



Project Initiation Documentation

High Level Bridge Improvements and Western Tow Path Accessibility

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Note: This document is only valid on the day it was printed

Revision History

Date of next revision:

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes Marked
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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals. A signed copy should be placed in the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Brian Morgan	Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services	14/11/2011	1
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Project Definition

1. Improve the route over the high level bridge; safety, lighting and surfacing.
2. Create the footpath under the high level bridge forming part of the riverside path.

Background

It has been a long term aim of the Council to create a riverside path along the River Medway and as such when the Scotney Gardens development was built on the old Trebor Bassett site, the planning consent was subject to a Section 106 agreement dated 15 November 2002 which included contributions of up to £500,000 for River Medway pedestrian works including to the high level bridge. There were a number of issues with regards to accessing this money, and as such on 25 August 2011 a supplementary deed to the Section 106 was signed which resulted in the developers paying £300,000 to the Council on the date of the deed. The deed reads as follows with regards to the use of the money:

‘2.4 on its receipt of the Sum the Council shall:

2.4.1 firstly expend part of the Sum on improvements to the existing high level footbridge next to the railway line spanning the River Medway and linking Buckland Hill / St Peter Street and Maidstone East Station / Week Street and

2.4.2 secondly expend the remainder of the Sum on improvements to the river towpath lying to the north of the Site’

As such, the project is essentially two fold, with the two elements being improvements to the high level bridge, and improvements to the accessibility of the western riverbank towpath lying to the north of Scotney Gardens, St Peter’s Street, Maidstone, and each element is explained in greater detail below.

Improvements to the High Level Bridge

The high level bridge links Maidstone East station with Maidstone Barracks and is one of very few links across the River Medway close to Maidstone town centre. This is a significant link, not only connecting these two stations, which operate on different lines, but also as a link to Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, The Maplesden Noakes School, and for residential populations living on the western bank of the river to access the town centre. However, for a link which is so important to many and Maidstone as a whole, it is not visually apparent, lacks identity, the node points are weak and there is a general state of dilapidation on the walk way. As such, a number of improvements have been suggested that would enhance the walkway, improve feelings of safety (including lighting) and increase access to the path. However, at present the specification for what is needed is based on a budget of approximately £500,000, so the Council needs to decide which improvements are most important and deliver these with the money available, or seek to lever in additional funding to deliver the full suite of improvements suggested.

Western Towpath Accessibility

The western side of the River Medway is currently accessible up to the end of the Scotney Gardens development, which is located directly to the north of the retail park containing Asda Living, Hobby Craft, TKMaxx and Homebase. After this point, should you wish to access Whatman Park to the north, you would need to walk round the northern side of the Scotney Gardens development, up St Peter’s Street, under the railway bridge at the bottom of Buckland Hill, and past LA fitness to enter the park. It is the intention of the Council that this park would be accessible via a riverside route, instead of the convoluted route you take now, which is badly signposted and not well marked or particularly safe for pedestrians. However, the towpath to the north of the accessible section by Scotney Gardens is currently shut off. This section, between here and the start of the Waterside Gate development, is owned by two separate companies / individuals Both ends of this section are owned by Terrance Butler Holdings, and the middle section is privately owned. Access over this land would be required to open up the towpath to pedestrians wanting to access Whatman Park via the towpath. Access along this section of the towpath would bring about a multitude of benefits including a traffic free, safe path directly from Maidstone town centre to a country Park (Whatman Park). The towpath in place to the north of the high level bridge by the Waterside Gate development was put in place through a S106 agreement.

Project Objectives

Given the source of the funding for this project, it is expected that the developer who paid the contribution will expect the money to have been spent and the outcomes achieved within 5 years from the date of the supplemental deed which is 25 August 2011. In terms of more accurate timescales for the two projects, it is envisaged that the high level bridge improvements would be delivered by the end of 2012 / beginning of 2013. With regards to the towpath accessibility, this is significantly more complicated and as such we would be looking towards 2014/2015 for the full delivery of this.

The Council currently has a budget of £300,000 for the works which have been secured through Section 106 funding. We will also attempt to lever in additional funds for the project.

The project will result in improvements to the environment of the high level bridge as well as the access for the public along the western tow path from the town centre to Whatman Park.

The key risk to the high level bridge improvement works is the inability to lever in additional funding. As explained above, the original specification for the works were based on a budget of £500,000. We are working on a reduced budget which will result in only a certain number of the recommended improvements being carried out, but are hoping to lever in additional funding to deliver as many of the improvements as possible.

