

Maidstone Joint Transportation Board



**October
2021**

Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP)

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

This report makes the following recommendations:

For Information. That this report be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Maidstone Joint Transportation Board – Update Report	October 2021

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 All schemes are being planned carefully to address the complications of available road space within Maidstone in the next few years. Many of the schemes will affect traffic on the M20 during construction, and as such Highways England will not permit them to be delivered simultaneously. In addition, there are substantial utility works planned within the area and careful negotiations with KCC Street Works Team is required to ensure that all schemes can be delivered as quickly as possible. Discussions are ongoing with all affected parties and it should be noted that delivery timescales given within this report are dependent on the availability of road space and are subject to change if planned Gas or utility works in the area conflict with the proposed timetable.
- 1.3 At the meeting of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Accountability Board on 10 September 2021, the Board resolved:
- To note the update on project delivery and progress towards achieving the outstanding consents.
 - To agree that the £8.9m LGF funding should remain allocated to the Project.
 - To agree that a project update should be provided to the Board in February 2022 on progress towards securing the required consent to relocate the ragstone wall.
 - To agree that a further update on the Project, which outlines progress towards achieving the outstanding consents and on delivery of the Project, should be presented to the November Board meeting.

A summary of the decision is available using the link below:

<https://www.southeastlep.com/app/uploads/2020/10/Summary-of-decisions-10.09.21-Final.pdf>

2. SCHEME UPDATES:

- 2.1 **A249 Bearsted Road Major Infrastructure Project (Funded through National Productivity Investment Fund):**
- 2.1.1 The main planning application for the link road into Newnham Court was approved in November 2020. A further KCC planning application for the completion of the HGV link has been submitted and is expected to be reported at KCC's November Planning Committee. However, this application cannot be determined until after the determination of the retrospective application made by the owners of the Newnham Court site for the construction of the concrete hard standing used for HGV deliveries, this is due to be reported to Maidstone Borough Council's Planning Committee on 21 October 2021.

- 2.1.2 A planning application has also been submitted to MBC for the drainage outfall to the land within the crematorium, and it is currently planned to be considered at the October 2021 Planning Committee.
- 2.1.3 As well as improving the drainage conditions for the local road network, the delivery of this aspect of the scheme will also:
- Introduce pollution control by reducing the build-up of sediment (silt) in the unnamed tributary of the River Len from the existing highway runoff; and
 - improve the water quality of the stream and lake and thus improve the biodiversity of Vinters Valley Nature Reserve's aquatic habitat.
- 2.1.4 The procurement of a contractor has been completed but works cannot commence until the three planning permissions have been granted, consequently the main construction works will not commence until 2022, and discussions are ongoing with the contractor to agree the overall programme for the construction phase.
- 2.1.5 Advanced works are currently underway to carry out reptile trapping within the area of the Crematorium and Vinters Valley Nature Reserve. Advanced archaeological investigations are also being considered to reduce risks during construction. Trial holes to confirm the location of utility apparatus are currently being programmed. This will help identify the precise nature of utility diversions to help prevent any delays in programme or cost during the construction of the scheme.
- 2.1.6 It is anticipated that the construction phase will substantially complete late 2022/early 2023.

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

- 2.2.1 The detailed design for the Coldharbour Roundabout scheme has been completed. The required acquisition of third-party land has been agreed with the landowner and is currently with solicitors to finalise the legal arrangements.
- 2.2.2 Inexpensive ducting will be provided at key locations during the construction, to avoid the need for extensive and disruptive works if future traffic levels require the junction to be signalised.
- 2.2.3 Procurement is intended to begin in early 2022, with a view to appointing a contractor in Summer 2022.
- 2.2.4 Construction is expected to start with off carriageway works in Autumn 2022 with construction being co-ordinated with the A249 Bearsted Road, to avoid unacceptable conflicts with roadworks near the M20.
- 2.2.5 The proposed scheme for the A20 London Road/Hall Road, Aylesford, continues to be developed alongside the Coldharbour scheme. Design work is almost complete, and it has an endorsed Business Case.
- 2.2.6 The procurement and construction of these works will follow on from the Coldharbour site, 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 local traffic 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 Providing a workable solution within the various site constraints at each of the sites has been challenging but the detailed design continues for those schemes which are progressing.

