

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title	Bearsted Road Improvement Maidstone
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Responsible Officer	Colin Shorter - GT TRA
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Type of Activity

Service Change	No
Service Redesign	No
Project/Programme	No
Commissioning/Procurement	Commissioning/Procurement
Strategy/Policy	No
Details of other Service Activity	No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate	Growth Environment and Transport
Responsible Service	Major Capital Programme Team
Responsible Head of Service	Tim Read - GT TRA
Responsible Director	Philip Lightowler - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

The scheme involves the signalisation of the A249 Bearsted Road roundabout, and the enlargement & signalisation of Bearsted Road/New Cut Road roundabout, including the use of Smart technology to ease congestion, improve traffic flow and accommodate traffic associated with the Kent Medical Campus Enterprise Zone and growth in the town centre and Borough of Maidstone (Kent County Council, 2017).

The Kent Medical Campus Maidstone, A249 Bearsted Road roundabout and Bearsted Road/New Cut Road roundabout junction improvement was submitted as one of two priority schemes in Kent for funding support through the Department for Transport (DfT) National Productivity Investment Fund (Kent County Council, 2017a). An allocation of £4.0M towards the scheme was announced on the 19th October 2017 (Kent County Council, 2017b), this was combined with £5.4M National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) allocated to KCC in financial year 2017. Match funding was confirmed via Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), £500k (Kent County Council, 2017b), and Developer Contribution £1.92M (inclusive of £420k in-kind land gift) (Kent County Council, 2017). Construction is currently planned to commence in 2019 (Kent County Council, 2017).

The objectives and anticipated benefits (Kent County Council, 2017) of the scheme comprise:

- * Upgrade two junctions on the A249 Bearsted Road and New Cut Road roundabouts;
- * Accommodate increased traffic volume from Kent Medical Campus;
- * Support the redevelopment of the nearby Newnham Court Shopping Village;
- * Ease congestion;
- * Improve traffic flow into Maidstone;
- * Unlock economic growth and job creation opportunities;
- * Enable the delivery of housing development;
- * Improve air quality and/or reduce CO2 emissions; and
- * Incentivising skills and apprentices.

The scheme proposes to significantly upgrade two junctions on the Local Road Network close to M20 J7 in Maidstone and install Smart Technology on the A249 Bearsted Road, a local strategic link into Maidstone.

Capacity and traffic flow will be improved so that the increased traffic volume from the Kent Medical Campus Enterprise Zone can be accommodated. This is a key employment site for the county and will

create 3,000 highly skilled jobs, including specialised research and development - an area key to boosting productivity (Kent County Council, 2017).

The scheme has been designed to also cater for housing growth in the town of 1,500 homes and will support the redevelopment of the adjacent Newnham Court Shopping Village. The proposal is fully supported by the Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016 - 2031, which sets out the Bearsted Road capacity improvements as a key priority for the Maidstone district (Kent County Council, 2017).

Kent Medical Campus will create up to 48 new businesses, up to 3,000 new jobs by 2022 and up to 3,300 by 2027 and adding £147m annual Gross Value Added (GVA) to the Kent and Medway economy by 2027. As well as bringing forward the Enterprise Zone and its outputs by 3-5 years, traffic modelling has also identified the need to mitigate the traffic generated from housing growth in the town centre and to the south of the Borough, which this scheme will deliver (Kent County Council, 2017).

The South East Local Enterprise Partnership's (SELEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) explicitly refers to the role of Kent Medical Campus in attracting businesses of all sizes in the medical technology industry to the region. Both the life sciences and healthcare sectors are central to SELEP achieving its objectives to increase productivity and innovation, create private sector jobs, increase the number of knowledge-based workers, and raise skills levels. Maidstone Borough Council's (MBC) adopted Economic Development Strategy (EDS), sets out how future growth and prosperity of the borough will be supported. Working in partnership with MBC, KCC is determined to see local people benefit from new jobs, increasing prosperity and sustainable growth (Kent County Council, 2017).

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?	No
It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?	Yes
Is there national evidence/data that you can use?	Yes
Have you consulted with stakeholders?	Yes
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?	
Public Consultation is planned to take place at the end of Outline Design in approximately August 2018. Healthcare and education providers, retail outlets and campus developers were contacted to inform this EqIA. Consultation specific to protected groups is outlined in Section 5. Discussions with the KCC Diversity Team confirmed that an EqIA would be required and which protected groups should be considered in the EqI Screening. The KCC Diversity Team reviewed the EqI Screening document and agreed the content of this EqIA	
Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?	Yes
Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?	Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients	No
Staff	No
Residents/Communities/Citizens	Residents/communities/citizens
Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result	Yes

