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## **A228/M20 Junction 4 - Eastern Overbridge Widening**

To: **Tonbridge & Malling Joint Transportation Board  
25 September 2017**

Main Portfolio Area: **Growth, Environment & Transport**

By: **Roger Wilkin, Director of Highways & Transportation**

Classification: **For Decision**

Ward: **West Malling & Leybourne and Downs & Mereworth**  
Division: **Malling North**

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**Summary: Recommendation to approve Traffic Regulation Order for the permanent ban of the right turn out of Castle Way; and update on miscellaneous works.**

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### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Members will be aware of the comprehensive report to the March 2017 meeting of this Board where following introduction of the item and discussion, the Board gave unanimous support to making the prohibition of the right turn out of Castle Way a permanent feature.

1.2 A Traffic Regulation Order has been published and there have been 63 responses – 36 objections, 21 in support and 6 undecided or response unclear although it could be deduced that at least 4 can be assessed as being in support. A copy of all responses will be available for Members to inspect at the Board meeting.

1.3 Leybourne Parish Council, Birling Parish Council and Snodland Town Council are the only community organisations that responded and they all indicated their support.

1.4 There is an established protocol that states that any TRO with 5 or more objections should be reported to the JTB for a recommendation that also has the support of the local KCC member.

1.5 All the responses have been read and they are comparable to the larger public consultation response held in 2016 and no new substantive issues have been raised.

1.6 The objections often query the safety concerns but in particular refer to the added journey distance, journey time, added fuel costs and added air pollution. They refer to the difficulties at Park Road roundabout which some supporters also refer to.

### **2.0 Commentary**

2.0 It is accepted that there are times when there is an incident generally related to the M20 when traffic can back along the A228 through Park Road roundabout under normal conditions traffic flows fairly freely and the added journey time is about 90 seconds.

2.1 It is probably not widely known of the proposals for improving the operation of Park Road roundabout to cater for the increased 'U' turn movements.

2.2 Park Road traffic signals are currently vehicle activated and operate independently. Coincidence of phasing can frequently lead to excessive stacking on the limited circulating area.

2.3 Telephone line links have been reinstated and the signals can be incorporated within the urban traffic control (UTC) system and the intention is to co-ordinate the phasing of the two sets of signals at peak periods.

2.4 The downside of reverting back to telephone line communication is that the wireless link to the CCTV would be lost but a new duct and cable crossing of the Birling Road entry will be provided so that a telephone connection to the CCTV link can be provided.

2.5 The combination of UTC control and CCTV monitoring will allow the operation of the roundabout to be managed from the Highways control centre at Aylesford.

2.6 Lane destination markings will be amended and added to on the approach to Park Road roundabout, around the roundabout and on the approach to J4. This will support the 'U' turn and assist traffic movements generally.

2.7 There have been two particular criticisms of the Castle Way signals. Firstly, that the left turn out of Castle Way is held while the left turn in from J4 is running. Secondly that the left turn out is only one lane whereas the right turn out (including the left turn) was two lanes and hence traffic through per cycle is now less.

2.8 The phasing will be amended so that the left turn out runs at the same time as the left turn in. The timings will also be amended to allow more time for the left turn out. It is a balance judgement and it will be monitored. It is important to give the Leybourne community good access while not encouraging excessive rat running on Castle Way and in particular not causing A228 traffic to block back along the free flow slip.

2.9 The 'yellow boxes' at J4 seem to have been well received. The yellow box sizes and locations are a considered judgement and monitoring has not suggested that any amendments are necessary at this time.

2.10 There has been some comment about the lack of lane guidance at J4 and some traffic being 'squeezed' on the approach to the widened eastern overbridge. Some additional lane guidance white lining will be provided.

2.11 There has also been comment about the poor condition of the road and lane destination markings particularly on the A228 Snodland approach to J4 (this is not helped by the relatively poor condition of the road surfacing). The lane markings on the western overbridge will be reinstated after it is resurfaced and the opportunity will

be taken to refresh the road markings generally at J4 where appropriate and particularly on the A228 Snodland approach.

2.12 The temporary ban on the right turn came into effect and has remained in place since April 2016. It is too short a time period for crash data to have any statistical significance but as a matter of fact at Park Road roundabout there has been only 1 Slight single vehicle loss of control accident. At Castle Way there has been 1 Slight accident, probably involving a red light violation, where a vehicle from J4 turned into Castle Way across the A228 free flow slip. There have been no reported injury accidents involving the left turn out of Castle Way or the 'U' turn manoeuvre.

### **3.0 Miscellaneous**

3.1 The western overbridge is planned to be resurfaced over the weekends of 8 and 15 September 2017 with the 22 September 2017 being held as a contingency. This is later than originally hoped but the work had to be co-ordinated with other roadworks and these dates have been agreed with Highways England and their agents AOne+.

3.2 Subject to the decision of the Board in respect of the Castle Way TRO, it would be the intention for the associated works related to the right turn closure to follow on in early October.

### **4.0 Financial**

4.1 The M20J4 scheme has been delivered within the allocated Local Growth Funding and S106 contributions received. A budget provision has been retained for the works necessary should the decision related to the TRO be made to permanently ban the right turn, together with the resurfacing of the western over bridge.

### **5.0 Legal implications**

5.1 Although the Joint Transportation Board is not generally a formal decision making body, in accordance with current convention the views of this Board together with that of the Local Member for Malling North will determine the approval or otherwise of the TRO without any further or ratifying decision being taken by the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport.

### **6.0 Conclusions**

6.1 The frustration of the extra journey distance and associated aspects of making the 'U' turn at Park Road roundabout is understood but the flows are relatively low and must be seen in the context of the potential accident savings and the personal and wider community benefits. There are proposals to address some of the concerns raised and in particular those related to Park Road roundabout. Nothing new or substantive has been raised in the responses to the TRO that would change the recommendation to permanently ban the right turn that was discussed in the Report to the March 2017 meeting of this Board.

### **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 I Recommend that:

- i. this Board acknowledges the views expressed and supports the proposed Traffic Regulation Order to permanently ban the right turn out of Castle Way on the basis of the safety advantages and mitigating proposals intended at Park Road roundabout.
- ii. the local community are advised.

Future Meeting if applicable: None planned	Date:
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**Appendices**

None	
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