

COMMITTEE:	CABINET	
DATE:	1 AUGUST 2002	
SUBJECT:	SEASIDE ROAD HERITAGE ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCHEME (HERS) - PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED STREET IMPROVEMENT AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SCHEME FOR SEASIDE ROAD	
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, REGENERATION AND AMENITIES	
Ward(s):	Devonshire	
Purpose:	To inform members about the draft designs for the Seaside Road street improvements and to seek members' approval to take the draft scheme out to formal public consultation.	
Contact:	Jane Stephen, Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor, Telephone 01323 415253 or internally on extension 5253.	
Recommendations:	That the draft street improvement scheme for Seaside Road, as detailed in Appendix 1, be taken out to public consultation in October 2002.	
1.0	<u>Background</u>	
1.1	Seaside Road is in the Town Centre and Seafront Conservation Area. It has been a major focus of the Council's regeneration activity for the past few years. A significant number of eyesore buildings on Seaside Road have now been renovated, with the help of Council grant funding. However, the quality of the public space in Seaside Road remains poor, and this reflects negatively on the restored buildings. The Seaside Road Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) was launched in July 2001. In addition to offering grants for the renovation of historic buildings, English Heritage have agreed to part of the HERS funding being spent on environmental improvements in Seaside Road.	

1.2	Seaside Road is a very busy main road (the A259). The street is often badly congested with cars and lorries. The tall buildings to either side of the street, the large number of vehicles parked on-street, and the narrow pavements, all seem to emphasise the feeling of congestion. Because of the high volume of traffic, and lack of safe pedestrian crossing points, pedestrian movement in the area is severely restricted. The street is also poorly lit at night, reducing its potential for evening use. The traffic congestion and generally poor pedestrian environment make the street less attractive to visitors. In recognition of these problems, a proposal to carry out pedestrian improvements to Seaside Road is included in the current Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the period 2001-2006.	
2.0	<u>Main elements of the Seaside Road street improvement scheme</u>	
2.1	In environmental improvement terms, the funding available for a scheme in Seaside Road is likely to be relatively modest (see Section 4, below). It has therefore been decided that, to ensure a scheme of acceptable quality and to achieve a significant impact, it will be necessary to concentrate most of the improvements over part of Seaside Road only.	
2.2	It is proposed that the majority of the improvement works will be concentrated in the west end of Seaside Road (between Terminus Road and Cavendish Place). This is the most congested end of the street. It is also the end that is nearest to the town centre, and it is hoped that pedestrian improvements in the part of the street, directly adjacent to the existing pedestrianised area of the town centre, could encourage more people to venture down Seaside Road. This part of the scheme between Terminus Road and Cavendish Place is called "Part 1".	
2.3	More modest works are being proposed for the part of Seaside Road between Cavendish Place and Bourne Street, but these "Part 2" works will only go ahead if funding becomes available.	
2.4	A plan showing the location of the areas to be included in the street improvement scheme is shown in Appendix 1 to this document.	
2.5	The draft designs for the street improvement scheme aim to create a more attractive and safe environment for pedestrians in Seaside Road. The proposed scheme will be based on the use of high quality materials, and will aim to achieve a co-ordinated appearance for the street. This should result in a scheme which is sensitive to the historic environment of the conservation area.	
2.6	<p>The main changes being proposed for the part of Seaside Road between Terminus Road and Cavendish Place (Part 1) are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a one-way traffic flow, in an easterly direction, from Terminus Road to Cavendish Place, with the aim of reducing the volume of traffic on the street, - two additional pedestrian crossing points to be provided along the street, - the traffic lights at the junction of Cavendish Place and Seaside Road will have a pedestrian phase on each of the four arms, - a large brick-paved build-out is proposed on the north (sunny) side of the street, along the stretch between 38 Seaside Road and The Manhattan, providing an opportunity to place chairs and tables, planters etc. 	

