To: Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

By: Tim Read, Head of Transportation

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Date: 24th October 2012

Subject: Draft Joint Integrated Transport Strategy

Classification: Information only

Summary: The Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) sets out the future direction for transport in Maidstone until 2026. Members are invited to consider the ITS and to submit their collective representation as part of the public consultation exercise, which took place between 17th August and 1st October 2012.

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1. DRAFT JOINT INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

1.1 The Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) sets out the future direction for transport in Maidstone until 2026. It describes the policy context within which the Strategy sits, but also the local context of the existing transport network. It outlines the transport issues arising as a result of the development aspirations of the draft Core Strategy and details how these issues will be addressed through its Vision, its Objectives and its Action Plan.

1.2 The main aim of the ITS is to provide the transport infrastructure necessary to support new development planned to 2026 through the Maidstone Core Strategy. It has been prepared in partnership between Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) and Kent County Council (KCC) and sits beneath KCC's principal transport strategies: the *Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2016* (2011) and *Growth Without Gridlock* (2010).

1.3 Within the ITS, a detailed description has been provided of the process undertaken (or 'Policy Evolution') to develop the Action Plan. There is also a comprehensive Funding and Delivery Plan identifying funding sources for the proposed schemes and an indication of when these schemes are expected to come forward.

1.4 Stakeholder engagement for the ITS included a workshop for local businesses; Maidstone Borough Council Member workshops and

presentations; consultation with the Highways Agency, the principal commercial bus operator Arriva, and representatives of the property development industry.

1.5 The ITS draws on a comprehensive evidence base. Professional transport consultants (JMP Consultants Ltd and Jacobs Engineering Ltd) were commissioned to conduct parking surveys, Park and Ride customer surveys; traffic modelling; cost / benefit analysis; economic impact assessments; environmental impacts assessments; and an overall appraisal of the measures and options available.

1.6 Extensive traffic modelling was undertaken exploring four future scenario options that included major components such as the South East Maidstone Strategic Link (SEMSL) road; expanding Park and Ride services; constructing bus priority measures and enhancing regular bus services. Travel demand measures have also been explored, including the level of car parking tariffs and the supply of town centre car parking.

1.7 Planning considerations have also been considered, covering matters such as landscape and biodiversity impacts. Financial viability has also been explored, as has the land requirements for each of the options.

1.8 The conclusions of the research found that the SEMSL option was not deliverable because it could not be adequately funded by developer contributions and could not be supported by the dispersed development distribution now adopted by the Core Strategy.

1.9 The remaining three options consisted primarily of enhanced Park and Ride services; constructing bus priority measures and enhancing regular bus services. Included as one of these options was also a 'Do minimum' scenario that involved the maintenance of the present Park and Ride offer and a small improvement to bus services. Combining the highest performing components of these options generated a 'Hybrid Park and Ride' option leaving this option and the 'Do minimum' option available for consideration.

1.10 Investigating the 'Hybrid Park and Ride' option further, it was concluded that this option was not deliverable due to the high land acquisition costs and impacts on landscape quality and biodiversity. Consequently, the 'Do minimum' option remained as the only deliverable option, although significant enhancements to this option were available, as some of the components of the other three options are deliverable independently.

1.11 These deliverable components include a northbound only bus lane on the A274 Sutton Road between Willington Street and Wheatsheaf Junctions; a bridge gyratory bypass scheme to assist town centre traffic flow; safety and/or capacity improvements to the M20 Junctions 5, 7 & 8, Coldharbour Roundabout, 20 – 20 Roundabout, Fountain Lane / Tonbridge Road, Hermitage Lane / London Road, Willington Street /

A274 Sutton Road, and Willington Street / A20 Ashford Road junctions; and public realm improvement works within the town centre.

1.12 The components included in the 'Do minimum' option, combined with those included in paragraph 1.11 above, form the basis of the Preferred Option presented in the ITS which has now been consulted on. MBC and KCC will be providing responses to representations made by the public and are yet to make amendments to the ITS accordingly. Further investigation may also need to be undertaken to further develop and refine the above components to ensure the benefits of these schemes are maximised.

Recommendations

Members are invited to consider the ITS and to submit their collective representation as part of the public consultation exercise, which took place between 17th August and 1st October 2012.

Background documents:

Appendices

1. Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (2012-2026), KCC and MBC, July 2012
2. Maidstone Option Testing: Model Output, Jacobs, March 2012
3. Maidstone Integrated Parking Strategy Research: Options Appraisal Report, JMP, April 2012
4. Resident Parking Scheme Survey Report, MBC, January 2010
5. Resident Parking Scheme Survey Report: Appendices, MBC, January 2010
6. Maidstone Integrated Parking Strategy Research: Data Report, JMP, December 2011
7. Private Car Parking Spaces Attached to Commercial Premises, MBC, October 2010
8. MBC Town Centre Parking Tariffs, MBC, 2011
9. Draft Cycle Strategy, MBC, June 2012

10. Maidstone VISUM Model: 2017 and 2026 Forecast Models – South East Maidstone Strategic Link Impacts Summary, Jacobs, December 2009

11. Maidstone Transport Strategy: Option Testing Summary Tables, Jacobs, March 2011

12. Maidstone Integrated Parking Strategy Research: Analysis Report, JMP, December 2011

13. Review of Maidstone Modelling and Appraisal Work, JMP, April 2012

14. Maidstone Option Testing: Base and 2026 Option 1 (Do Minimum) Turning Movements, Jacobs, June 2012

15. M20 Maidstone New Growth Point, Highways Agency, March 2008

16. Maidstone Bridge Gyratory: Outline Design Alignment, Jacobs, November 2005

17. Maidstone Town Centre Micro-Simulation Model: Assessment of Maidstone Bridge Gyratory A229 Through Link Option, Jacobs, March 2005

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