

From: David Brazier - Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport
Mike Austerberry - Corporate Director Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 17 September 2014

Subject: 14/00092 M20 J4/A228 - Widening of Eastern Overbridge

Key decision Major Scheme with cost over £1m

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: For Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: Malling North

Summary: Approval to take the highway improvement scheme through the next stages of development and delivery including authority to progress statutory approvals and to enter into funding and construction contracts.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport on the proposed decision as follows (and indicated on the proposed decision sheet attached at Appendix A):

- i) give approval to the outline design scheme for M20 J4 Widening of Eastern Overbridge for development control and land charge disclosures shown in principle on Drg. No. ITB8066-GA-003 Rev A;
- ii) give approval to progress all statutory approvals or consents required for the scheme shown in principle on Drg, No. ITB8066-GA-003 Rev A;
- iii) give approval to enter into a S6 Agreement with the Highways Agency to allow KCC to deliver a scheme on the Highways Agency network;
- iv) give approval to enter into Single Local Growth Fund funding agreement subject to the approval of the Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement, and
- v) give approval to enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery of the scheme subject to the approval of the Procurement Board to the recommended procurement strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 The M20 J4 connection with the A228 is an important node on the highway network. The A228 runs from Grain in a south westerly arc to the A21 at Tunbridge Wells and provides important access to economic activity in the Medway Valley and at Leybourne and Kings Hill.

1.2 The eastern overbridge on the M20 J4 only has two lanes and this is a major contributor to congestion that would be relieved by widening the bridge to

provide an extra lane to the junction gyratory system. See Drg. No's. ITB8066-GA-002 Rev A and GA-003 Rev A attached as Appendix B.

- 1.3 Disappointingly, bids to the Local Pinch Point Fund in 2013 for funding to widen the bridge were unsuccessful. However, the recently announced award from the Single Local Growth Fund is very welcome news and, together with S106 developer contributions, will now allow the scheme to proceed. There is a need to start the scheme before March 2016 to avoid losing a significant element of S106 funding.
- 1.4 This report provides an overview of the project and recommendations for the required decisions to allow the scheme to be progressed.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The overall estimated scheme cost is £4.80m. The allocation from the Single Local Growth Fund is £2.19m. The remaining £2.61m is available from S106 contributions that are already received or can be called upon. Further S106 contributions should also be available when development build-out thresholds are reached.
- 2.2 Costs of developing the scheme are included within the estimate.
- 2.3 The Highways Agency are likely to require a commuted sum to reflect the increased inspection and maintenance liability of the widened bridge and this has been allowed for within the scheme estimate.
- 2.4 There will be a marginal increased revenue maintenance liability associated with the additional carriageway surfacing associated with the extra lane over the widened bridge.

3. Policy Framework

The scheme supports the objectives of supporting existing businesses and encouraging economic activity with housing growth and job creation by reducing congestion and improving infrastructure and accessibility. The scheme contributes to the unlocking of over 3500 homes and 100,000 sq m of commercial floor space.

4. Scheme Update

- 4.1 Traffic assessment has identified that a widened eastern bridge, providing three lanes, will satisfy committed development, local plan allocations and background growth. The western overbridge was widened to provide four lanes in 2006 but traffic distribution is such that three lanes are considered appropriate for the improvement of the eastern overbridge.
- 4.2 The scheme is totally within the highway curtilage of the M20. Planning consent is not required, no land needs to be acquired and it is unlikely that any other statutory approvals or consents will be required but is included in the decision recommendation as a contingency safeguard.

- 4.3 In connection with the earlier Pinch Point Bid some data such as engineering details of the existing bridge, a topographical survey and geotechnical survey information has already been obtained. Engineering and cost consultants have also been commissioned.
- 4.4 The design of the widened bridge will need to satisfy the Highways Agency standards. It will be delivered by KCC under a S6 Agreement which allows a highway authority to work on another highway authority's network. KCC has considerable experience and knowledge of the junction having widened the western over bridge and improved the slip roads in 2006. The M20 is a major strategic link to Europe and constructing the widened bridge without losing motorway capacity will be a key requirement of the Highways Agency and major intrusive activities will probably need to be done at night.
- 4.5 The proposal is well established within the context of major development consents but is probably not well known to the local community. However, this is a small scheme in scale and the nearest houses are about 250m away beyond Leybourne Lakes. An information letter drop will be arranged when the scheme and programme have been developed in more detail with further communication, as would be done for any highway scheme, when appropriate.
- 4.6 Delivery of the scheme in practical terms will be dependent on completing the detailed design of the scheme and procuring a contractor through a competitive tender process - probably under European procurement rules. Delivery will also be dependent on the cost and affordability and this will be clearer after the detailed design has been completed and a more robust estimate prepared. A scheme specific business case needs to be submitted to the Department of Transport for approval before the £2.19m Single Local Growth funding is confirmed.
- 4.7 On the basis of the Single Local Growth funding being confirmed, design and procurement proceeding satisfactorily and road space permits to carry out works affecting the M20 being granted by the Highways Agency, a start of construction in early 2016 is anticipated.

5. Conclusions

This is an important scheme to help reduce congestion on the M20 junction of the A228 strategic route corridor and support housing development, job creation and general economic activity. The failure to achieve Pinch Point funding in early 2013 was disappointing but the recent announcement of Single Local Growth funding that will allow the scheme to proceed is very welcome news. The programme will be challenging but some preliminary work has already been done and there is confidence that a construction start date of early 2016 can be achieved.

6. Recommendations

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proposed decision as follows (and indicated on the proposed decision sheet attached at Appendix A):

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- iv) give approval to enter into Single Local Growth Fund funding agreement subject to the approval of the Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement, and
- v) give approval to enter into construction contracts as necessary for the delivery of the scheme subject to the approval of the Procurement Board to the procurement strategy.

7. Background Documents

None

8. Contact details

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