2.7	<p>If funding is available, the changes to the eastern end of Seaside Road (the area between Cavendish Place and Bourne Street - Part 2) could include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a coach bay for the Hippodrome Theatre, - a pedestrian refuge, in front of the Hippodrome Theatre, to provide a safer crossing point for patrons, - the closing off of the streets to either side of the property at 113-135 Seaside Road (Queens Gardens and Colonnade Road respectively) to create a further opportunity to provide a pedestrian space for chairs and tables etc (similar to the area recently created at the junction of Ivy Terrace with Gildredge Road, Eastbourne). 	
2.8	<p>A large-scale plan showing the detail of the main proposed works to Seaside Road will be available for members to view at the meeting.</p>	
3.0	<p>Time scale for implementing the street improvement scheme</p>	
3.1	<p>The HERS funding for the street improvement scheme is time-limited, and must be spent by the end of the HERS project in March 2004. It is therefore proposed that the Seaside Road street improvements should be implemented in the winter of 2003/4.</p>	
3.2	<p>It is proposed that the draft scheme should go out to public consultation in October 2002. The overall timetable proposed for the scheme is shown in Appendix 2.</p>	
3.3	<p>In addition to the Seaside Road works, improvement schemes are also being proposed for Terminus Road (the section between Seaside Road and Grand Parade) and for the area around Eastbourne Pier. Both of these schemes are identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and will be funded by the County Council. It is proposed to co-ordinate these schemes with the works to Seaside Road. Accordingly, all three schemes will follow a similar design theme, and the public consultation and implementation of the works will be co-ordinated, in order to achieve economies of scale, and minimise the disruption caused to local residents and businesses.</p> <p>-</p>	
4.0	<p><u>Funding the scheme</u></p>	
4.1	<p>It is proposed that the funding available under the Seaside Road HERS and the Local Transport Plan (LTP) will be combined to pay for the proposed street improvement and traffic management scheme for Seaside Road.</p>	

4.2	A total of £90,000 has been allocated towards the Seaside Road street improvement scheme from the Seaside Road HERS budget. This HERS contribution will be jointly funded by EBC, English Heritage and East Sussex County Council (Built Environment Fund). A further £5,000 has been made available for the scheme from the County Council's contribution to the Conservation Area Partnership Scheme (CAPs) for the Seaside Road area.	
4.3	The initial LTP bid for the works to Seaside Road was for £55,000. However, some of the cost estimates received to carry out the proposed improvement work have been quite high. For example, the initial cost estimates for the proposed pedestrian phase on the traffic lights at the corner of Cavendish Place and Seaside Road is £42,500. Therefore, the bid to the County Council for LTP funding has now been increased by a further £95,000 to a total of £150,000. The County Council has now provisionally agreed to fund the additional cost of the works.	
4.4	<p>Early budget forecasts indicate that the comprehensive improvement scheme, as currently proposed, could cost in the region of £350,000. Even allowing for the increased contribution from the County Council, there could still be a budget shortfall. In order to ensure that the cost of the scheme is kept to an acceptable level, the following approach is being advocated :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - officers will seek to secure further external funding contributions towards the scheme through the LTP process, - economies of scale will be sought, through combining the proposed works in Seaside Road with the planned street improvement works in adjacent roads. - the scheme will be designed in such a way that it comprises of free-standing elements that can be either "bolted on" or left out, depending on the availability of funding. - Cost savings will be sought in the specification of materials and street furniture, though not at the expense of good quality and design. 	
4.5	The final agreed scheme will have to be implemented within the finances available. The funding situation will be clearer once cost estimates are firmed up, following any changes that come about after public consultation, and once the external funding situation has been formally agreed. A full financial analysis of the scheme will be brought back to Cabinet for approval, prior to the final scheme going out to tender in 2003.	
4.6	When the scheme goes out to consultation, in October 2002, the public will be made aware that the proposals are aspirational, and that the ability of the Council to implement the full scheme will be dependent on it securing additional external finance for the project, and/or achieving cost savings on the scheme.	
5.0	<u>Consultations</u>	

5.1	<p>In March 2002, local traders and residents in Seaside Road were consulted about what they saw as the current problems in the area and what they would like to see improved. A questionnaire was door dropped to addresses in the area and a public advice surgery was held at T.J.Hughes. The main issues to come out of the preliminary consultation were :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problems of access for deliveries to businesses - Problems with high traffic volumes and congestion - Need for more pedestrian crossing points - Lack of availability of on-street parking and lack of enforcement of existing parking restrictions. - Need for improved lighting, - Need for better quality pavements - The need for more litter bins. <p>In drawing up these draft designs, officers have tried to take the views expressed by the local community into account.</p>	
5.2	<p>English Heritage and East Sussex County Council have both been informally consulted about the proposals, and have both given their broad support to the main principles of the scheme. It is proposed that these bodies should now be formally consulted on the details of the draft scheme, at the same time that it goes out to public consultation.</p>	
5.3	<p>It is proposed that the draft proposals should go out to public consultation in October 2002. The consultation period will be for three weeks. In order to give local people an opportunity to view the plans and make comments, it is proposed to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - advertise the public consultation opportunity in the local paper, - door drop all addresses immediately affected by the scheme, - put up posters in shop windows on Seaside Road advertising the consultation on the scheme, - hold a public surgery on the scheme, where officers will be available to explain the proposals and to answer any questions, - provide an opportunity for members of the public to view the draft plans at the Council's offices. <p>Members of the public will be asked to write in to the Council with their views, or to attend the advice surgery, if they wish to comment.</p>	

