
A20 LONDON ROAD, East Malling, Larkfield and Ditton – Highway Improvements Scheme
To: **Tonbridge and Malling Joint Transportation Board, 23rd September 2019**

Main Portfolio Area: **KCC – Growth Environment and Transport**

By: **Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Ditton, Larkfield South and East Malling**

Division: **Malling North East and Malling Central**

Summary: **The report is a summary of the actions and results of a consultation carried out between July and September this year, and outlines proposed highway improvements along A20, London Road.**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 A20 London Road links the districts of Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling and as such is a busy commuter route. The A20 runs parallel to the M20 motorway and therefore much of the traffic travelling from London to Kent will use the motorway rather than the A20. However, the A20 is still an important and well used route for local traffic and is also used as a contingent when there are issues on the M20.
- 1.2 Local developers have provided financial contributions to be used to improve journey times along A20 between the A228 and Coldharbour Roundabout. A package of measures are being designed and consultation has taken place on phases 1 and 2. This comprises proposals to improve road junctions and access for cyclists between New Hythe Lane and Station Road. The proposals aim to reduce road congestion and improve links for cyclists between the two junctions.
- 1.3 Currently there is no off-road cycle path provision and no continuous on carriageway cycle route along the A20.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 The current proposals are designed to not only improve journey times and cutdown on queuing and congestion but also to make journeys more convenient and pleasant for all types of road users.
- 2.2 Focusing on these aims we are proposing to increase the number of straight-ahead lanes at both the New Hythe Lane junction and the Station Road junction to two each way. The length of the merge lanes will also be increased to give greater capacity at these two junctions and to maintain a good flow of traffic.

- 2.3 We are also proposing to widen the existing footway at certain points in order to provide a shared use footway/cycleway. This will therefore allow for a continuous cycle route along the A20 between these two junctions. Tactile paving will be installed at all new pedestrian crossing points along the route. Existing cyclist/pedestrian crossing islands will be widened to allow for the full width of bicycles.
- 2.4 An ineffective bus lane will be removed under the current proposals and a number of bus laybys removed although the bus stops will remain in place. In addition the bus stop on the northern side of London Road will be relocated 35m to the east where the footway is wider.

3.0 Consultation

- 3.1 The County Council has carried out a full public consultation exercise during the summer of 2019.

3.1.1. Consultation postcards were distributed to all local residents and businesses as well as parish and district councils and other interested parties. Posters and A-boards were displayed along the route. Larkfield Library acted as a distribution centre for copies of consultation materials. The Consultation leaflet and distribution plan are shown in Annex 1.

3.1.2 Consultation exhibitions were held at Larkfield Village Hall to give local residents and interested parties an opportunity to ask questions and engage with the County Council's design team. These events were generally well attended.

3.1.3 The Consultation booklet was also available to view on the County Council's website, where respondents could complete an online version of the questionnaire.

3.1.4 The Consultation period lasted from 8th July until 1st September, an extended consultation period of 8 weeks was given as the consultation coincided with school holiday time.

- 3.2. The Public Consultation sought people's views on the various components of the scheme which were divided into the improvement works to the junction of A20 and New Hythe Lane, the installation of the shared use cycleway/footway and the improvements to the junction of A20, Station Road and New Road, Ditton.

- 3.3 By the close of the consultation Kent County Council had received 204 responses. A summary of the responses is provided in the Consultation Report which is attached as Annex 2 and 3.

4.0 Discussion

- 4.1 The Consultation was generally positively received with more respondents being in favour of the proposals than against although there were shared concerns on some issues.

4.1.1. The biggest concern related to the introduction of a shared use cycleway/footway. Some respondents felt that a shared use facility with no segregation will cause conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

4.1.2 Other concerns related to the merging of two lanes into one at the junctions of A20/New Hythe Lane and A20/Station Road/New Road, which it was felt may cause

conflict being vehicle drivers; the sequence of the traffic lights at these junctions and the removal of the bus laybys.

4.1.3 All comments received will be reviewed and any necessary changes, as a result of these comments, will be made to the designs at the detailed design stage.

One option we will be investigating is the possibility of a segregated cycleway/footway as opposed to a shared use facility.

5.0 Financial

- 5.1 Funding for the scheme has been secured from developer contributions under a S106 agreement. The detailed design will include a scheme cost estimate which at present is estimated to be around £700,000

6.0 Phasing and Programme

- 6.1 It is anticipated that the work will be delivered in 2 phases. The first phase would consist of the installation of the footway/cycleway improvements along with the improvements to the A20/New Hythe Lane junction and phase 2 the A20/Station Road/New Road junction. Detailed design is progressing on Phase 1 during September and October. The final designs will be presented to the Joint Transportation Board in November 2019. It is anticipated that work could start as early as late January 2020 if the JTB recommend progressing to construction however there are a few wider issues to understand such as the M20 smart motorway works and the Coldharbour roundabout improvements which all need co ordinating. The build period (anticipated to be approximately 3-4 months) will require temporary traffic management along A20 although every effort will be made to keep traffic moving in either direction without the need for 2- or 3-way temporary traffic signals.
- It is anticipated that Phase 2 will follow however at this time it is not known whether this phase will progress via a S278 agreement with a developer or directly by KCC.

Future Meeting if applicable:	Date: Nov 2019
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Annex List

<i>Annex 1</i>	<i>Consultation Postcard and Delivery Plan</i>
<i>Annex 2</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback Summary Report</i>
<i>Annex 3</i>	<i>List of Consultation responses</i>