In terms of the works to open up the towpath, there are a number of key risks. Firstly, the structural integrity of the towpath as it currently stands, is if it is deemed to be unsound, then it is possible that this part of the project would fail as we may not have the necessary funding to do structural work on the towpath. The second key risk is if the Council cannot either acquire the land by an agreement or the landowners are unwilling to enter into an agreement for this work. Should this be the case, then we would have to consider creating the towpath by an order, which could potentially involve legal proceedings, should the landowners strongly object to what we are trying to do.

Desired outcomes

Our expectations from the project are as follows;

- 1) That the pedestrian link between Maidstone East station and Maidstone Barracks station is improved for users both in terms of accessibility and the environment.
- 2) That the western towpath of the River Medway, north of Scotney Gardens, is opened up for public use and access to Whatman Park. This will have been achieved in both the most cost effective and appropriate fashion with respect to the landowners involved.
- 3) That all the work carried out represents value for money and is delivered in a managed and appropriate fashion, and is of high quality.

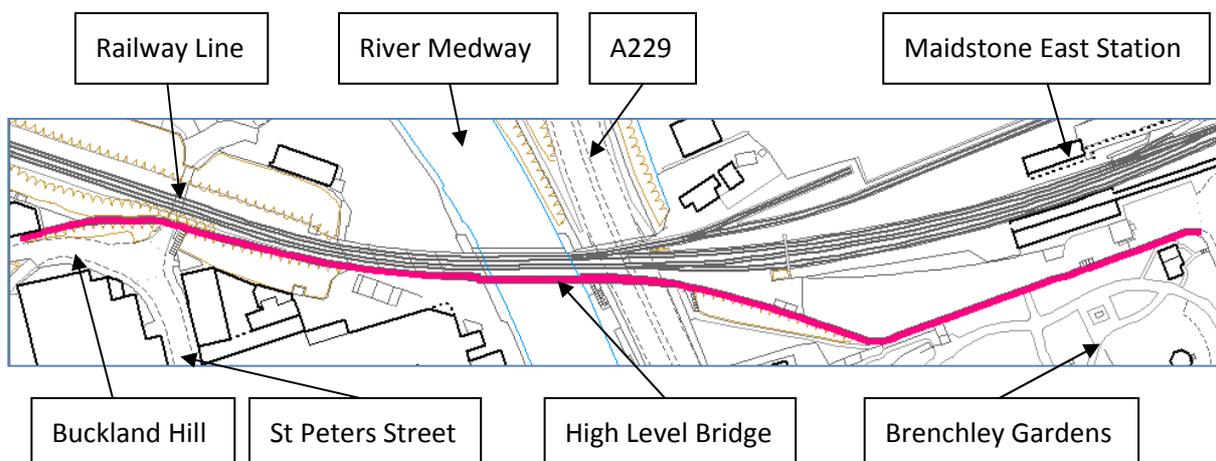
Project scope and exclusions

The two elements of this project have definite boundaries and details on what should and should not be included which are outlined below.

Improvements to the High Level Bridge

As stipulated in the S106 agreement, this money should be spent in part on improvements to the high level bridge. With this in mind, the area that is included in our scope and the associated works is outlined below.

Location Map: The following map highlights the high level bridge in pink and as such the area within which we will look to make improvements



It is intended that the work undertaken will focus on the following four main categories; safety, access, signage and surfacing & the general environment. The following elements will be considered for inclusion in the works,

with final decisions being made based on the level of available funding.

- Maidstone East Station accessibility and signage;
- Access via Brenchley Gardens;
- Improving the safety of the access steps on the eastern side of the spine road;
- Improving signage around the access steps on the western side of the spine road;
- Improving the safety of the access steps at St Peter's Street; and,
- General improvements to the signage, surfacing, landscaping and fencing on the link.

The following two elements are outside of the scope of the work as they do not involve improvements to the high level bridge directly. Instead they provide significant improvements to the access to areas around the high level bridge. They will be considered should the levels of external funding accessible exceed that needed to deliver the improvements to the high level bridge itself.

- Kerb and footpath realignment at Buckland Hill to create a footpath on the northern side of Buckland Hill road which leads under the railway bridge; and,
- Looking at the potential for a new link through the season ticket holder car park to the southern station platform.

