
Maidstone Bridges Gyratory Scheme

To: **Maidstone Joint Transportation Board - 14th October 2015**

Main Portfolio Area: Maidstone

By: Russell Boorman, Project Manager,

Classification: **For Information**

Ward:

Division:

Summary:

Kent County Council received funding from the Local Growth Fund combined with significant contribution from Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to deliver the Maidstone Bridges Gyratory improvement scheme. Construction is due to commence in spring 2016.

1.0 Introduction and Background

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The scheme will see the construction of two additional northbound lanes on the eastern side of the River Medway. The new junctions will be controlled by traffic signals. This will enable northbound traffic on the A229 to avoid crossing both bridges, thereby reducing journey distances and travel times and enabling the regeneration of the western riverside.
- 1.2 The Gyratory is a recognised congestion and air quality hotspot within Maidstone Town Centre, lying at the point where the A20, A26, and A229 routes converge and cross the River Medway.
- 1.3 The scheme has been the subject of a successful bid to the government's Local Growth Fund and will also be supported by Maidstone Borough Council's New Homes Bonus. Construction is intended to commence in the next financial year (2016/17).
- 1.4 The total cost of the scheme is £5.74m. The scheme is expected to increase the capacity of the overall junction by some 10-20% in each of the peak hours, resulting in the reduction of delay of some 25% to drivers using the gyratory.

2.0 Body of the report

- 2.1 Detailed design has been progressing in conjunction with MBC through regular Steering Group meetings. The original scheme layout remains predominately unchanged. The lane separating central islands have been slightly extended to create increased capacity for queueing on the new north bound lanes at the newly introduced traffic signals.
- 2.2 Enhancements to the scheme have been discussed with MBC and a range of opportunities have presented themselves through the detailed design process.

- 2.3 Working closely with the Environment Agency the construction of the carriageway crests to a specific height to accommodate flood alleviation in the future when funding is available.
- 2.4 Re-design of the lower High Street at the junction with Bishops Way to incorporate the existing 'street scene' with improved access to the crossing point for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- 2.5 A proposal to holistically look at the gyratory system in relation to pedestrian/cycling facilities has been undertaken. A route from the St Peters Bridge to the High Street is being investigated. Consideration is being given to an 'at grade' crossing on the western side of the Broadway Bridge. Modelling work is currently being carried out to assess the impact on the benefits of the gyratory scheme.
- 2.6 Dependant of the outcome of the modelling works in **2.5**, a second proposal to utilise the existing western sub-way for pedestrians/cyclists to cross the Tonbridge Road and continue along the Broadway Bridge to the High Street is being investigated. It is recognised that upgrading the surface water drainage system, lighting, materials and overall aesthetics will be required and KCC/MBC are working on these requirements.
- 2.7 Initial discussions have been held with MBC in relation to landscaping requirements. A proposal to transfer the maintenance of the soft landscaping is being developed. This will incorporate a standardised planting regime in a wider area than just the gyratory system. This would be cost neutral to both KCC & MBC
- 2.8 Existing Air Quality Station to be relocated to a location identified by MBC.

3.0 Financial

- 3.1 The cost of the scheme is £5.74m. £4.6m SELEP funding and £1.14m MBC contribution.

4.0 Legal implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this scheme.
- 4.2 The scheme is progressing through permitted development and therefore planning permission is not required.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Continue with the detailed design and move towards contract award in March 2016. Pre-works commencing in January 2016 and main contract construction spring 2016.
- 5.2 Extended working hours will assist in mitigating the impact on the travelling public with 20% less traffic throughout the summer school holidays.
- 5.3 Communication and engagement will begin immediately with a campaign to capture the wider audience to inform of the forthcoming works following the JTB. Specific Member sessions have been arranged and engagement sessions with the local business community are due to take place.
- 5.4 Steering group meetings will continue to and throughout the construction phase to ensure all parties are kept informed of progress.
- 5.5 Consultation in respect of the 'Stopping Up' order to commence with a 6 month period, this will be completed prior to construction. Consultation will be distributed the local community

and affected groups with local media being utilised to disseminate the proposals accordingly.

- 5.6 Identify signage requirements for the pedestrian/cycling routes on both sides of the bridge. Investigate electronic signage to highlight car park capacity with the town centre on the A229, A20 and A26 approaching the gyratory system.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the scheme continues in line with the current programme.

Future Meeting if applicable:	Date:
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Contact Officer:	
Reporting to:	

Annex List

<i>Annex 1</i>	<i>Scheme Proposal / Plan</i>
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