

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION (SOCC) (Published under Section 47(6) of the Planning Act 2008)

M20 Junction 10a proposal

Highways England is publishing this Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC) for the proposed M20 Junction 10a scheme. The statement, prepared in accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act), explains how we will consult on the scheme with the local community, residents, businesses, organisations and visitors to the areas. It provides details of where further information can be viewed and how your comments on the proposals can be made.

The proposed scheme looks to construct an interchange junction 700 metres east of Junction 10 which will be called Junction 10a. It includes a new dual carriageway link road to the existing A2070 Southern Orbital Road (Bad Munstereifel Road) and a connection to the A20 Hythe Road.

The community consultation period will run for a period of nine weeks, from Thursday 14 January to 17 March 2016.

The Scheme

The scheme comprises of new junction 10a on the M20 and link road to the A2070 at Ashford in Kent. Ashford is a rapidly growing town in the heart of Kent and a major growth area for the south east, benefits from its close links to the UK road network and northern Europe. The M20 is a strategic national corridor and an international route that is used by large volumes of both heavy goods and holiday traffic. The proposed new junction aims to support local infrastructure needs as part of the future growth plans to the South of Ashford.

The proposed scheme objectives are to:

- Increase the capacity of the road network to support and allow the delivery of residential

and employment development either proposed or permitted within the Ashford growth area.

- Improve the safety of road users by alleviating congestion around the existing Junction 10 whilst creating the opportunity to enhance local transport facilities for non-motorised users.
- Provide a new route for traffic into Ashford via a new Junction (10a) and dual carriageway link road.
- Minimise the environmental impact and where possible allow enhancements to be made to the environment.
- Improve journey time reliability on the strategic road network.

Any negative impacts will be mitigated where possible. It is anticipated that the potential impacts of the scheme include; temporary disturbance to traffic flow relating to the M20 junction 10, noise and visual impacts, and general disturbance to non-road users across footbridges and pathways during construction. More information on all aspects of the scheme will be available at the upcoming consultation events and in the published consultation material.

The consenting process

The proposed scheme is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Act and we are required to make an application to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate (as the responsible agency) for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to construct the scheme. The Planning Inspectorate will examine the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who decides on whether the application should go ahead.

More information about the Planning Inspectorate, the Act, and how you can get involved in the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's national infrastructure planning website: <http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk> or by calling them on 0303 444 5000.

Under Section 47 of the Act, we are required to consult with the local community before submitting an application for a DCO so that you can have your say and help shape the scheme proposals. We are also required to consult with the relevant local authorities (Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council) about our consultation approach and have taken their comments into account in devising our consultation approach and drafting this SOCC.

Consultation with people living in the vicinity of a proposed development site is an important aspect of any NSIP and will help to deliver a better project outcome. Therefore comments made during the public consultation period will be recorded, and carefully considered by Highways England when further developing the proposals for the project.

Following the consultation period we will produce a consultation report to summarise the views and comments received, and outline how they have been taken into consideration in refining the scheme. We will send this report to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the DCO application which is planned for submission in the summer. The Planning Inspectorate will decide whether

our application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, and will determine whether our pre-application consultation has been adequate.

Environmental Information

The project requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2009 (as amended). An Environmental Statement (ES) will therefore be submitted as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application and, in accordance with Regulation 10, preliminary environmental information will be provided in the form of a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), which will form part of the consultation material. The PEIR will present environmental information that we have gained to date and explains how we plan to further assess the potential environmental effects of the project. The PEIR will indicate in general terms the potential mitigation measures that could be implemented in order to minimise negative impacts of the project, although these will be confirmed in the ES once the EIA work is complete. Mitigation measures identified as being required in the ES will be incorporated into the design of the project, for the construction and operation of the Scheme.

The community consultation process

Community consultation is a process by which the community, those people who are directly and indirectly affected by the scheme, are invited to participate and respond to the scheme proposals. All responses to the consultation process are recorded and carefully considered by Highways England, and will influence, where appropriate, further refinements to the proposals. A consultation questionnaire will accompany the consultation process.

Consultation on options

A community consultation exercise previously took place in 2008 between 13 June and 5 September on three options, a 'Proposed Option' and two

alternative options. The consultation found an overall preference for the proposed option. This option was subsequently announced as the preferred route in March 2010.

