

BERA November News

Work starts on A127 junction improvement schemes
Wednesday 9th November 2016

Work starts this month on a series of junction improvements along the A127 that will help manage traffic better along the main route into and out of the Borough.

These projects – which will see a major upgrade of the Kent Elms junction as well as minor changes to junctions on Victoria Avenue - have been made possible through central government funding, namely the Government's Local Growth Fund (LGF) which the Council bid for on a competitive basis through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP). As a condition of the funding the main highways works in both projects must be delivered by Spring next year.

Victoria Avenue Junction improvements

From 21st November, the Council's highways contractor, Eurovia, is scheduled to start a package of small junction improvements along Victoria Avenue by first extending the right-turn lane from Victoria Avenue into East Street. This is aimed at improving the flow of traffic out of the Town Centre.

The Council will then create new right-turn lanes from nearby Carnarvon Road and Great Eastern Avenue onto Victoria Avenue. The right turn from Great Eastern Avenue will facilitate the future expansion of the car park next to the Beecroft Gallery (former library car park), whilst the right turn from Carnarvon Road onto Victoria Avenue will help address issues of motorists rat-running through side streets between Carnarvon Road and East Street in advance of the completion of the new residential development on the site of the old college.

The improvements to junctions along Victoria Avenue are funded through £1m of LGF and will be completed by March 2017.

Kent Elms Junction improvement

Starting on 21st November, work will begin on widening the Kent Elms junction of the A127. This much larger project involves installing additional lanes on both inbound and outbound carriageways, replacing the footbridge and introducing attractive new landscaping.

The £6.5m project aims to improve the traffic flow across this key junction into and out of the town and make it easier for disabled people and those with pushchairs to cross the highway. A new surface-level pedestrian crossing will also be introduced across the A127 to the east of the junction near Mendip Crescent. There will also be a new pedestrian crossing in Rayleigh Road, at the junction. These will be timed to coincide with the main traffic light sequence. The pedestrian crossing next to the Kent Elms surgery, which opened in December 2015, will be retained and slightly modified.

Work will continue through to May 2017. The majority of the funding for the Kent Elms junction improvement (£5.1m) is the LGF, with the remainder coming from the Council's Capital budget.

The contractor, Eurovia, will be carrying out the Kent Elms scheme after being selected in a competitive tendering exercise. They will also be carrying out the Victoria Avenue junction improvements as the Council's term contractor.

The Council and Eurovia will be keeping disruption to motorists and neighbours to a minimum throughout these projects. There are no planned lane closures during peak commuting hours or at weekends.

Keeping you informed

Indicative timeline of activity

Mid November 2016 – Work starts on extending the right-turn lane from Victoria Avenue to East Street.

Mid-November – Work starts on Kent Elms junction upgrade.

Late-November – removal of existing footbridge at Kent Elms junction, with temporary modified surface crossing arrangements in place

Early December – Work completes on extending right-turn lane from Victoria Avenue to East Street

January 2017 – Work starts on creating a right-turn lane from Great Eastern Avenue and Carnarvon Road to Victoria Avenue

March 2017 – Work completes on creating a right-turn lane from Great Eastern Avenue and Carnarvon Road to Victoria Avenue

May 2017 – Highways work completes on Kent Elms upgrade