

# Maidstone Joint Transportation Board



**19  
October  
2022**

## Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP)

<b>Decision Making Authority</b>	Kent County Council/Maidstone Borough Council
<b>Lead Director</b>	Haroona Chughtai
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Tim Read
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Barry Stiff/Lee Burchill
<b>Wards and County Divisions affected</b>	Maidstone Borough including Tonbridge & Malling
<b>Which Member(s) requested this report?</b>	Committee

### **This report makes the following recommendations:**

That this report be noted.

### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Maidstone Joint Transportation Board	19 October 2022

# Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP)

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

**1.1** This report provides an update in respect of the major schemes currently in progress within Maidstone and the proposed junction improvements contained within the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP). A map showing the locations of these schemes is included as Appendix 1.

**1.2** Projected start dates for the various schemes are as follows:

- A249 Bearsted Road – December 2022 / January 2023
- A20 Coldharbour Roundabout – September 2023
- A20 London Road/Hall Road – April 2024 (subject to co-ordination with Coldharbour)
- A229 Loose Road – Wheatsheaf Phase 1 – March 2022 (Experimental Closure of Cranborne Avenue)
- A229 Loose Road - Armstrong Road - October 2022
- A229 Loose Road – Sheals Crescent – TBC
- A229 Loose Road - Wheatsheaf Phase 2 – May 2023
- A229 Loose Road – Cripple Street/Boughton Lane – TBC (Currently Paused)
- A20 Ashford Road/Willington Street – January 2024 (Subject to coordination with Wheatsheaf Phase 2 and Bearsted Road)
- A274 Sutton Road/Willington Street – TBC (Currently Paused)
- A26 Tonbridge Road/Fountain Lane – TBC (Insufficient Funding in Place)

**1.3** Local Growth Fund – As reported in the August JTB update, KCC are no longer required to provide an update at each SELEP Accountability Board meeting. Updates are now only required if new risks are identified.

A summary of the decision of the Accountability Board meeting held on 15 July 2022. is available on the SELEP website by using the link below:

<https://www.southeastlep.com/good-governance/our-boards/accountability-board>

## **2. SCHEME UPDATES:**

### **2.1 A249 Bearsted Road Major Infrastructure Project (Funded through National Productivity Investment Fund):**

- 2.1.1 It had been anticipated that a start would be made in August 2022, following the initial site clearance works that were undertaken, unfortunately it has taken longer to finalise the detailed design for the revised scheme that provides the dualling option. We are hopeful that the updated scheme will now also incorporate the much-needed capacity improvements to M20 Junction 7, following recent funding opportunities which have been made available.
- 2.1.2 Following endorsement through the Maidstone Borough Council Planning and Infrastructure Policy Advisory Committee, a Levelling Up Fund bid was made to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in August 2022, to fund the capacity improvement scheme at M20 Junction 7. It is anticipated that an announcement on the outcome of this bid will be received in November 2022. Should this bid not be successful, KCC has also submitted an application to the Strategic CIL Funds for Infrastructure opportunity that MBC made available in July 2022.
- 2.1.3 The delay in concluding this work has impacted on the programme to discharge the various pre-commencement planning conditions, which are now likely prior to Christmas 2022.
- 2.1.4 It is now expected that work to establish the site compound and to carry out some initial offline works could commence in December 2022, with the main construction commencing in January 2023, in order to avoid the Christmas embargo.
- 2.1.5 Engagement with residents and other key stakeholders is currently being planned and it is anticipated that newsletters will be issued during November 2022, to provide an update on the current proposals and construction programme ahead of the main works commencing. This will also include details of the proposed retaining wall and landscaping proposals.

