

1. Background

- 1.1. The Growth Deal allocated £8.9 million LGF to the delivery of Maidstone Integrated Transport Package.
- 1.2. The original bid document defined the scope of this project as the delivery of new and expanded Park and Ride sites in Maidstone (Linton Road Park and Ride and M20 Junction 7 Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride).
- 1.3. Subsequent to the bid submission and in light of developments with Maidstone Local Plan, the construction and operation of Park and Ride sites is not supported locally.
- 1.4. As of 8th February 2016, the Sittingbourne Road Park and Ride site has ceased to operate.
- 1.5. An alternative package of transport schemes has been identified to enable housing delivery in Maidstone.
- 1.6. The revised scope of the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package has been agreed with Maidstone Borough Council and has been approved by Maidstone Joint Transportation Board.

2. Variation to Scheme

- 2.1. A Transport Business Case has been developed and assessed by the SELEP Independent Technical Evaluator, which sets out the benefits of delivering a number of alternative priority schemes which have been agreed at the local federated level.
- 2.2. The Business Case seeks approval for LGF spend on the measures set out in Appendix A.
- 2.3. The schemes identified are predominately traffic schemes that are located at congestion hotspots and will aim to improve journey time reliability.
- 2.4. The Maidstone Integrated Transport Package benefits will remain consistent with those defined in the original bid document. These include the delivery of transport infrastructure that is required to tackle congestion and which forms part of the interventions necessary to support the delivery of the significant housing and employment growth proposed by the emerging Maidstone Local Plan.
- 2.5. These schemes are complemented by Section 278 developer funded/delivered improvements which are linked to local development works.

3. Financial Implications

3.1. The LGF spend profile will remain as previously agreed and as shown below:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020
£1.3m	£2.0m	£2.0m	£3.6m

3.2. A local developer contribution of £2.954m has been identified for spend in 2016/17.

3.3. The revised total project cost estimate is £11.854m.

3.4. If additional local funding contributions are identified, the scope of the project and total project cost estimate will increase accordingly.

4 Legal Implications

4.1 None

5 Background – Revised Scheme

5.1 A20/M20 Junction 5 Junction Improvements

This scheme involves the partial signalisation of the existing roundabout. This new arrangement will be supported by localised widening on the M20 slip roads and circulatory carriageway to achieve additional queuing capacity. A dedicated left turn lane will also be provided on the A20 to facilitate continuous traffic movement onto the M20 westbound on-slip, thereby removing an element of traffic from the circulatory part of the junction. Capacity modelling has indicated that the proposals will achieve a 20% improvement on the most congested junction arm, the M20 eastbound off-slip.

A229/A274 Wheatsheaf Junction Improvements

This junction is currently the subject of a County Council proposal to close the Cranborne Avenue arm to enable the traffic signals to devote additional green time to the A229 and A274. The proposal is to include this closure in a more comprehensive upgrade that will widen the northbound A229 approach to the traffic signals. This will provide capacity benefits by enabling vehicles to queue in two lanes over a much longer distance. Importantly, this scheme does not compromise the retention of the existing pedestrian crossing facilities. Initial indications suggest that an overall improvement of 12-17% in capacity could be achieved through these proposals.

A20/Willington Street Junction Improvements

The proposal is to widen the westbound A20 approach in order to create two lanes for queuing traffic. The lanes will be individually allocated to the left turn into Willington Street and the straight ahead movement along the A20, thereby enabling a greater volume of traffic to move through each cycle of the traffic signals. Initial indications suggest that an overall improvement of around 10% in capacity could be achieved through these proposals.

A274/Willington Street and A274/Wallis Avenue Junction Improvements

The proposal is to utilise the verge on the southern side of the A274 to widen the carriageway. This will accommodate an additional lane for westbound traffic on the A274 on the approaches to both the Willington Street and Wallis Avenue junctions, with a merge arrangement provided to the west of Wallis Avenue as the road reverts to single carriageway. It will also enable an additional lane to be provided for eastbound traffic on the section of the A274 between the Willington Street and Wallis Avenue junctions. The improvements will provide additional queuing capacity in both directions and enable a greater volume of traffic to move through each cycle of the traffic signals. Initial indications suggest that an overall improvement of around 13% in capacity could be achieved through these proposals.

A20/Hermitage Lane Road Widening

The proposal is to widen the westbound A20 approach to the junction to achieve four lanes for queuing traffic. The widening will then continue westwards up to the Mills Road junction to provide three continuous lanes. This will increase the capacity of both junctions and reduce the potential for queuing that blocks back from one junction to another. The improvements involve the removal of the existing section of bus lane, which currently provides a marginal benefit to bus journey times. This loss will be compensated by the removal of the bus layby further to the west, as the new on-carriageway stopping arrangement will alleviate the difficulties bus drivers currently experience in trying to pull out into moving traffic.