

A249 Bearsted Road Improvement Scheme



Newsletter 1

May 2019

Programme

Outline Design: Complete
Detailed Design: Complete
Procurement: April to July 2019
Contract award: July 2019
Public Engagement: July 2019
On site: Late 2019
Expected completion: Autumn 2020

Funding

Project cost: £11.4 million
Government funding: £9.4 million
Developer Contribution: £1.5 million
Maidstone Borough Council Contribution: £500,000

A Few Stats

Traffic data collected in March 2018 identified a daily average traffic flow of over 4,500 vehicles using the route in peak periods between M20 junction 7 towards the town Centre with an additional 50% using M20 junction 7 towards New Cut Road.

The Scheme

The A249 Bearsted Road is a key route to and from the county town. Anyone who regularly drives along this route will be aware that its inability to cope with the current level of traffic can cause significant congestion.

The proposed scheme aims to alleviate that congestion not only in the short-term but taking into account the anticipated increase in the traffic over the coming years.

The need for such an improvement scheme was initially identified in Maidstone Borough Council's local plan which feeds into Kent County Council's Local Transport Plan. Funding was secured as shown in the left-hand panel and outline design was undertaken in 2018. The proposals were then published, and events held where the project team spoke to various interested parties including local members, businesses, and the general public. As a result of those discussions further work was undertaken during the detailed design phase to take on board and develop the changes and amendments suggested. As such the timescales have been adjusted from what was previously advertised within the current programme as detailed in the left-hand panel.