Accessibility to the Western Tow Path

Location Map: The area highlighted in green below is the area we are looking to open up as a towpath for public use. The area highlighted in yellow is already publicly accessible land but there is no designated path over this.



In addition to this, by whatever means we decide to pursue opening this area up and designating it as a right of way, we will need to extend this right of way down past the Scotney Gardens development and the St Peter's

Wharf retail park, to the Millenium Bridge. This would enable this path to be put on the designated map and provide a circular right of way route between the Millenium Bridge, and Whatman Park via towpaths on both the west and eastern sides of the Medway.

This project includes the following;

- Work to determine the structural integrity of the towpath;
- Work to determine the options available to enable the opening of the section of towpath in question for public use;
- The actioning of the most appropriate option to enable the opening of the towpath, should it be deemed structurally sound;
- Any consultation or public liaison as deemed necessary for the project to go ahead;
- Work to improve the towpath that is considered reasonable within budget constraints;
- Any works negotiated with current landowners to ensure all parties are adequately compensated.
- The designation of the route as a Public Right of Way.

Constraints and assumptions

Adherence to Statutory & Corporate Health and Safety legislation and guidelines must be observed.

Constraints:

- That we only have access to £300,000 at present.
- MBC do not own the land on which the works will be taking place
- All the works being considered will be subject to planning consents

Assumptions:

- That KCC will be willing to help support the project
- That KCC will be willing to procure the work and that MBC will then pay.

The user(s) and any other known interested parties

List of Key Stakeholders:

- Environment Agency
- Network Rail
- South Eastern Rail
- Kent County Council (specifically Public Rights of Way and Highways (Sustainable Transport))
- Local Access Forum
- Valley of Visions
- Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
- Members of the Public
- Local schools, businesses and employees

- Members of LA fitness
- Users of Whatman Park
- Waterside Gate Residents
- Terrance Butler Holdings
- Private Landowners
- Local Disability Forum
- Medway River Users Association
- River Medway Alliance

Interfaces

High Level Bridge Improvements

The number of improvements that can be delivered as part of the work on the high level bridge will be affected by the amount of additional funding that can be secured. Also, the improvements that will be delivered will depend on those which are considered the most important relative to the budget constraints.

Western Tow Path Accessibility

Firstly, the ability to even consider opening up the western towpath will depend on whether or not the towpath is considered to be structurally sound. In addition, there are a number of different ways in which the towpath can be delivered, and the option chosen will depend on the findings of research into these, and as such will affect how this is delivered and the timing of the delivery. This factor could also impact on the costs associated with this work.

Furthermore, any work that is being carried out on the Powerhub building needs to be considered in terms of access to the towpath. The impact of the consideration to list the powerhub building is also a factor in terms of the impact it may have on our relationship with Terrance Butler Holdings (new owners) and their subsequent willingness to cooperate and help us with this project. Also, the opinion of the private landowner will impact on this project and the way in which it might be able to be delivered.

Project Approach

Project Approach – Improvements to the High Level Bridge

1. Initial consultation with all involved parties to re-register interest in the project.
2. Review the previously recommended improvements in light of the time lapse that has occurred since the original specification to see which elements are, and which aren't still relevant.
3. Work to breakdown the improvements required into smaller work packages.
4. Work up each of these work packages and obtain quotes for each of these elements.
5. Determine whether or not any other funding is available to supplement the S106 money we already have.
6. Undertake an exercise with all relevant parties / members to decide which elements should be taken forward within the limits of our budget.
7. Following a decision on which improvements to carry out, commission these pieces of work to be undertaken.

Project Approach – Accessibility to the western tow path

1. Initial consultation with all parties involved to outline the project aims / plan.
2. Scoping work to determine the structural integrity of the towpath and whether or not it would be suitable for public use as a towpath.
3. If the towpath is considered to be structurally robust, then a number of options to enable the creation of a path need to be explored. These are as follows;
 - Acquire the land
 - Creation by agreement with the landowners
 - Creation via planning enforcement action and respective planning conditions
 - Creation via unrecorded PROW
 - Creation by order
4. Decision to be made over which is the most cost effective avenue to pursue this via. The next steps of the process will depend on the route taken, which is undecided at present.
5. Designation of the route as a PROW on the definitive map.

At present it is planned that we will proceed with the high level element of the project initially and the work to the towpath will remain on hold until clearer information with regards to proposed redevelopment adjacent to the specified section of the towpath is available.

