

FAQs Regarding the A249 Grovehurst Road Junction Improvements Scheme.

The A249 Grovehurst Road/Key Street scheme is being managed by the KCC Major Capital Programme Team and constructed by Jackson Civil Engineering. The improvement scheme will increase capacity on the road network, and provide the infrastructure needed before new housing planned on the A249 corridor from the junction with the M2 to the Isle of Sheppey is delivered.

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions about the project.

1. Why did the Grovehurst Road Junction Scheme start when the M2 J5 project is yet to be completed?

During the planning of these works, it was never the intention for the scheme to be delivered concurrently with the works being undertaken at Stockbury Roundabout /M2 Junction 5. We have already delayed the start of the Grovehurst Road Project by 12 months, whilst the main slip road closures required by M2J5 were in place. The Grovehurst Junction Improvement works, alongside the Key Street improvements, are funded by Homes England. The funding that has been made available for these works has an availability deadline attached to it. With the delays that have been incurred by National Highways in the delivery of their works and taking in to account the deadline for the Grovehurst funding, it has unfortunately meant that these works are now overlapping.

2. What are the measures taken to ensure the traffic congestion caused by the road works are mitigated?

National Highways are responsible for the Strategic Road Network (England's Motorways and Major Roads) which includes the M2 and A249. KCC as the Local Highway Authority are responsible for the remaining public roads. All traffic management for the scheme has been subject to review by both National Highways and KCC Streetworks Team, to ensure that safe working and construction works are able to happen, whilst reducing the impact on the travelling public as much as possible.

All Traffic Management and subsequent diversion routes are being monitored regularly and are subject to planned reviews to alleviate any issues that are identified.

3. Why is there a diversion route in Iwade? considering that the roads are designed with traffic calming measures, and motorists continue to use the small roads thereby causing congestion.

The diversion routes for the Grovehurst Road scheme are not via Iwade and diversion routes are clearly marked out for drivers. The details of these routes have been shared via the local press, through stakeholder engagement and social media. Whilst the official diversion route is not via Iwade, it is appreciated that motorists will often seek out the most appropriate and direct route for their own journey and may at times demonstrate inappropriate driving behaviour for the routes in question. We are monitoring the impact on Iwade and will review

to alleviate any issues that are identified. We have installed large temporary signs to reinforces that the Sheppey Way through Iwade is unsuitable for HGVs.

4. What provision is being put in place for residents who rely on travelling out of the Island for work and other activities as regards the lane closures?

All works are coordinated with ongoing and regular discussion through both KCC Streetworks Team and National Highways. All Traffic Management and subsequent diversion routes are being monitored regularly and are subject to planned reviews to alleviate any issues that are identified.

5. Will there be a dedicated bus route while the works are on ongoing?

There will not be a dedicated bus route as all existing bus routes remain open. There are currently no restrictions on traffic moving from Iwade across the Grovehurst Junction. There will be some TM on both Grovehurst Road North and South, which will be communicated when dates are confirmed.

6. Is it possible to re-establish the Kemsley Access Road from Eurolink to ease congestion?

Under review – response to follow.

7. Is it possible to consider working weekends or 24/7 to reduce the total completion time of the project?

It is not practical for the following reasons:

- Complying with the planning conditions relating to the Environmental Health requirements and site working hours. Noting the proximity of the neighbours to the site that would be disturbed with noise, vibration, and lighting pollution for a prolonged period.*
- Operations that are being undertaken such as excavations in high-risk areas also require daylight to undertake safely.*
- There are supply chain restrictions such as material production, facility planning constraints and labour availability which means that the shifts would be unproductive.*
- Some weekend and nighttime working will be required, for works being carried out on the A249 under road closures.*

8. Can a focused Business stakeholder group be established to discuss issues which may impact their business, providing a consultative role?

The Project Team are looking to create a business forum meant for business stakeholders who are affected by the works. Send an email to the project team at GrovehurstRoad@jackson-civils.co.uk to be a part of this forum.

9. Why was the Southbound lanes on the Sheppey Crossing reduced to one? This is causing gridlocks and greatly affecting residents of the Island.

The Southbound Lane on the Sheppey Crossing had been closed to comply with all appropriate design standards. This reflects the complexity of the arrangement of the existing slip roads and the constraints of the Sheppey Crossing. The traffic management in place provides safe working areas for construction, whilst maintaining the safety of the travelling public.

KCC and Jacksons are currently exploring safe departures from standards to mitigate the impact on travel times currently being caused by the TM across the Sheppey Crossing.

10. For how long will the traffic management on the Sheppey Crossing last?

Currently, the traffic management plan is to be in place until winter, 2024. However, if there are any changes that arise from reviewing the programme, or if a departure is secured, this will be communicated to stakeholders and the public.

11. Can the schedules of the works and planned traffic management be sent to stakeholders well in advance to allow them to plan their journeys?

Currently we are sending regular traffic management updates and any important information to stakeholders via email. Due to the nature of the scheme, our programme schedules are constantly under review and changes can occur at any time, hence it will not be possible to send out detailed work schedules. Advance notice of traffic management will be shared at the earliest opportunity. Please contact GrovehurstRoad@jackson-civils.co.uk to be added to our mailing list.

12. What are Jacksons doing about Air Pollution?

Jackson is playing their part in reducing air pollution by working within the requirements of the Considerate Constructors Scheme. However, Swale Borough Council is responsible for locating, monitoring, and helping to improve air quality in Swale. For more information please visit <https://swale.gov.uk/bins-littering-and-the-environment/air-quality> or contact Swale Borough Council on csc@swale.gov.uk or call 01795 417850

13. What is the plan for workforce recruitment as proposed in the social value plan?

Jackson will launch a targeted recruitment campaign in areas and communities surrounding the scheme, for locally required staff and operatives. As part of this, we will share opportunities via locally based recruitment platforms / agencies, including Compete For, The Kent Business Portal, Social Enterprise Kent, and JobCentre+.

Furthermore, we will use our internal recruitment team in assisting the project team in filling these important employment positions, and when we find a good fit, we will look to keep employees within the company, to be deployed on other / future Jackson projects within the Kent area.

14. Will there be special considerations for traffic during peak-hours in the morning when people are trying to get their children to school and also get to work, and the afternoon when school finishes and parents are trying to get their children home?

Traffic management will be limited to off peak- hours wherever practical, especially in the morning peak. However, to ensure safe construction of the works there may be times where this is not possible. We will advise of new traffic management arrangements and lane closures in advance of the works.

If you have further questions about the scheme, please contact us via email at GrovehurstRoad@jackson-civils.co.uk and your enquiries will be responded to.