### **2.2 A20 Coldharbour Roundabout/A20 London Road - Hall Road (LGF Scheme):**

- 2.2.1 Due to the delays with the commencement of the Bearsted Road scheme, we have deferred the next stage of the procurement process for this scheme to ensure that the period between the tenders being returned and commencement onsite is kept to minimum. This is to ensure that the pricing of the contract and risks to KCC and the Contractor are not unduly affected by the volatile market that currently exists, largely due to the worldwide impacts on material availability/costs because of the war in Ukraine as well as the increasing and uncertainty of fuel, energy, and inflation costs. A contractor is now expected to be appointed by Spring/Summer 2023.
- 2.2.2 Following comments made at the previous JTB, a review of the site clearance requirements is being undertaken to ensure that all trees identified for removal are absolutely necessary.
- 2.2.3 Construction is expected to start with the off carriageway works in September 2023 with construction being co-ordinated with the A249 Bearsted Road scheme, to avoid unacceptable conflicts with roadworks near two key junctions of the M20. Completion is expected in Summer 2024. It may be possible to bring this date forward, but this will be dependent on the final phasing of the Bearsted Road project, which is currently being agreed with the appointed Contractor.

- 2.2.4 The proposed scheme for the A20 London Road/Hall Road, Aylesford, continues to be developed alongside the Coldharbour scheme.
- 2.2.5 The procurement and construction of these works will follow on from the Coldharbour scheme, subject to availability of road space. The delivery of these two schemes will be closely linked due to their proximity and the need to reduce impacts on both the local road network and the M20 corridor.

### **2.3 A229 Loose Road Corridor (LGF Scheme):**

2.3.1 The Loose Road corridor comprises of four separate junction improvement schemes:

- A229 Loose Road junction with the A274 Sutton Road (Wheatsheaf junction)
- A229 Loose Road junction with Armstrong Road/Park Way
- A229 Loose Road junction with Sheals Crescent
- A229 Loose Road junction with Cripple Street/Boughton Lane – paused following the consultation process

#### **2.3.2 A229 Loose Road junction with the A274 Sutton Road (Wheatsheaf junction)**

2.3.3 The first phase of this project commenced on 28 March 2022, with the implementation of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the trial closure of Cranborne Avenue. As advised in previous updates, under this type of TRO the closure must be in place for a minimum period of 6 months, up to a maximum period of 18 months. After 6 months it will be possible to make the Order permanent subject to addressing any comments/objections received.

2.3.1 Six months have now elapsed since the start of the TRO and objections and comments received during this consultation period are now being collated and assessed. In summary, 96 representations were received, 23 of which were in support and 73 against the proposal. The representations against the proposal appear to be directly related to the impacts on the local roads in the immediate vicinity of Cranbourne Avenue.

2.3.2 Several of the concerns raised, included increased volume and speed of traffic along Marion Crescent and at the junction of Plains Avenue with Loose Road. These concerns will be fully reviewed as part of the overall assessment of the consultation responses and any necessary mitigation included in the final design of the scheme.

2.3.3 Initial observations on the performance of the Wheatsheaf junction are positive, and it is expected that when the traffic data has been fully analysed it will show that some of the projected capacity benefits were achieved.

2.3.4 The closure of Cranbourne Avenue remains a key component of the final design solution to achieve the required capacity benefits. The additional traffic data collected from traffic surveys will be used to review the junction modelling and design, to allow any refinements to the layout to be made based on real information, rather than modelling data.

2.3.5 A report on the findings of the consultation will be presented at a future JTB meeting for consideration on the implementation of the TRO.

2.3.6 The second phase of the scheme, which will include the demolition of the pub and construction of the new junction is currently expected to be carried out between Spring 2023 and Spring 2024.

**2.3.7 A229 Loose Road junction with Armstrong Road/Park Way**

2.3.8 Works on this junction to create a new right turn lane for southbound traffic into Armstrong Road and relocate the pedestrian crossing to the south side of Loose Road commenced on 3 October 2022. Work is expected to be complete prior to Christmas 2022.

2.3.9 The work is being undertaken by KCC's term contractor, Amey, and their appointed sub-contractor Steadline Ltd. To carry out the works safely it has been necessary to close Parkway for the duration of the works. Armstrong Road will also need to be closed at certain times, but these will be kept to an absolute minimum. Residents and key stakeholders will be notified in advance of these closures.

**2.3.10 A229 Loose Road junction with Sheals Crescent**

2.3.11 The Sheals Crescent junction changes will provide a filter straight into Sheals Crescent for southbound traffic by removing the need for traffic to give way when turning right from Upper Stone Street.

