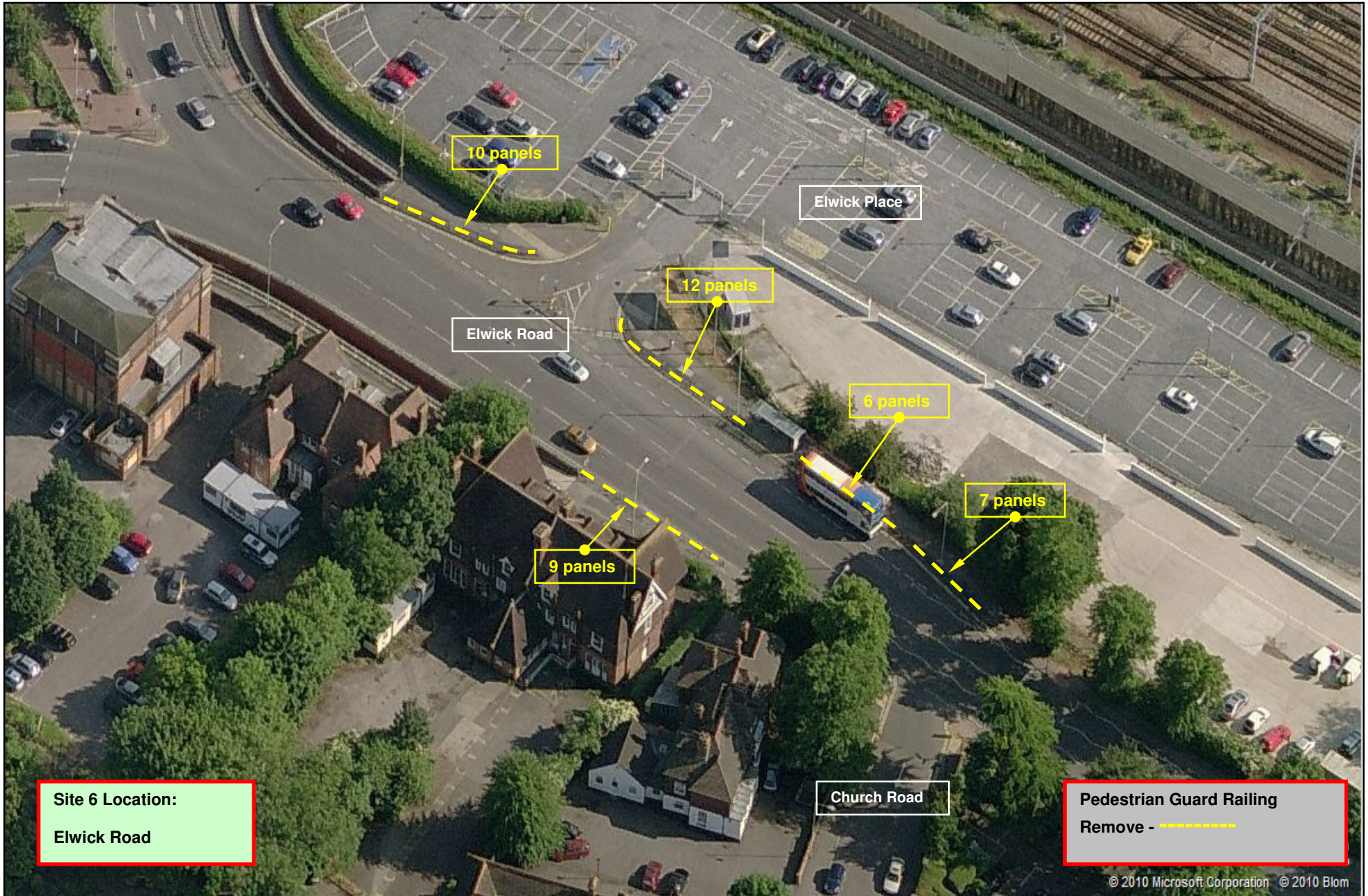
The site is located on the southern footway at a bus stop and is adjacent to Elwick Place car park.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as moderate.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 6.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 6



Site 7 Location:

Site 7 is located on Station Road.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

