

March 2014

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL EQUALITY ANALYSIS / IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

This document is available in other formats, Please contact Barry Stiff at barry.stiff@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 03000 419377

Directorate:

Growth, Environment & Transport

Name of policy, procedure, project or service

A28 Chart Road, Ashford – Road Widening & Dualling

What is being assessed?

Highway Project

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer

Barry Stiff

Date of Initial Screening

25 February 2015

Date of Full EqIA :

TBA

Version	Author	Date	Comment
1.0	Barry Stiff	25/02/15	Draft Issue for Comments
2.0	Barry Stiff	02/06/15	Revised draft issued for comments
3.0	Barry Stiff	04/06/15	Amended following Diversity Team's comments
4.0	Barry Stiff	17/06/16	Updated following review
4.1	Akua Agyepong	29/06/2016	Comments

Screening Grid

Characteristic	Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect this group less favourably than others in Kent? YES/NO If yes how?	Assessment of potential impact HIGH MEDIUM LOW/NONE UNKNOWN		Provide details: a) Is internal action required? If yes what? b) Is further assessment required? If yes, why?	Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group? YES/NO - Explain how good practice can promote equal opportunities
		Positive	Negative	Internal action must be included in Action Plan	If yes you must provide detail
Age	No	Low		Provision of an additional short section of shared unsegregated footway/cycle way on the south side of Chart Road between Brunswick Road and Brookfield Road. This will provide a continuous footway link on this side of the road. Additional controlled crossings of Chart Road to replace existing uncontrolled facilities are proposed near to Brunswick Road and Brookfield Road. The road alignment and its width have been constrained due to the physical constraints of the site (railway line, buildings etc) and restriction on available land. The proposed width of 2.5m for the shared unsegregated facility is considered appropriate when also considering the low pedestrian and cycle usage of this route and the need to also provide a safe route for cyclists. The general footfall of pedestrians is from the Godinton estate eastwards into Ashford town centre. There are no bus stops located along Chart Road, and a bus service only operates along the eastern part of Chart Road in order to access the Godinton Estate via Loudon Way. New replacement LED lighting is being proposed for the new road layout which will give	YES – The provision of the additional section of footway will make it easier and safer for older people to walk along Chart Road, giving them more choices and flexibility for their chosen route, this may also reduce the number of times they need to cross the road compared with the current road layout, which only has a footway on the north side of the road between Brunswick Road and Brookfield Road. The new controlled crossings will also offer a much safer crossing facility compared with the current uncontrolled crossing facilities and will have pedestrian on-crossing detection which will hold vehicles on red until pedestrians have finished crossing the road.

<p>Disability</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Low</p>		<p>a consistent lighting level throughout the route. Provision of an additional short section of shared unsegregated footway/cycle way on the south side of Chart Road between Brunswick Road and Brookfield Road. This will provide a continuous footway link on this side of the road. Additional controlled crossings of Chart Road to replace existing uncontrolled facilities are proposed near to Brunswick Road and Brookfield Road. The design of the scheme is being carried out in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which gives guidance based on current legislation for non-motorised users, and particularly the requirements for those users with disabilities. Once an initial design has been prepared that meets the requirements of the DMRB, Kent County Council will engage with The Kent Association for the Blind (KAB), Guide Dogs for the Blind and Ashford Access Group to ensure that their requirements are met by the design.</p>	<p>YES – The provision of the additional section of footway will make it easier and safer for people with a disability who are not able to drive, giving them more choices and flexibility for their chosen route which could also potentially reduce the number of times they need to cross the road compared with the current road layout. The provision of the additional section of footway giving continuity of provision of footway both sides of the road together with controlled crossings will make it more accessible and easier for wheelchair and mobility scooter users. The new controlled crossings will also offer a much safer crossing facility compared with the current uncontrolled crossings. The new crossings will have flush kerbs with contrasting red coloured blister tactile paving (as per Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving Surfaces, Dft 1998) and both audible beepers and rotating cones to assist blind and partially-sighted pedestrians. They will also have pedestrian on-crossing detection which will hold vehicles on red until pedestrians have finished crossing the road. Cross falls of a maximum of 1:12 gradient at the crossing, and widths of central islands will also make the crossing facilities accessible by wheelchairs and mobility scooters.</p>
<p>Gender</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Neutral</p>		<p>No</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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Gender identity	No	Neutral	No	N/A
Race	No	Neutral	No	N/A
Religion or belief	No	Neutral	No	N/A
Sexual orientation	No	Neutral	No	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	No	Neutral	- No	- N/A
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No	Neutral	No	N/A
Carer's responsibilities	No	Neutral	No	N/A

