

Longfield Road Improvement Scheme, North Farm, Tunbridge Wells

Newsletter 1
January 2014



What the Scheme Includes

- Widening of Longfield Road to a dual carriageway from the A21 to Dowding Way
- Changing Knights Park junction to a roundabout
- Changing Kings Standing Way junction from traffic signals to a roundabout
- Changing Great Lodge junction from traffic signals to a gyratory system
- Constructing a shared cycleway/footway along Longfield Road from the A21 to Dowding Way
- Installing signal controlled pedestrian/cycle crossing between Great Lodge and Kings Standing Way
- Low retaining walls along the frontages of BMW/Mini, Asda and Magnet/Hobbycraft/Oak Furniture Land
- Major diversions of utility company plant are required. This will have a significant impact on the scheme construction and is a key focus during the planning of the scheme

Highlights

- Scheme Designed
- Land Agreed
- Funding In Place
- Contractors Shortlisted
- Advance Tree and Vegetation Clearance starts 27th Jan for 4 to 5 weeks

Advance Tree and Vegetation Clearance

Some tree and shrub clearance works are required on parts of the route. It is necessary to carry out this work before the bird nesting season starts in March 2014. Work will start on 27th January for 4 to 5 weeks.

Road closures are not required but it will be necessary to employ traffic management measures to ensure public and workforce safety.

However, this traffic management will be kept to a minimum and restricted to off peak periods, with access maintained at all times.

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Our mailing address is:

NorthFarmMajorProject@kent.gov.uk

24 hour helpline: 03000 418181



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Programme

- 27th Jan to March 14 - Advance Tree and Vegetation Clearance
- Feb 2014 to June 2014 - New Public Utility Services Work
- June 2014 – Main Construction Starts
- May 2015 – Main Construction Finishes

New Public Utilities Work

KCC have published a Section 58 notice to protect the scheme from being dug up for five years after it is completed (other than for emergency works or new supplies). This means that the utility companies need to carry out any planned work before construction of the scheme starts in June 2014 or they will have to wait until 2020.

A number of the utility companies have indicated that they have work that needs to be carried out in Longfield Road. KCC is co-ordinating this work to ensure that it is carried out with minimum disruption and undertaken between Feb 2014 and June 2014 (before the main construction starts).

UKPN will be carrying out their work first and will start in February 2014. More details will follow in the next newsletter.

Constructing the Scheme

The first stage of the procurement of a contractor to construct the scheme is complete. Six contractors have been shortlisted and will be invited to submit a tender for the work in Feb 2014. A key selection criterion was experience of similar schemes requiring a high level of public and business community liaison.



Land

Many thanks go to the landowners and their retail tenants who have made this scheme possible by agreeing to dedicate the land required.

- Dandara – Knights Park
- New Look, Next, TKMaxx, Argos Extra
- Carpetright
- Big Yellow Storage
- Dixons, DFS, B&Q
- John Lewis
- BMW/Mini
- Magnet, Hobbycraft, Oak Furniture Land
- Asda

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The Impact

It is inevitable that the construction of the Longfield Road scheme will result in some disruption. Our aim is to minimise this disruption; our challenge is to achieve a balance between ensuring that all businesses are able to continue trading whilst allowing the scheme to be constructed efficiently.

In order to achieve this, certain requirements will be written into the construction contract e.g. working constraints during the key Christmas and January sales trading periods and the provision of dedicated public/business liaison and traffic control officers. KCC has already contacted businesses at North Farm to request details of opening hours, delivery periods and peak trading periods. This will help inform the traffic management obligations that we write into the construction contract.

Keeping You Informed

This is the first in a series of newsletters that we will issue during the coming months before construction starts. In this way we will endeavour to keep the community informed on progress made and key dates.

When the tenders are returned in April 2014 and a preferred contractor is identified, we intend to hold an event so that the proposed construction programme and phasing of the works can be shared with the North Farm community.

In the meantime, we invite you to the next liaison event on Tuesday 4th February 2014 at 11am-1pm at the Mercure Hotel, Pembury to discuss the construction of the scheme and any concerns you may have.

Please confirm your attendance by emailing Phil Greenin, Project Manager (Major Projects) at the following email address: NorthFarmMajorProject@kent.gov.uk

A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Dualling

KCC and the Highways Agency, HA, are liaising closely on the interface between the Longfield Road scheme and the A21 proposal to avoid any abortive work and unnecessary disruption.

The Public Inquiry for the HA's A21 scheme was held in the summer of 2013 and a decision from the Secretary of State for Transport is expected in February 2014.

If the Secretary of State confirms the Statutory Orders, the HA anticipate starting construction in Spring 2015 and completing in early 2017.

In the meantime, the HA have already invited tenders and have selected a preferred contractor.

KCC will continue to liaise with the HA to ensure that the construction programmes for the Longfield Road scheme and the A21 scheme are aligned to minimise disruption.

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