2.3.3 All investigatory work has been completed, including geotechnical, environmental and topographical surveys, which have all fed into the design process.

2.3.4 The planning consent for the demolition of the Wheatsheaf Public House was approved on 24th June 2021. A heritage assessment of the building was carried out in July 2021, which is required to discharge planning conditions related to comments received by KCC's Heritage Team.

2.3.5 A trial closure of Cranborne Avenue was originally planned for Autumn 2021 but is now likely to be carried out over the winter to avoid conflict with nearby SGN works and to ensure surveys are carried out in traffic neutral periods Traffic surveys have recently been undertaken to verify the current flow data, and additional counts then carried out during the closure to further assess the impacts of the proposed scheme.

2.3.6 Alterations to the junction of Plains Avenue may also be required and this will be assessed as part of the final design of the Wheatsheaf junction. The detailed design of the Wheatsheaf junction will be pursued following on from the trial closure with a view to completing this in Spring 2022.

2.3.7 The Armstrong Road junction improvements will create a right turn lane for southbound traffic and relocate the pedestrian crossing to the south side of Loose Road. This scheme falls under permitted development and detailed design work is progressing. It is hoped that this element of the corridor can be delivered ahead of the Wheatsheaf junction, using KCC's term contractors. If this is possible then as long as the road space is available, the scheme could be delivered by December 2022.

2.3.8 The Sheals Crescent junction improvement will provide a filter straight in to Sheals Crescent for southbound traffic by removing the need for traffic to give way when turning into Sheals Crescent. It is anticipated this could be delivered in conjunction with the works to Armstrong Road.

2.3.9 The design of the Cripple Street/Boughton Lane junction is currently being reviewed to ascertain if a scheme can be delivered that avoids the removal of the landscaped area in front of the parade of shops.

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

- 2.4.1 This scheme requires the re-positioning of a listed rag stone wall to the boundary of Mote Park, which requires a listed building consent submission to Maidstone Borough Council.
- 2.4.2 A pre-application meeting has been held with Maidstone Borough Council Cllrs and officers to discuss the application. It is hoped that the listed building consent will be granted in December 2021.
- 2.4.3 Procurement will commence once the detailed design is complete, and the Listed Building Consent is in place.
- 2.4.4 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 but will need to be programmed after the completion of the A249 Bearsted Road project.

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

- 2.5.1 A solution 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.
- 2.5.2 The feasibility design is complete, however currently there are insufficient S106 contributions to deliver this scheme. 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. Should further S106 contributions be secured, then outline design could be developed in Summer 2022, with detailed design in Summer 2023, land acquisition in Autumn 2023 and construction commencing in Winter 2023/24.

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.
- 2.6.2 To manage the design resources which are currently available, and as this scheme does not have time limited funding, the design will be revisited early in 2022. Members will be consulted as part of this process and the design will be brought back to this Board for consideration.

3. CONCLUSION:

- 3.1 As per the decision at SELEP Accountability Board on 12th February 2021 and endorsed at the Accountability Board meeting on 10 September, all LGF schemes that can demonstrate that they meet the SELEP conditions by September 2021 will be able to spend their LGF allocation after the end of the Growth Deal.

- 3.2 KCC are confident that the current programme as detailed above, will mean that sufficient progress has been made on the schemes to ensure that the SELEP conditions can be met.
- 3.3 The programme of schemes within Maidstone will continue to be carefully planned, with schemes progressed where possible to make use of available road space. Discussions with SGN and KCC's Street Works Team are ongoing to ensure that the available road space opportunities are maximised to reduce congestion within the town whilst delivering these important highway improvements and it is anticipated that more programme information will be available for the next meeting.

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

