

Report to	<b>Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment</b>
Date	<b>5 December 2005</b>
Report By	<b>Director of Transport and Environment</b>
Title of Report	<b>Lewes – Phoenix Causeway Roundabout</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To seek deferment of design work of the Lewes, Phoenix Causeway roundabout scheme</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**To defer work on the design and subsequent construction of a roundabout on Phoenix Causeway pending the outcome of proposals to redevelop the Phoenix Quarter.**

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### **1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 The planned slippage in design work on this scheme will not result in any under-spend in the current year. The deferment of this scheme will allow design work on other schemes in 2005/06 to be advanced slightly more quickly than originally planned. This will create capacity in the 2006/07 programme, which will allow work on this scheme or on any other such scheme that emerges from discussions be “slotted in”.

### **2. Supporting Information**

2.1 Work has been undertaken on the design of a roundabout junction on Phoenix Causeway Lewes as part of the Lewes Gateway Scheme. It had been intended to complete this design work in the current (2005/06) financial year with a view to implementing the scheme in 2006/07. This was included in the programme approved by the Lead Member on 11 November 2002.

2.2 The design of this three-arm roundabout junction has incorporated provision for a possible fourth arm to be added at a later date were the land to the north of the junction ever to be redeveloped.

2.3 Since work on this design began, a developer has come forward with a proposal for a major redevelopment of this land (known as the Phoenix Quarter) and an associated development in the Malling Brooks area. A planning application is likely to be submitted early in 2006.

### **3. Comments/Appraisal**

3.1 From preliminary discussions between the developer, Lewes District Council planning authority and the highway authority, it has become clear that this is a very large development package which would have a significant impact on traffic, walking, cycling and parking across a substantial part of the town centre. The proposals could create positive opportunities that would further the achievement of the County Council’s transport strategy objectives for the town.

3.2 It had been planned to build a transport model for Lewes in 2006/07 to assist in the development of transport proposals in the town. The prospective developer of the Phoenix

Quarter has agreed to contribute to the cost of this model. The model would be of considerable value in developing transport proposals for the town and the developer's contribution will allow work on the model to be brought forward so that it is available in time to assist in the assessment of the impact of the development.

3.3 Until specific proposals have been firmed up and the impacts and opportunities assessed it is premature to comment on the net implications of the scheme on transport in Lewes. However, it is clear that, in principle, there could be significant benefits in integrating the design of transport infrastructure in the Eastgate area with the design of the development. In particular, this could achieve better integration between the development and the existing town centre.

3.4 On the other hand, if work on the design of a free standing roundabout is deferred and if the development does not come to fruition, the timetable for construction would be set back, probably until 2007/08.

#### **4. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

4.1 Formal authority is not normally sought to make minor amendments to the detailed programme of schemes which is approved annually. However, in this case given the local profile of this scheme and its influence on the development strategy I feel it appropriate to recommend a formal deferral of the programmed work.

4.2 I consider that, on balance, the potential benefits of being able to integrate the design of the transport infrastructure with the design of the major new development and inform the local strategy through a local transport model, justify the risk that the efforts in that direction might prove to be abortive and the implementation of a free-standing roundabout would be delayed if the development does not come to fruition.

BOB WILKINS

Director of Transport and Environment

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Local Member(s): Councillor O'Keeffe and Councillor St Pierre

#### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.