Part 1: INITIAL SCREENING

Proportionality - Based on the answers in the above screening grid what weighting would you ascribe to this function – see Risk Matrix

Low	Medium	High
Low relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a judgement.	Medium relevance or Insufficient information/evidence to make a Judgement.	High relevance to equality, /likely to have adverse impact on protected groups

State rating & reasons

Low – this is a highway scheme that will provide an additional short section of shared footway/cycle way facility on the southern side of Chart Road and new controlled pedestrian crossing facilities that will benefit and increase accessibility for all users, particularly older people and those with disabilities.

Context

The A28 Chart Road is a locally important strategic route with a heavy traffic flow but relatively low pedestrian usage. The proposed improvements to the A28 Chart Road have long been an aspiration for Kent County Council in order to improve current issues surrounding traffic congestion and to provide highway improvements to facilitate local developments. The recent allocation of local growth funding from Central Government and developer contributions has now made the scheme possible. The widening and dualling of the existing single carriageway will increase the capacity of the existing network to cope with planned development in Ashford up to 2034. The site is heavily constrained by a number of features including the existing ‘Tank’ and ‘Matalan’ roundabout links, Godinton Housing Estate to the north, Cobbs Wood Industrial Estate to the South and the land constraints associated with the new bridge over the railway line. The existing pedestrian route on the south side is not continuous due to the constraint of the existing bridge over the railway line, and currently pedestrians are required to cross over the road at uncontrolled crossings either side of the bridge located at the junction with Brunswick Road and on the approach to the ‘Matalan’ roundabout.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the scheme is to reduce traffic congestion, particularly during peak hours and to improve overall journey time reliability. This will be achieved by dualling the existing single carriageway which will provide an additional lane in each direction, increasing the size and operational capabilities of ‘Tank’ and ‘Matalan’ roundabouts, and improving the signalised junction at Loudon Way. Improvements to existing pedestrian/cycle facilities by adding the section ‘of missing’ footway on the south side are also proposed. As part of the scheme design, all aspects of the highway will be assessed and designed to meet current design standards of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and will include improved footway/cycleway facilities with consideration given to how the route is used by all users including older people and people with disabilities.

Beneficiaries

All highway users, including residents, local businesses, town centre visitors, and transport operators.

Information and Data

N/A

Involvement and Engagement

Kent County Council holds monthly steering group meetings with the design team, which a representative from Ashford Borough Council attends, to provide updates on the progress of scheme. Meetings are also routinely held with local and district councillors, and the local parish council to provide information and to keep them updated on progress of the scheme. A public engagement exercise was held in autumn 2015, following which the preferred scheme was approved to take forward. Further information will be provided to stakeholders as the scheme design is progressed via such mediums as KCC website, leaflet drops etc, and as deemed appropriate at the time. Regular communications will also take place before and during construction to advise users how the construction work will be managed.

Potential Impact

The potential impacts for a highway scheme of this nature are considered to be low. The provision of pedestrian facilities are typical for a scheme of this nature and the additional and improved facilities can only be seen as a benefit for older people and those with disabilities who may use this route.

Adverse Impact:

It is considered there are no adverse impacts of this scheme as the proposed improvements will only increase the flexibility of how the pedestrian route can be used by all users, and includes the provision of a new section of footway.

