

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH

JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

23 September 2013

Report of the Director of Kent Highways and Transportation

Part 1- Public

Matters For Information

1 MEDWAY WHARF ROAD / SOVEREIGN WAY JUNCTION, TONBRIDGE

Summary: This report updates Members on the results of the recent public consultation exercise concerning Kent County Council (KCC)'s proposed improvements to pedestrian safety and accessibility at the Medway Wharf Road / Sovereign Way junction in Tonbridge.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 KCC Highways and Transportation is in receipt of funding totalling £65,000 negotiated under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 from the developers of recent residential developments in Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge. The funding has been secured to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility at, and in the vicinity of, the Medway Wharf Road / Sovereign Way junction, for the benefit of new and existing residents of the area.

1.1.2 The existing junction layout, with its wide carriageways and lack of crossing facilities, does not adequately cater for pedestrian movements. KCC's proposed scheme, which has been subject to an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and is depicted in full at **Annex 1**, comprises:-

- The installation of a raised table traffic calming feature within the junction, with at-grade crossing points and contrasting surfacing, to provide a safer and more accessible pedestrian environment;
- The reduction of carriageway widths on the Sovereign Way arm of the junction to further aid pedestrian movement; and
- The installation of a new uncontrolled crossing point at carriageway level on Sovereign Way to better reflect the pedestrian desire line between Medway Wharf Road and the local supermarkets.

1.1.3 A public consultation exercise was undertaken between 3rd July and 26th July to seek the views of local residents and businesses on the scheme. Consultation

material, comprising a covering letter, scheme plan and feedback form, was hand delivered to neighbouring properties, including the Iceland and Waitrose supermarkets whose service yard is accessed from Sovereign Way.

1.2 Consultation responses

- 1.2.1 Responses were received from a total of five individuals, three of whom are residents of the Holmes Court retirement home. All respondents supported the principle of pedestrian safety and accessibility improvements at the Medway Wharf Road / Sovereign Way junction; however the residents of Holmes Court felt that these should include the installation of a signal controlled pedestrian crossing on Sovereign Way.
- 1.2.2 Whilst the Section 106 Agreement associated with the Ashby's Yard development states that the financial contribution shall be paid to KCC for: "*...the provision of a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the junction of Sovereign Way and Medway Wharf Road*", the form of the crossing is not stated. The County Council considered the case for a pelican crossing prior to the commencement of the public consultation exercise and concluded that it would not be technically possible to provide one in the vicinity of the junction. This is on account of the restricted forward visibility as drivers travelling towards Medway Wharf Road round the bend adjacent to the Waitrose service yard and the need to locate such a crossing at least 20 metres away from the junction itself. Moreover, in view of the relatively low traffic volumes and good crash record on Sovereign Way, as well as the ongoing maintenance liabilities associated with a controlled crossing, such a scheme is not considered to be cost effective.
- 1.2.3 The proposed raised table traffic calming feature would provide pedestrians travelling to and from the High Street with a level crossing facility on their primary desire line in full view of approaching motorists. It would also act to reduce traffic speeds and provide a visual warning to drivers that they are entering an area with heavy pedestrian flows. On this basis, it is KCC's view that the scheme depicted at **Annex 1** is progressed to its detailed design and delivery stages.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The scheme is in accordance with the terms of the Section 106 Agreements associated with Planning Applications TM/05/03197 and TM/09/00499.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 These are covered within the main body of the report.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Not required.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

1.6.1 Not required.

Background papers:

Nil

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