

Agenda Item No: 9
Report To: Ashford Joint Transportation Board
Date: 8 March 2011



Report Title: **Update report on:-**
i) **Highway Improvements at M20 Junction 9, Drivers Roundabout and a new foot/cycle bridge over the M20**
ii) **Victoria Way**

Report Authors: John Farmer, Kent Highway Services, Major Projects Manager
Andy Phillips, Ashford's Future, Head of Transport

Summary:	Members are updated on the progress being made on the construction of these two major highways schemes that will support the growth of Ashford. Officers will be available to give a verbal update on the details of the programme for completing the schemes and the traffic management impacts.
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: Stour, Godinton, Bockhanger, Victoria

Recommendations: **The Board is asked to note the progress being made towards completing these projects.**

Policy Overview: Both schemes are consistent with policy CS15 of the adopted Local Development Framework's Core Strategy and the Ashford Transport Strategy.

Financial Implications: M20 Junction 9 and Drivers Roundabout are funded by Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) and Growth Area Funding (GAF3). Victoria Way is funded by Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF2)

Risk Assessment Full costed risk assessment have been carried out and maintained for both schemes.

Equalities Impact Assessment No

Exemption Clauses: No

Background Papers: No

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Report Title: Update report on:-

- i) Highway Improvements at M20 Junction 9, Drovers Roundabout and a new foot/cycle bridge over the M20**
- ii) Victoria Way**

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Members of the progress that has been made with the construction of these two major highway schemes that support Ashford's growth programme.

Issues to be Decided

2. None. This report is for Members' information.

Drovers Roundabout and M20J9 RIF Funded Projects

Drovers Roundabout

3. Construction is proceeding reasonably well but progress has been affected by the snow and freezing conditions in December, heavy rain in January and continuing wet weather into February. Although some lost time has been recovered by working at weekends, it has not been possible to bring the project back on programme without significantly increasing traffic congestion. Substantial completion of the works is now likely towards the end of April.

M20 Junction 9

4. The weather and remaining utility diversions has similarly affected progress on Junction 9. As with Drovers Roundabout substantial completion is likely towards the end of April but with the need for final works to remove the existing footway under the M20 in July when the new route over the new bridge is available.

Foot/Cycle Bridge

5. Progress on the construction of the new feature bridge is the main cause of concern. The design is complex and the detail is closely related to how the steel work is fabricated and the method of erection. Good progress is now being made on the concrete abutments either side of the M20. Fabrication of the steelwork is underway but some challenging detailed aspects have only recently been resolved. The programme is tight but every effort is being made to achieve erection over a weekend period before the end of May but the 7/8 May previously suggested to the Board is now unlikely.

6. Arrangements have been made to fully co-ordinate construction of the pathway leading the bridge on south side with works to extend Sainsbury's store and car park. These works will now be carried out at Sainsbury's cost to fit with their revised access arrangements that have recently been approved by the Borough Council.

Landscaping

7. To minimise the risk of the soft landscaping withering in the summer, it is likely that the bulk of the planting will be carried out in November.

Victoria Way CIF Funded Project

8. Utility diversions and future proofing works were a major cause of delay to progress last year and a programme of acceleration measures were introduced for the core roadworks to mitigate delay. Construction is proceeding reasonably well but progress has been affected by the snow and freezing conditions in December, heavy rain in January and continuing wet weather into February. Although some lost time has been recovered by working at night and at weekends it has not been possible to bring the project completely back on programme. Substantial completion of the core roadworks is now likely towards the middle of April.
9. Night time working for surfacing works the Brookfield Road/Leacon Road junction has helped to minimise traffic disruption. At Victoria Road extensive temporary traffic management is in place to support works to widen the carriageway and pavement works.
10. The major public realm works at John Wallis Square are likely to be substantially completed before the end of June.
11. The results of recent consultations over amendments to Traffic Regulation Orders are covered in a separate report on this agenda.

Portfolio Holder and Local Member Views

12. Updates on all Ashford's Future led projects and the Growth Area Funding programme are also regularly reviewed at Ashford's Future Company Board attended by Cllr Peter Wood, and at Ashford's Future Partnership Board meetings chaired by Councillor Paul Clokie.

Spend against Budget

13. Details of spend against budgets on the two schemes is regularly reviewed at Project Steering Groups and any implications on the overall programme for growth area funding programme are regularly reviewed at the Ashford's Future Company and Partnership Boards.
14. Approval has recently been given by the Departments for Transport (DfT) and Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) to vire funding between the two RIF funded projects together with some relaxation over the final claims period. The GAF3 funding support is not time limited and will cover expenditure into 2011/12.

15. Similarly the Homes and Communities Agency have indicated that some CIF2 spend related to Victoria Way can be claimed against some completed GAF3 projects which is not time limited. The freed up GAF3 together with cost reimbursement of some utility works will cover expenditure into 2011/12.

Conclusion

16. The Board is asked to note the progress made on these essential schemes that support Ashford's and Kent's growth programme.
17. The Project Managers for both of these schemes will be in attendance at the meeting and will be able to update members on traffic management implications and answer Members questions.

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Attachments:

None