Note: Although not specifically referred to in Version 3, the scheme did include a new footway/cycleway connection to Beaver Lane but this is no longer proposed. Beaver Lane between the Bombardier site entrance and the A28 is not public highway - it was stopped up many years ago under an earlier improvement. The connection was shown in anticipation of mixed use development of the Bombardier site but there are no proposals or early likelihood of a planning application and hence any development is many years away. It is not really possible to anticipate the possible benefit of such a connection but a future connection will not be prejudiced by the scheme and there is also a viable and equally convenient designated route alongside Brookfield Road that is more visible and hence more secure and with a flatter gradient. The issue of a connection was not raised or commented upon during the public engagement.

Positive Impact:

The positive impact is considered as low, as the overall use of the route by pedestrians does not change dramatically with the exception of providing a continuous footway link on the south side, which will afford all pedestrians, wheelchair and mobility scooter users with more choices about their chosen route. The new controlled crossing features will also have flush kerbs with contrasting red coloured blister tactile paving and both audible beepers and rotating cones to assist blind and partially-sighted pedestrians. They will also have pedestrian on-crossing detection which will hold vehicles on red until pedestrians have finished crossing the road. Cross falls of a maximum of 1:12 gradient at the crossing facilities, and widths of central islands will also make the crossing facilities accessible by wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

JUDGEMENT

Option 1 – Screening Sufficient **NO**

Justification: This is a highway scheme, which has low but mainly neutral impact.

Option 2 – Internal Action Required **YES**

Option 3 – Full Impact Assessment **YES**

Action Plan

See table below

Monitoring and Review

Kent County Council has overall responsibility for the scheme and holds internal monthly or as required, steering group meetings which monitor and review the development and progress of the scheme. Ashford Borough Council, also attend these meetings.

Sign Off

I have noted the content of the equality impact assessment and agree the actions to mitigate the adverse impact(s) that have been identified.

Senior Officer

Signed: 

Name: *RUSSELL BOORMAN*

Job Title: *INTERIM MAJOR CAPITAL PROGRAMME MANAGER*
DMT Member

Date: *4/7/16*

Signed: 

Name: *TIM READ*

Job Title: *HEAD OF TRANSPORTATION* Date: *4/7/16*

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
Access to and use of the highway network by users with disabilities and mobility problems	The need to engage with Kent Association for the Blind, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Ashford Access Group once an outline design layout for the scheme has been produced to ensure their requirements and needs are met by the design.	Write to Kent Association for the Blind, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Ashford Access Group requesting comments/meeting to discuss the scheme	Receive comments and where appropriate/practical these will be accommodated in the design	Barry Stiff	July-August 2015 (provisional)	Unknown at this stage but likely scale of any changes could be accommodated within current project budget
			No comments have been received prior to 16 June 2016 but further efforts will be made to engage with each group before the design is finalised	Barry Stiff	June 2016 – July 2017	Unknown at this stage but likely scale of any changes could be accommodated within current project budget
Access and use of the highway network by all user groups	The need to engage with local users and key stakeholders to advise those people who will be affected by the scheme specific details about the proposed layout and to highlight any local specific needs that need to be considered	A public engagement exercise will be undertaken through a number of different mediums such as KCC website, public exhibition, leaflet drops.	Receive comments and where appropriate/practical consider changes to the design. Due to the constraints on the scheme, any changes are likely to be restricted to points of detail, rather than around the general principle/design of	Barry Stiff	October-November 2015	Unknown at this stage but likely scale of any changes could be accommodated within current project budget.

			the scheme.			
			Minor comments received during the public engagement exercise	Barry Stiff	October 2016 – July 2017	Changes can be accommodated within current scheme and project budget
Access to and use of the highway network by all users, including those with disabilities and mobility problems	The need to advise all users of Chart Road, of proposed traffic management and restrictions on use of any parts of the route during the construction phase of the project	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 are able to access and use the highway safely during the construction works.	Barry Stiff	At appropriate times between March 2018 to December 2020 (Provisional Construction period)	Included within current project budget