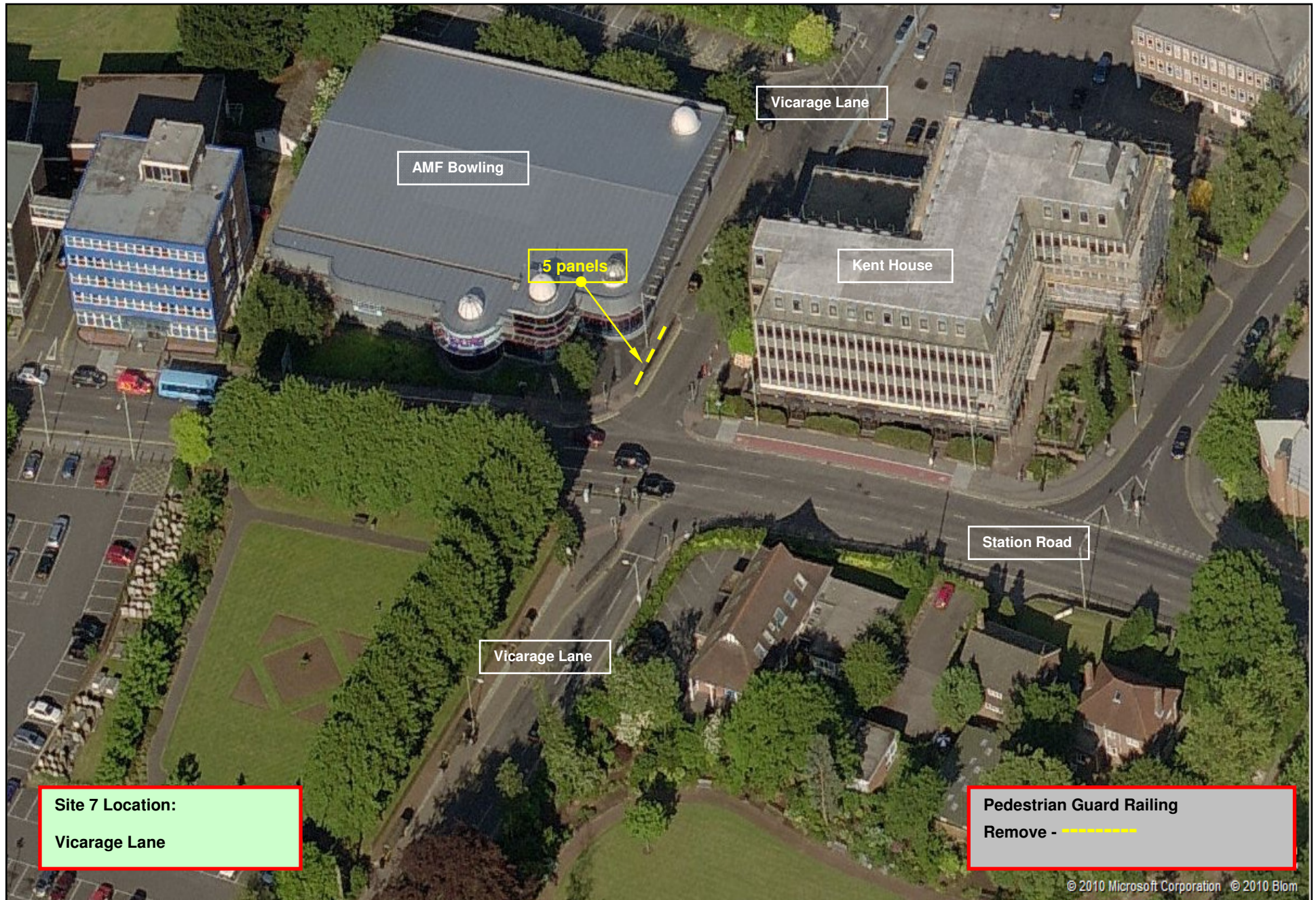
The site is located on the northern footway outside the AMF Bowling Centre and is adjacent to Kent House.

The pedestrian guard railing offers no benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has a low volume of vehicular movement and the use by pedestrians was assessed as low.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 7.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 7



Site 8 Location:

Site 8 is located on Park Street.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

Park Street is a way one system where at the site is separated into a northern and southern section by a long central island. On the northern side of the central island are bus stops and the southern part of Park Street is an access and egress for taxis, a restaurant and the British Heart Foundation.

The pedestrian guard railing offers little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has both moderate volume of vehicular movement and pedestrian use.

- **It is recommended to remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 8.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 8



Site 8 Location:
Park Street

Pedestrian Guard Railing
Remove - - - - -

Site 9 Location:

Site 9 is located at the roundabout junction of Mace Lane/Hythe Road and Henwood/Mill Court.

