

£3.2million windfall for Tesco junction scheme

6:10am Monday 16th December 2013 in [News](#)



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ONE of the busiest junctions on the [A127](#) is to undergo a £4.75 million revamp next year after the Government pledged to foot most of the bill.

The Tesco roundabout revamp, at the junction of Nestuda Way, will include more lanes, traffic lights and six months of traffic delays.

Work will start in July. Southend Council says changes were needed to provide for growth as [Southend Airport](#) attracts more business to the town.

Council leader [Nigel Holdcroft](#) said: “This is excellent news and demonstrates strong support for our plans to remove bottlenecks on the A127.

“Improving access into Southend will create jobs and boost the local economy.”

Transport officers are yet to finalise plans for the roundabout, but the draft includes more lanes and “smart” traffic lights that can sense how much traffic is waiting, similar to Cuckoo Corner.

The Southend-bound carriageway of the A127 may be widened from two to four lanes and right turning lanes may be added to Nestuda Way and Thanet Grange, which leads to Tesco and RBS, to stop waiting vehicles blocking others.

The Government will pay £3.2million towards the scheme, due to be completed by March 2015, with the rest coming from council coffers.

The council hopes the scheme will support the creation of 7,000 jobs and the construction of 1,785 houses by 2021. Most jobs are earmarked for a new Airport Business Park, off Cherry Orchard Way, which is reached from Nestuda Way.

The council has asked for more cash to redevelop the Kent Elms and Bell junctions of the A127 and expects to hear back next July. Any work would start after the Tesco Roundabout is finished.

Tony Cox, councillor responsible for transport, said: “We gave a commitment to reduce congestion at the junctions on the A127 following the improvements at both Cuckoo Corner and Progress Road, which were delivered on budget and on time.

“Improving the Tesco roundabout junction will not only ease congestion and improve traffic flow, it will also offer a major boost to encouraging economic growth at the proposed Airport Business Park.

“We are also actively making the case for further investment to secure improvements at Kent Elms Corner and the Bell.

“The improvement at the Tesco roundabout is an important further step towards completing all five junctions and represents strong government support for our plans.”