The Preferred Route

- To construct a new M20 Junction 10A, 700 metres south east of Junction 10. The new junction will include a roundabout over the motorway, new slip roads and a new link road to the A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road. Junction 10A will be partially signalised with two 3 lane bridges.
- The A20 Hythe Road would be incorporated in the new junction so that the traffic in both directions would travel via the new roundabout.
- A new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the M20 from Kingsford Street to the A20.
- The existing Highfield Lane Bridge and Church Road footbridge will be demolished.
- A new non-motorised user crossing at Church Road.
- The east facing slips at the existing Junction 10 will be removed.
- Scheme now includes minor improvements to Barrey Road A270 junction.

What we will consult on?

We will provide detailed information on the proposed preferred route on which we are seeking your views. Consultation materials will contain information on the proposed junction and link road layout and access arrangements, including design development since the preferred route announcement.

How can I find out more about the community consultation?

- Written communications - we'll be promoting the consultation through a door to door letter drop to 17,462 residents and businesses located within the scheme location to include the parishes of Mershan, Severington, Wye and Hinxhill.

We will be writing to stakeholder organisations and special interest groups. Additionally, we will be emailing those individuals who are registered on the scheme webpages to receive further communications.

- Visit scheme web pages at: www.highways.gov.uk/M20J10a. This will include copies of the consultation material, including the brochure, questionnaire, scheme layout plan, Preliminary Environmental Information Report, consultation event boards and this SoCC.
- Public exhibitions – a series of public exhibitions will be held between 14 January to 17 March 2016 where visitors will be able to view the scheme proposals and images, talk with the project team and complete a questionnaire. Details of the public exhibitions are listed below and will be advertised in the Ashford Herald, Kentish Express and Folkestone & Hythe Express on Thursday 31 December 2015 and Thursday 7 January 2016. This is available to review on the scheme website www.highways.gov.uk/m20j10a.
- Public viewing places - consultation materials can be viewed and collected at community locations. Details are listed below.
- Ashford Borough Council - we will be promoting the consultation in Root & Branch, Ashford Voice, Business News and on Ashford Borough Council's website.

How to respond to the consultation?

You can use one of the following methods to contact us and/or respond to the consultation:

- Attend a public consultation exhibition where you can meet the project team and complete a consultation questionnaire.
- Complete the consultation questionnaire online at: www.highways.gov.uk/M20J10a
- Attend a single day event at a community location.

- Collect a consultation questionnaire at one of the public viewing places and post it to; M20 Jct 10a, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ
- Email: M20-J10a@highwaysengland.co.uk
- Write to us at M20 Jct 10a, Highways England, Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, GU1 4LZ
- Call 0300 123 5000 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday).
- If you would like a representative at a local event please get in touch.

Details of public exhibitions

All consultation venue locations and dates have been identified based on accessibility for individuals, including a selection of weekend and evening venues, accessible entrances and clear signage.

The New Ashford Market (Amos Hall), Ashford TN24 0HB:

- Thursday 21 January, 12pm to 8pm
- Friday 22 January, 10am to 8pm
- Saturday 23 January 9.30am to 3.30pm

One day events:

ASDA, Kimberley Way, Ashford TN24 0SE:

- Wednesday 3 February, 11am to 3pm

Ashford Designer Outlet, Kimberley Way, Ashford TN24 0SD:

- Wednesday 10 February, 11am to 3pm

IMPORTANT: This SOCC relates only to the Highways England M20 Junction 10a scheme and is not a consultation exercise for any other developments in the Ashford area.

The deadline for all responses is 17 March 2016 at 23.59. In order to be considered, your views must be submitted on or before 17 March 2016.

Details of public viewing places

Consultation materials will also be available to view from Thursday 14 January 2016 until Thursday 17 March 2016 at the following community locations:

- **William Harvey Hospital** Kennington Road, Ashford TN24 0LZ
- **Willesborough Post Office** 65 Church Road, Ashford, TN24 0JZ
- **Mersham Stores and Post Office** 8 The Street, Ashford, TN25 6NA
- **Ashford Gateway Plus** Church Road, Ashford, TN23 1AS
- **Ashford Cattle Market** Orbital Park, Ashford, TN24 0HB
- **Ashford Borough Council Offices Civic Centre** Tannery Lane, Ashford, TN23 1PL
- **Willesborough Garden Centre** Hythe Road, Willesborough, Ashford, TN24 0NE
- **Brabourne Lees Village Shop and Post Office** Lees Road, Brabourne Lees, Ashford, TN25 6QE
- **Kent County Council** County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ

Please check opening times at the locations for access.

Copies of consultation materials may also be requested from Highways England using the details in the 'How to respond to the consultation?' section.. Paper copies will be provided free of charge.