Types of Guard Railing:

Standard	See through	Decorative
	Yes	

Conclusions / Recommendations

The site is located at a large roundabout junction where there is an Express Store, residential properties and on Henwood the Kent Fire & Rescue Service and some industrial estates.

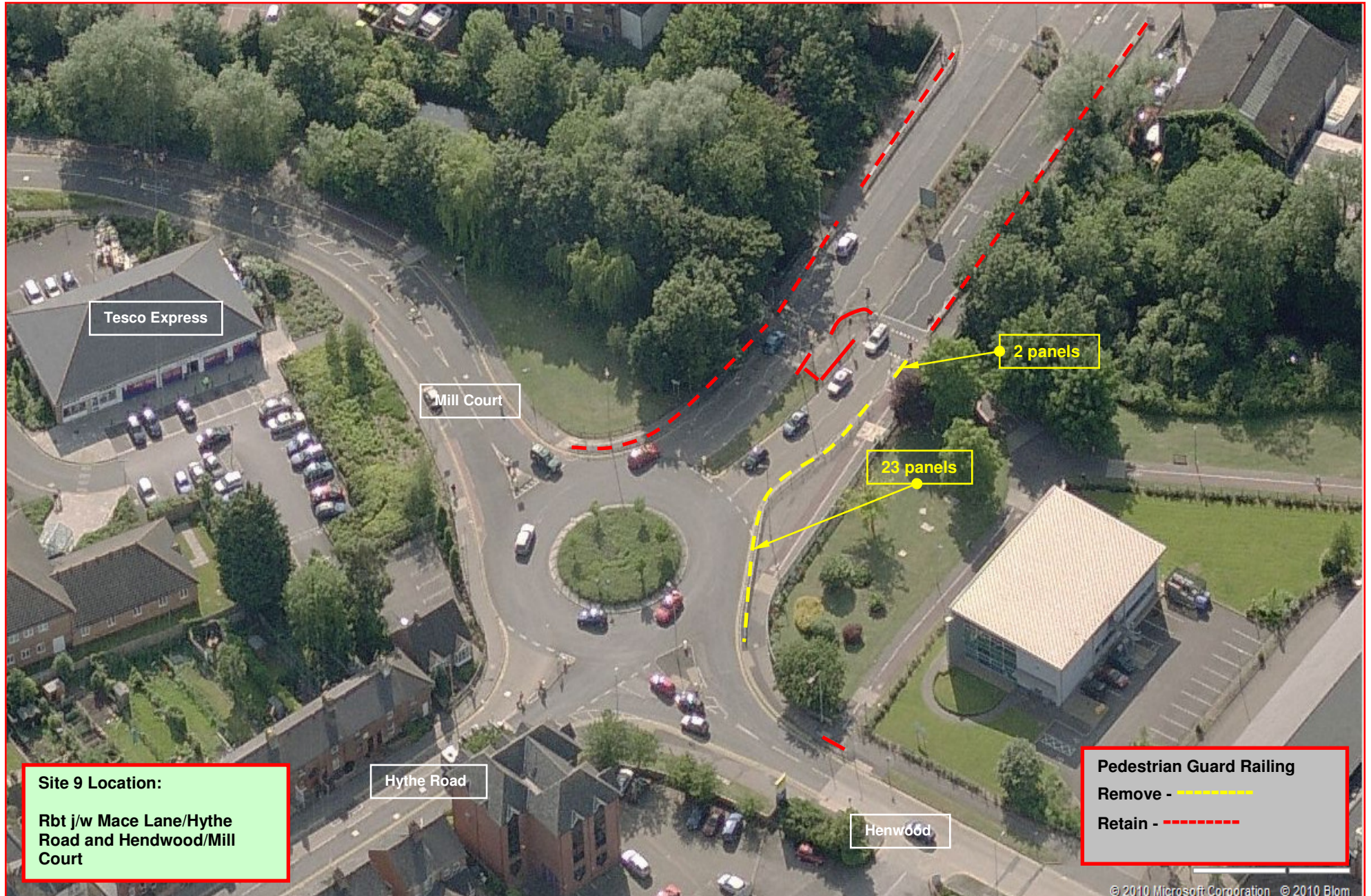
The northern footway with a segregated cycle facility has a wide footway and a wide space between the cycle facility and the pedestrian guard railing.

The pedestrian guard railings assessed for removal offer little benefit as a guide or protective device.

The site has a high volume of vehicular movement and moderate pedestrian use.

- **It is recommended to partially remove the pedestrian guard railing at site 9.**

Illustrated Diagram of site 9







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Ashford Site Locations: