

EQIA Submission Section A

EQIA Title

A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme

Responsible Officer

Victoria Soames - GT TRA

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)

Tim Read - GT TRA

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

Project/Programme

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

Responsible Service

Transportation

Responsible Head of Service

Tim Read - GT TRA

Responsible Director

Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

The A229 Blue Bell Hill is a section of dual carriageway which runs between Junction 6 of the M20 in Maidstone and Junction 3 of the M2 at Blue Bell Hill village. It is a key link between the M20 and M2, and between Maidstone and Medway.

Road users often experience high volumes of traffic which result in significant congestion issues and concerns about road safety. These congestion issues are likely to be made worse by future housing developments in the surrounding area and the new Lower Thames Crossing, which will both generate additional traffic.

Improvements to Blue Bell Hill are therefore required to improve journey time reliability, reduce delays and improve road safety across this section of the road network.

Scheme objectives:

- To improve journey time reliability at M2 Junction 3 and M20 Junction 6 interchanges of the A229
- To reduce congestion along the route
- To enable the local area to develop in accordance with population and housing growth predicated under Local Plans
- To reduce the impact of additional traffic from the proposed Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) and allow LTC to maximise potential benefits it can provide for the Kent area
- To improve road safety and address known accident hotspots

- To make best use of existing assets including land and highways
- To provide suitable routes and facilities for public transport
- To provide safe and improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- To improve air quality
- To protect and enhance the local environment.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

We undertook a consultation in 2020 on the scheme options and have used the feedback generated to develop the preferred scheme. Consultees:

General public / road users

Local residents and businesses

AONB

National Highways

Maidstone Borough Council

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Medway Council

Local interest groups

Local Members of Parliament

Gravesham Borough Council

Local Parish Councils

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

No. The previous EqIA was dated August 2020.

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

Residents/communities/citizens

Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

Improved pedestrian and cycle facilities for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer's Responsibilities.

Better access to public transport with improved journey time reliability for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer Responsibilities.

More reliable journey times for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer's Responsibilities.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions
19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
Yes
Details of negative impacts for Age
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops.
There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating Actions for Age
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners.
Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised.
Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Victoria Soames
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
Yes
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Impacts during construction due to changes in normal routes for both vehicles and non-motorised users as well as relocation of public transport stops. Potential for delays due to traffic management impacting routes to medical appointments.
There may also be impacts from dust, noise and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Disability
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners.
Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to be designed to minimise disruption and avoid confusion. Any changes will be advertised.
Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Disability
Victoria Soames
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
Yes
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Possibility of delays for reaching local places of worship during the construction period.
Routes to reach local places of worship may change (depending on where travelling from/to) during the construction phase and once the scheme has been constructed.
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Construction phasing and traffic management to be planned to minimise disruption and delays. Changes in traffic management to be advertised.
Alternative routing during construction and once the scheme has been constructed will be advertised and clear temporary diversion signs used when needed.
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Victoria Soames
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Yes
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops.
There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners.
Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised.
Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Victoria Soames
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Yes
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops.
There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners.
Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised.
Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Victoria Soames