

## **KB18 Public Footpath Conversion to Cycle Track, Maidstone**

To: **Maidstone Joint Transportation Board – July 2020**

Main Portfolio Area: **Growth, Environment & Transport**

By: **Simon Jones, Director of Highways & Transportation**

Classification: **For Information**

Electoral Division: **Borough Wide**

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**Summary:** **Approval for the conversion of KB18 from a Public Footpath to a Cycle Track**

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### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2015 a Public Path Creation Agreement between Kent County Council and Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust obtained agreement to widen and resurface Public Footpath KB18 with a view to converting it to Cycle Track status.
- 1.2 In order to complete the conversion and formalise the use of a facility designed for shared use, an Order to convert the existing Public Footpath to that of Cycle Track status is required.
- 1.3 This report seeks approval from the board to carry out the final legal work necessary to complete the Order in accordance with the provisions of Cycle Track Act 1984.
- 1.4 KB18 runs from Hermitage Lane alongside the northern boundary of Maidstone hospital towards Giddyhorn Lane and then joins with National Cycle Route 17. Good pedestrian access to the hospital is available from the footpath. See plan at Appendix A.
- 1.5 During the consultation for the Creation Agreement in 2015 local residents were supportive of a shared use route and also requested it as part of the consultation on the Countryside Access Improvement Plan. This was further supported by members of the Maidstone Cycling Forum and the NHS Trust. There is a degree of evidence that the route is already being used by cyclists.
- 1.6 The Cycle Track will form part of a wider strategic network and will enable residents in the vicinity of Hermitage Lane to access schools and colleges in the Queens Road / Oakwood Park areas. Ultimately it is intended that this route will connect to a new direct route to London Road Park and Ride and will allow the Hospital NHS Trust to promote the route for staff and visitors to use as part of their travel plans.

1.7 Funding has been identified to cover the legal costs and signage associated with the conversion of KB18.

## **2. Current Situation**

2.1 Stakeholders including Maidstone BC, Arriva, the NHS Trust and KCC's Public Rights of Way and Highways teams have been actively involved throughout the process and will continue to be included going forward.

2.2 An audit of KB18 has been completed and confirms the suitability of the surface and width for shared use and conversion to cycle track status.

2.3 The registered landowners have been identified and notices will be issued as part of the legal procedure.

2.4 The Chief Constable of Police has been consulted and we are awaiting their response.

2.5 Maidstone Cycling Forum has been informed and are supportive.

2.6 KCC recently conducted two sustainable travel events at Maidstone hospital. Staff feedback regarding walking or cycling from the Park and Ride was positive.

2.7 An Equality Analysis and Impact Statement has been prepared which covers the conversion of KB18 and related works detailed below to connect the hospital to London Road Park and Ride.

## **3. Related Works**

3.1 The conversion of KB18 is part of a wider aspiration to create a safer and more direct signed cycle route connecting Maidstone Hospital and London Road Park and Ride. The route is mainly on road through residential streets. There are two sections of shared use for pedestrian/cycles. See plan at Appendix B.

3.2 Maidstone BC and KCC are engaged with the NHS Trust and Arriva to encourage the use of London Road Park and Ride as an alternative parking location for hospital staff and visitors. The Park and Ride site offers free parking and is a 10 minute cycle or 20 minute walk from the hospital.

3.3 Maidstone BC are tendering for a cycle hire scheme which will contribute to the wider vision of utilising Park and Ride sites as sustainable transport hubs. Both Park & Ride locations and the hospital have been identified as cycle hub locations for the scheme.

2.5 To avoid cyclists having to negotiate the busy London Road/Beaver Road junction we are proposing to improve an alleyway between Juniper Close and Allington Way to make it suitable for shared use. This requires some resurfacing and the removal of a barrier and gate which is severely restricting access to cyclists. See Appendix C.

2.6 The barrier and gate will be replaced by alternative measures to prevent access by motorbikes and scooters but that allows access for bicycles, mobility scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs. Funding for this work and the resurfacing and has yet to be identified.

#### **4.0 Next Steps**

4.1 Following approval by the Board, KCC will commence the legal process to prepare the Order and undertake the statutory consultation with residents, landowners and prescribed organisations.

#### **5.0 Financial**

5.1. The estimated cost of the KB18 conversion, including additional signage is £4,100. Funding has been identified from central budget and StAR.

#### **6.0 Legal implications**

6.1 Invicta Law will be engaged to assist with the legal procedures in accordance with the Cycle Track Act 1984.

#### **7.0 Conclusions**

7.1 Subject to a satisfactory outcome from the consultation, work to progress the conversion Order could commence in Spring/Summer 2020.

#### **8.0 Recommendations**

For approval.

Future Meeting if applicable: As necessary but none planned at present	Date:
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#### **Appendices**

Appendix A	Map of KB18
Appendix B	Map showing proposed route between the Park and Ride and Hospital
Appendix C	Map showing the location of the alleyway between Juniper Close and Allington Way