6.0	<u>The Seaside Road parking strategy</u>	
6.1	<p>Parking problems were one of the key issues identified by local residents and traders in responses given to a recent questionnaire about how they would like to see Seaside Road improved. Those who attended the public advice surgery on the street improvements also identified parking and delivery issues as a high priority. Car parking provision for all users of the street, and delivery arrangements for local businesses, are key issues to be addressed in the new designs for the street. The street improvement proposals provide an opportunity to change the parking situation on Seaside Road for the better and we need to plan to achieve this change.</p>	
6.2	<p>The Council is proposing to introduce decriminalised parking enforcement throughout Eastbourne before the end of 2004. This will mean that the Council will have control of the enforcement of on-street parking restrictions. The Council will use its new powers to enforce parking restrictions more vigorously, and to encourage a better availability of parking spaces for what are considered to be priority users. Decriminalisation will be used to ensure that parking spaces are available for potential shoppers/customers and tourists, with the resultant economic benefits. Priority will also be given to residents, to enable them to park near their home, within residential areas. Under the new decriminalised parking regime it is proposed that the central area of the town will be divided into parking zones. Seaside Road is in the proposed Central Parking Zone, covering the town centre and adjacent streets. A number of working groups have been set up to discuss how the proposals will operate, and these will meet from August 2002 onwards. The proposals for the decriminalisation of parking will then go out to full public consultation towards the end of 2002.</p>	
6.3	<p>The successful operation of the parking regime on Seaside Road will rely on the introduction of decriminalised car parking to the town centre zone. A draft parking strategy has been produced for Seaside Road, to illustrate how parking opportunities for customers and loading/unloading facilities for local businesses can potentially be improved by the introduction of decriminalised parking (See the parking strategy in Appendix 3).</p>	
7.0	<u>Human Resource Implications</u>	
7.1	<p>The Seaside Road street improvement scheme will be project managed by the Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor, as part of her normal role. However, the Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor is subject to a 3-year contract, which ends in March 2004. The last year of that contract, 2003-2004, is currently only funded for a part-time post (18.5 hours per week). The management of this project is dependant on the post being made full-time. This growth bid will be the subject of a separate report on the funding of the Conservation Service.</p>	
7.2	<p>The Council's Highways Section will also provide technical support to the scheme.</p>	

8.0	<u>Environmental Implications</u>		
8.1	The proposed street improvement and traffic management scheme should significantly improve the quality of the street environment of Seaside Road and provide an appropriate setting for the historic buildings in the area.		
9.0	<u>Financial Implications</u>		
9.1	As indicated in section 4, above, it is hoped that at least £245,000 of funding will be made available to implement this scheme. The Council contribution to street improvements will be £30,000. This funding comes from the existing Seaside Road Street Improvements budget, which will contribute £10,000 annually for the years 2001-2004. The rest of the finance required will be externally funded from East Sussex County Council and English Heritage. This leaves a shortfall for the current scheme, as detailed below.		
		Cost	Funding secured
	Cost of scheme (Parts 1 and Part 2)	£350,000	
	EBC contribution (HERS)		£30,000
	English Heritage (HERS)		£45,000
	ESCC (Built Environment Fund)		£15,000
	LTP		£150,000
	TOTALS	£350,000	£240,000
	Potential shortfall	£110,000	
	LTP bid for extra funding		£110,000
			(not secured)

9.2	Negotiations are continuing with East Sussex County Council regarding the level of their financial contribution to this scheme.	
10.0	<u>Youth Implications</u>	
10.1	None.	
11.0	<u>Anti-Poverty Implications</u>	
11.1	None.	
12.0	<u>Community Safety Implications</u>	
12.1	The proposed new street lighting will provide a higher level of illumination and a more even spread of lighting across the street. Improved levels of lighting should reduce the fear of crime for people using the area at night.	
12.2	Security improvements are proposed for the pedestrian alleyway between Seaside Road and Elms Avenue, as part of the street improvement scheme. This should reduce the opportunities for crime in this area. —	
13.0	<u>Human Rights Implications</u>	
13.1	None.	
14.0	<u>Conclusion</u>	
14.1	Funds have been identified to carry out an environmental improvement and traffic management scheme for Seaside Road in 2003/4. Draft designs for a scheme have been produced and it is now proposed to take this draft scheme out to public consultation in October 2002.	

Jane Stephen		
Assistant Historic Buildings Advisor		
Background Papers:		
<p>The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Seaside Road Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme (HERS) Implementation Programme, dated April 2001. b) Eastbourne Local Transport Plan 2001-2006. c) Seaside Road Regeneration Strategy. Approved by Cabinet in July 2000. <p>To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.</p>		