2.3.12 It was originally envisaged that this work would be delivered at the same time as the Armstrong Road improvements, but it has been decided to delay these works to allow the impact of the Armstrong Road works to be assessed. An update will be provided at a subsequent JTB meeting.

**2.3.13 A229 Loose Road junction with Cripple Street/Boughton Lane**

2.3.14 The status of this scheme remains the same as reported in the August update, which is as follows:

2.3.15 This design was paused following the consultation process but a revised scheme to avoid any impact to the landscaped area in front of the shops has been developed. Whilst this may deliver some minor improvements to the length of the right turn lane into Cripple Street, it is not expected to deliver any noticeable capacity benefits.

2.3.16 Half bus laybys have also been considered in the design, which will allow some vehicles to pass a stationary bus and whilst this may help with driver frustration at being held up it will not provide any capacity benefits to the junction.

2.3.17 This alternative proposal is currently being costed and an estimate of utility diversions being sought to allow the cost/benefits to be properly considered.

2.3.18 Final costings will be known shortly to allow a cost versus benefit comparison of options to be made and these will be presented at the next JTB meeting.

**2.4 A20 Ashford Road junction with Willington Street (LGF Scheme):**

2.4.1 This improvement will provide additional capacity on the Eastbound A20 approach to the junction by extending the length of the two-lane approach and also providing wider lanes that will allow eastbound vehicles to pass the queuing right turning traffic more easily. Currently eastbound traffic is frequently blocked by larger vehicles turning right and this only adds to the length of the eastbound queue to the junction. These amendments will allow more traffic to move through the junction at each change of the signals.

- 2.4.2 To accommodate the additional widening of the eastbound carriageway, it will be necessary to widen the westbound carriageway into the existing verge and toward the Mote Park boundary wall, which will require the wall to be repositioned. There are currently utilities and highway street furniture including road signs, lamp columns and a VMS sign which all need to be relocated into the verge. The street furniture will need to be located with sufficient lateral clearance to the edge of carriageway to avoid being struck and to allow access for maintenance. Utilities need to be retained within the verge to minimise the impact of any future maintenance works.
- 2.4.3 A short additional lane is also being provided on the westbound approach to the junction to provide additional capacity on this approach.
- 2.4.4 The boundary wall of Mote Park forms part of the listed curtilage to Mote House and listed building consent has been granted Maidstone Borough Council for the relocation/rebuilding of the wall.
- 2.4.5 Due to other projects being carried out on the network in the near vicinity, the construction will be planned with KCC's Street Works team alongside the other network pressures and will need to be programmed after the completion of the A249 Bearsted Road project. Accordingly, the earliest this could be delivered would be after January 2024, although it may be possible to bring this date forward subject to the traffic management requirements for Bearsted Road. It will also need to be co-ordinated carefully with the Wheatsheaf improvement scheme.

## **2.5 A26 Tonbridge Road junction with Fountain Lane (Developer Funded Scheme):**

- 2.5.1 The status of this scheme has not changed since previous updates, which is as follows:
- 2.5.2 An outline scheme has been identified which would provide a dual roundabout to replace the existing signalised junction. This requires the acquisition of adjacent third-party land, and negotiations are ongoing with the relevant landowner for the voluntary acquisition of the property.
- 2.5.3 The feasibility design is complete but further design work is required to progress this junction improvement further. There are currently insufficient S106 contributions available that will allow this scheme to be progressed. KCC are continuing to work with MBC and TMBC to seek other funding opportunities to be able to deliver this scheme in conjunction with the MITP projects. Until such time as funding becomes available it is not possible to predict when this could be delivered, but it should be assumed that the design, planning required for the demolition of the property and procurement could take at least 12 months to complete.

## **2.6 A274 Sutton Road junction with Willington Street (Developer Funded Scheme):**

- 2.6.1 This is a developer funded scheme with no deadline on the spend, and as such, this scheme will be promoted towards the end of the overall programme to allow schemes with funding constraints to be delivered first. This will ensure that other funding streams which have been secured are not lost and reallocated outside of the County.

3.

### Appendix 1: Map of Highway Improvement Schemes in Maidstone

