

To: Tonbridge & Malling Joint Transportation Board
By: KCC Highways and Transportation
Date: 5 June 2023
Subject: Kent Street Junction improvement update
Classification: Information Only

Summary: This report updates Members on the Kent Street/Malling Road highway improvements.

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 S106 funding was secured from Kings Hill Phase 2 development and carried through to the S106 for the Phase 3 development.

The funds are for 'Local Traffic Management and Calming' for:

A scheme at Kent Street, Mereworth junction with the A228 designed to mitigate the impact of traffic arising from the Development and to enhance safety and conditions for local residents, pedestrians and cyclists; and

A scheme of traffic management at Offham Village designed to mitigate the local impact of traffic arising from the Development and to enhance safety and conditions for local residents, pedestrians and cyclists. This scheme was completed several years ago.

- 1.2 Design options being considered are aimed at improving visibility at the Kent Street junction with the A228 plus some additional footway provision, signing, surfacing and strengthening of ironwork/service chambers within the carriageway of the A228 over the length of the scheme; provision of uncontrolled crossing points on A228, keeping as close to the Kent Street desire line as possible; providing a footway link from Kent Street to the wider Kings Hill area and consideration to the potential for the widening of A228 Malling Road.
- 1.3 Options were presented to the JTB in March 2021 with the recommendation to progress to detailed design on a scheme that would give the most amount of improvement.

2.0 Scheme update

- 2.1 Over the last 24 months, various schemes have been investigated working closely with the landowner and local Councillors with the main aim to provide better visibility at the junction. This has proved difficult due to the geometry of the junction with houses close to the main road.
- 2.2 The project has now got to a point where the design has taken into account feedback and developed proposals that widens the A228 Malling Road between Kent Street and Beech Road, this busy section is narrow and used by a large number of heavy goods

vehicles travelling between the M20 motorway, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. The existing carriageway width makes it very tight when large vehicles pass each other, any incidents on this route can cause a high-level of disruption to the surrounding road network.

- 2.3 Both Kent Street junctions have very poor visibility for vehicles wishing to turn out onto the A228 Malling Road. This scheme also proposes the installation of traffic signals at the crossroads to assist these turning vehicles. Both Kent Street junctions will be widened to provide sufficient carriageway width for vehicles to turn in whilst another vehicle waits at the stop line. The traffic signals will also provide a pedestrian push button crossing facility across Malling Road, not only improving the area for pedestrians and cyclists but providing a vital safe link to the new bus stops proposed to the north of Kent Street.
- 2.4 The scheme also includes a 4-metre-wide shared cycle and footway on the western side of the Malling Road with a 1-metre-wide safety buffer to separate passing traffic from pedestrians and cyclists. A new footway link has recently been installed at the western end of Kent Street which joins up with the bridleway that runs around the outside of Kings Hill. This new link could result in more pedestrians and cyclists requiring a safe crossing point over the Malling Road, which the traffic signal scheme provides.
- 2.3 KCC is consulting on the proposals starting 23 May until 30 June 2023 via an online consultation ([Let's talk Kent](https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk) - letstalk.kent.gov.uk) and will also be holding 2 sessions with plans on display at Mereworth village hall on Monday June 19 between 13:30 and 16:45 and Wednesday 21 June between 18:00 and 20:00.
- 2.4 Appendix A has the consultation plans which consist of an overall layout plan, 4 more detailed drawings and a typical cross section of the cycle path.
- 2.5 The current available S106 developer funding is £743,000.
- 2.6 If supported the project is likely to commence in a phased approach pending construction costs. Widening the road and implementing the traffic signals being the first phase followed by the construction of the cycleway and footway.

Contact and report author: Jamie Watson – Senior Programme Manager - Active Travel:
email: activetravel@kent.gov.uk; Phone: Contact Centre: 03000 41 81 81

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

1. Kent Street consultation Plan – overall layout
2. Consultation Plan 1
3. Consultation Plan 2
4. Consultation Plan 3
5. Consultation Plan 4
6. Kent Street Consultation Plan – Typical cross section of cycle path