Visualisation westward near Crematorium

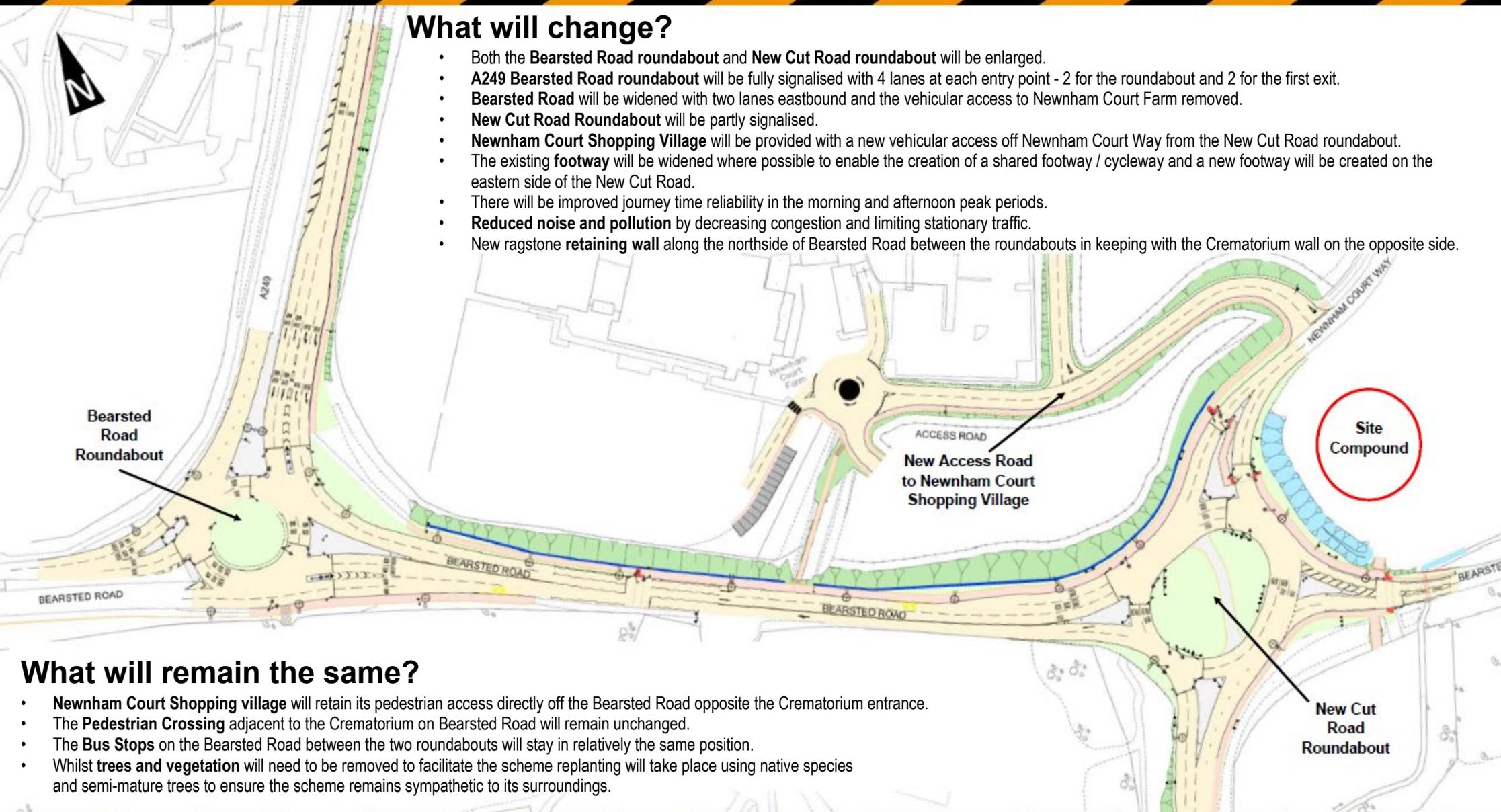


Bearsted Road eastbound towards roundabout

We are going out to tender this month and hope to award the contract in July. Our next newsletter will advertise more engagement events which will be arranged in July. At this stage we will be able to provide details on how the project will be delivered including timescales and traffic management.

What will change?

- Both the **Bearsted Road roundabout** and **New Cut Road roundabout** will be enlarged.
- **A249 Bearsted Road roundabout** will be fully signalised with 4 lanes at each entry point - 2 for the roundabout and 2 for the first exit.
- **Bearsted Road** will be widened with two lanes eastbound and the vehicular access to Newnham Court Farm removed.
- **New Cut Road Roundabout** will be partly signalised.
- **Newnham Court Shopping Village** will be provided with a new vehicular access off Newnham Court Way from the New Cut Road roundabout.
- The existing **footway** will be widened where possible to enable the creation of a shared footway / cycleway and a new footway will be created on the eastern side of the New Cut Road.
- There will be improved journey time reliability in the morning and afternoon peak periods.
- **Reduced noise and pollution** by decreasing congestion and limiting stationary traffic.
- New ragstone **retaining wall** along the northside of Bearsted Road between the roundabouts in keeping with the Crematorium wall on the opposite side.



What will remain the same?

- **Newnham Court Shopping village** will retain its pedestrian access directly off the Bearsted Road opposite the Crematorium entrance.
- The **Pedestrian Crossing** adjacent to the Crematorium on Bearsted Road will remain unchanged.
- The **Bus Stops** on the Bearsted Road between the two roundabouts will stay in relatively the same position.
- Whilst **trees and vegetation** will need to be removed to facilitate the scheme replanting will take place using native species and semi-mature trees to ensure the scheme remains sympathetic to its surroundings.

A249 Bearsted Road Improvement Scheme



Amendments following the 2018 public engagement

- The new pedestrian crossing at the New Cut Road end of the Bearsted Road will no longer be created owing to safety concerns. The constraints of the crematorium wall mean that a pavement on the southside of the Bearsted Road at that location is not an option. Instead we will be creating a pedestrian crossing at the eastern arm of the New Cut Road roundabout and extending the footway south on the eastern side of the New Cut Road to meet the existing one so that pedestrians who would otherwise currently have to cross to the westbound side have a continuous route to the New Cut Road / Bearsted Road roundabout.
- The dedicated lane for Bearsted on the Bearsted Road roundabout from Maidstone will be widened to two lanes separated from the two lanes for junction 7 by a splitter island. Splitter islands will also be added on the other two approaches to that roundabout so that there will always be a division between the two lanes going round the roundabout and those going straight on or left.
- Funding was not secured for the signalisation of M20 Junction 7 which we had hoped to deliver as part of this project. Further work is being undertaken on this and we will keep you updated on progress.

Keep In Touch

We are keen to keep you abreast of updates on the project. Once the project is on site, we will be communicating with the public on a day to day basis via our Twitter page [@A249BearstedRd](https://twitter.com/A249BearstedRd)

If you are less familiar with this method of communication, you will be able to view the same information on our webpage www.kent.gov.uk/bearstedroad which will contain a direct feed from Twitter.

We are also intending to send out regular newsletters to those on our e- mailing list. Please drop us a line if you would like to be added to the list at: bearstedroad.majorproject@kent.gov.uk

Once the contract has been awarded a dedicated Public Liaison Officer will be employed who will work out of our site offices so that any nearby residents / businesses can speak to someone in person about any concerns.

The more of the motoring public we can reach with these updates the more effective they will be in helping to alleviate congestion during the works so please help us by spreading the word and telling your friends, family and colleagues who may use this route



New Cut Road from Bearsted Road South

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Department for Transport