

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

29 JULY 2009

REPORT OF HEAD OF COUNTYWIDE IMPROVEMENTS

Report prepared by Andrew Burton, KCC Highway Schemes Manager

HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES 2009-10

1.1 For Information

1.1.1 Appendix A to this report updates Members on the integrated transport improvement schemes that form part of this year's capital programme for Kent County Council.

1.2 Background Documents

1.2.1 Item 11, Kent County Council Highways Advisory Board, 8 May 2008, "Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2008-09"

1.2.2 Item 7, Kent County Council Highways Advisory Board, 3 March 2009, "Transportation and Safety Package Programme 2009-10"

1.2.3 Item 8, Maidstone Joint Transportation Board, 28 January 2009, "Integrated Transport Plan for Maidstone 2009-10 and Beyond"

2 Discussion

2.1 Appendix A to this report details the progress of each scheme, including previous years' schemes that were not completed by April 2009. Progress to date is summarised and anticipated progress prior to the next Joint Board is detailed. New schemes that are being funded as part of the 2009-10 capital programme are also described. Due to space restrictions, certain schemes are reported in more detail as follows:

2.2 **Traffic calming Coxheath** (Scheme Ref MG7410 ML) – it was reported to the last meeting of this Board that whilst the original scheme was completed in May 2008, public dissatisfaction with its performance has necessitated a scheme review. Unforeseen delays have meant that this review is not yet complete and it will therefore not be possible to report the outcome until the next meeting of the Board. A budget of £50,000 in this financial year has been allocated to implementing the findings of this review.

2.3 **Quality Bus Partnership – Shepway Estate** (Scheme Ref MY 06 04TD) – This scheme was deferred from 2008/09 to allow negotiations with the bus operator to be concluded. Arriva are concerned that the existing traffic calming in Shepway Estate is unsuitable for a bus route and have strongly urged KCC to replace the speed-reducing features with measures that have less deleterious effects on buses, bus drivers and passengers. It is the case, however, that

officers and Members of both Councils are committed to retaining a low-speed environment in the estate and that significant speed reducing features are required to maintain a reasonable environment for road users. Because it has not been possible to agree a compromise using conventional traffic calming features, KCC will trial two new road humps designed to affect buses less than cars. These will be installed in August and their effects on road users measured over the following three months. If they prove successful, they will replace existing road humps along the bus route through the estate.

- 2.4 **South East Maidstone Strategic Link (SEMSL)**. As reported to the last meeting of this Board, there remains a longer-term desire to bypass the B2163 through Leeds and Langley. Because this is mainly an environmental improvement, it is unlikely to get Government funding. However, the Local Development Framework (LDF) that Maidstone Borough Council is producing, includes the potential for new development in the south east quadrant of the town. This might see the need for a more direct route between the A274, and the commercial area around Parkwood that might also serve the new residential development at the A20/M20 Junction 8. The LDF process has not defined the new housing areas or new commercial development areas yet so it is not possible to advise what route SEMSL may take. Maidstone Borough Council is currently assessing traffic flows and preparing a transport strategy to manage future development. This strategy is expected to include SEMSL. Provided that it is a defined transport need, publication of the Core Strategy for the LDF, possibly in autumn 2009, will see outline designs of a SEMSL published.
- 2.5 **A229 /A26 Maidstone Bridge Gyratory** This proposal identified a new road layout and conversion to two-way traffic at the junction of Fairmeadow / High Street / Bishops Way / Tonbridge Road and St Peter's Street. Extensive design work was undertaken but, as reported to the last meeting of this Board, the forecast cost has now escalated to £3.5-£4million. Compared to other funding priorities for Kent County Council, this cost is currently disproportionate to the benefits the scheme would achieve. Accordingly, public funding of this specific proposal is unlikely as a stand-alone scheme in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, detailed assessment of traffic flows is being carried out to more precisely quantify the traffic benefits of the scheme. This is using output from Maidstone Borough Council's traffic model, developed for the Local Development Framework.

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APPENDIX A. Integrated Transport Improvement Schemes for Maidstone Borough

KHS Ref	Location	Description of Works	Current Progress	Anticipated Actions for next 3 months (Prior to next JTB)	Budget 2009 - 10	Forecast Out-turn 2008-09	Kent Highway Services Contact 08458 247800
MG7410 ML	Traffic calming Coxheath -	06/07 scheme: Speed management measures including physical measures to slow vehicular traffic	Original scheme completed, but review underway following public dissatisfaction with scheme's performance.	See main body of report	£50K	£50K	Andrew Burton
MY96 05/2 TD	New Cut Rd – Maidstone	2008-09 Scheme: Upgrading of existing pelican crossing to Toucan crossing	Scheme review has revealed technical issue delaying its delivery until Autumn 2009	Review to be completed and reported to next meeting of this Board	£8K	£1K	Julian Cook
MY 06 07TD	Ware Street, Bearstead	Zebra crossing west of railway bridge	Statutory consultation on outline design commenced June 2009	Public consultation to be carried out August 2009	£25K	£28K	Ben Hilden
MY 06 06TD	Fant	Traffic calming	Public consultation on outline design carried out June 2009	Scheme to be refined to incorporate views of consultees.	£85K	£20K	Ben Hilden
MY 06 02TD	Town Centre Maidstone	Cycle Improvements	Statutory consultation on proposed contra-flow cycle lane in spur of Station Road (beside KFC) commenced June 2009	Scheme to be refined to incorporate views of consultees	£30K	\$16K	Helen Cobby
MY 06 04TD	Quality Bus Partnership - Maidstone	Scheme deferred from 2008/09: Upgrade existing bus corridors in Shepway estate	Detailed design complete	See main body of report	£100K	£20K	Andy Padgham
S106	A229 Loose Rd/ Cripple Street, Loose	New traffic signals at junction	Developer-funded scheme required as planning condition	Details awaited	tba	tba	Andy Corcoran