Business Case

Please see attached documentation.

Project Management Team Structure

Please see attached.

This is the project management structure which is deemed appropriate for Stage 1 & 2 of the project. It is likely that this will evolve as the project progresses and as such the governance arrangements will be reviewed at each major stage of the project. The dashed lines surrounding the project team for the tow path represent the fact that this group will not be set up until clearer information is available with regards to the proposed redevelopment adjacent to the specified section of the tow path, as noted in the 'Project Approach' section above.

Role Descriptions

Project Manager (Jennifer Hunt) – Day to day management of the project and the project teams. Coordination of requests from Project Board to Project Teams and liaison with contractors and consultants.

At present, all that is confirmed is that MBC will manage this project. As we do not know the exact nature of the work that is going to be required, or who will be procuring the work at present, the role descriptions cannot be accurately defined.

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Quality Management Strategy

The Quality Management Strategy and any quality techniques and standards to be applied to the project will not be determined until decisions are made on how certain elements of the projects will be progressed and the nature and suite of improvements that will delivered to both parts of the project.

Risk Management Strategy

Please see attached Risk Management Strategy.

Communication Management Strategy

At present this can only be considered in a very preliminary context due to the indecision over the way the project will be delivered at present. In terms of the communication between the Project Board and the Project Teams, the Project Manager will report the findings / workings of the Project Teams to the Project Board, and disseminate any work programmes / decisions as determined by the board to the Project Teams. The communication mediums are likely to be varied and will depend on the nature of the information being distributed, but certainly will involve regular face to face meetings with each Team and the Board. In addition phone calls and email will be used when they can to ensure that people are only called to face to face meetings when required. In addition regular highlight reports will be completed.

In terms of communicating with other partners who aren't represented on the Project Board or the Project Teams, these will form part of the consultation around the Tow Path. However at present, until we know the approach that will be taken to deliver this element of the project, we cannot elaborate on the nature of this.

Furthermore, with regards to communications with contractors, once the suite of improvements to be made to both the High Level Bridge and the Tow Path are known, and we have a better gauge on the complexity and size of the work involved, we can set up appropriate communication management plans to ensure that this is managed in a way that befits the level of work being undertaken.

Lastly, it should be noted, that given the origin of the money for this project, it is important that the Developer (Fairview New Homes (Welwyn) Ltd) are kept informed of the progress of the use of the money. Reports to them at the closure of each element of the project will be required.

Project Plan

Given the nature of the project, we suggest that Project Plans are written for each stage of the project, given our current inability to define the exact way they will be delivered at present.

As such, as we are only at the stage where we are defining the project and its potential, and have no definite way forward, we have not completed a stage plan yet.

Project Controls

Project Stages: these are indicative at present:

High Level Bridge Improvements & Western Towpath Accessibility	
<i>High Level Bridge Improvements</i>	<i>Western Towpath Accessibility</i>
Stage 1: Initiation	
Stage 2: Design & Feasibility*	
Stage 3: Tender & Acceptance	
Stage 4: Mobilisation	
Stage 5: Construction	
Stage 6: Monitoring & Completion	

	Stage 8: Approach Decision
	Stage 9: Implementation of Chosen Avenue**
	Stage 10: Negotiations
	Stage 11: Closure of Chosen Avenue***
	Stage 12: Design & Approval
	Stage 13: Tender & Acceptance
	Stage 14: Mobilisation
	Stage 15: Construction
	Stage 16: Monitoring
	Stage 17: Designation of the route as a PROW & Completion
Stage 18: Close	

* At the end of this stage, a decision will be taken on how the money will be allocated between the high level bridge, and the towpath

** There will be a number of additional stages that will be required to sit under this which are dependant on which avenue is chosen

*** It is envisaged that at the end of this stage – we will have gained the right to public access over the land in question

Agreed Tolerances: +/- X days from each key stage of the plan – to be reviewed when new stages are added as part of the process for the western towpath; +/- 2% from budget costs at each stage

Monitoring: Monitoring with regards to time, cost, progress, and project team findings is the responsibility of the Project Manager. Monitoring with regards to quality and adherence to health and safety etc will be by the contractor, CDM consultant and the Project Manager.

Reporting: Contractor, CDM Consultant and team members will report to the Project Manager who will report all findings and progress to the Project Board as per the communication strategy.