of the activity that you are doing?	
Details of Positive Impacts	
In addition to the positive impacts identified for all residents and users of the scheme, specific positive impacts have been identified for the following protected characteristics:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age - Disability - Pregnancy & maternity 	
<p>Age: Walking routes are used frequently by older people and young people (particularly to and from school) and improvements to access and facilities will increase confidence in both walking and cycling and therefore, increase its use for learning, education, leisure, and health.</p> <p>The schemes will improve connections to The Crematorium, Shopping Village & KIMS, meaning that those with decreased mobility will be able to travel more directly and easily. This will increase access to the service and subsequently increase access to vital hub locations. Improvements in infrastructure such as improved pedestrian crossings will significantly improve the user experience, leading to increased use, improved traffic safety, reduced fear of crime and increased confidence to make independent journeys for school, social, recreation and travel to essential services. Clear, signed routes help avoid confusion in new areas often experienced by young or older people.</p>	
<p>Disability: The design will incorporate inclusive facilities accessible to disabled users. The scheme will improve connections to The Crematorium, Shopping Village & KIMS meaning that those with limited mobility will be able to travel more directly and easily. This will increase access to the service and subsequently increase access to vital hub locations. Works will include improvements to pavements and highway surfaces.</p> <p>Cycle routes are often infrequently used by disabled people with mild to moderate disabilities due to a lack of accessible facilities. Improvements to access and facilities will increase confidence in the routes and use for learning, education, leisure, and health.</p> <p>Pedestrian crossings will also be upgraded. Improvements in infrastructure such as improved pedestrian crossings will significantly improve the user experience, leading to increased use, improved traffic safety, reduced fear of crime and increased confidence to make independent journeys for school, social, recreation and travel to essential services. Clear, signed routes help avoid uncertainty in new areas often experienced by disabled people.</p>	
<p>Pregnancy and maternity: Schemes will include improvements to pavements, pedestrian crossings, and highway surfaces. Therefore, there will be a decreased risk of falls or injury, that may disproportionately impact pregnant women. Widening footways will also benefit parents with prams and pushchairs.</p>	
Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions	
19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age	
Are there negative impacts for age?	Yes
Details of negative impacts for Age	
<p>Construction could result in temporary closure, & diversion of footpaths for users, this may result in uneven footway surfaces which could affect young and older pedestrians. Pedestrians and road users may have to find alternative and more lengthy routes to access services (such as hospital, schools, public transport etc.). Noise disruption from the construction works could cause anxiety and confusion for some people. If access to services and access to transport is disrupted it could disproportionately impact elderly people's health and wellbeing as they may stop attending social groups, being active or attending health</p>	

appointments	
Mitigating Actions for Age	
<p>Safety audits will be completed at the design and construction stage. NMU audits will be undertaken to ensure due consideration is given to all road users.</p> <p>The design will meet all statutory requirements including the Equality Act 2010, with all good practices in mind.</p> <p>Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the highway safely during the construction works.</p> <p>Access to services kept clear with ramps where required</p> <p>Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulation</p>	
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age	Colin Shorter
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability	
Are there negative impacts for Disability?	Yes
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability	
<p>Construction will result in temporary closures of footpaths, for road users including pedestrians & cyclists. This may temporarily disrupt access to essential services for disability groups meaning alternative routes may be required. Construction works can cause major obstructions on key walking routes and unexpected changes to the 'landscape' for blind and partially sighted people. Construction works can be noisy – causing confusion and anxiety for some disabled people</p>	
Mitigating actions for Disability	
<p>Safety audits will be completed at the design and construction stage. NMU audits will be undertaken to ensure due consideration is given to all road users.</p> <p>The design will meet all statutory requirements including the Equality Act 2010, with all good practices in mind.</p> <p>Ensure designs are carried out in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which gives guidance based on current legislation for non-motorised users (NMU) and those with disabilities. The design will meet recommended guidance from the Department for Transport on inclusive mobility, the Kent Design Guide and associated standard details.</p> <p>The need for the schemes have been identified through assessment by KCC in partnership with local District development and transport strategies.</p> <p>Risk assessment to be completed for affected groups prior to construction.</p> <p>Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the highway safely during the construction works.</p> <p>Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulations with access to services kept clear with ramps where required</p>	
Responsible Officer for Disability	Colin Shorter
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex	
Are there negative impacts for Sex	Yes
Details of negative impacts for Sex	
<p>During construction, women may feel unsafe using diversions away from usual walking or cycling routes or waiting in temporary structures or adjacent to construction sites due to fear of crime.</p>	
Mitigating actions for Sex	
<p>Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings, where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure users can access and use the highway safely during the construction works.</p> <p>Ensure appropriate, lit diversion routes are chosen and well signed during the construction works.</p>	

Responsible Officer for Sex	Colin Shorter
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race	
Are there negative impacts for Race	Yes
Negative impacts for Race	
During construction, communication barriers could cause confusion and anxiety for different ethnic groups in relation to the construction works due to the potential for a language barrier.	
Mitigating actions for Race	
Public engagement materials during construction to be available in alternative languages on request.	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race	Colin Shorter
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	Not Applicable
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
There is a possible increased risk of falls during work if pregnant women are walking unfamiliar routes.	
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Construction sites and diversion routes to follow health and safety regulations. Diversion routes to be lit, as necessary, and well signed with ramped access to services as required	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	Colin Shorter
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No

Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	Yes
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	
<p>Diversions and major construction works may impact on travel plans if works are not known about in advance.</p> <p>Construction works and changes to the site area could affect planning for independent travel with client groups.</p>	
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Public engagement, via letter drops, websites, social media, and public meetings where appropriate, to ensure all users are aware of construction works/programme and any temporary access arrangements to ensure they can access and use the highway safely during the construction works.	
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities	Colin Shorter