

**Report to:** Lead Member for Transport and Environment

**Date of meeting:** 19 July 2021

**By:** Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

**Title:** Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme Phase 2a (Terminus Road: Bankers Corner to Langney Road)

**Purpose:** To consider the final design of the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme Phase 2a ahead of advertisement of the associated Traffic Regulation Orders and construction

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The Lead Member is recommended to:

- (1) approve the final detailed design for the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme Phase 2a, as set out in Appendix 2;**
  - (2) approve the construction of the scheme in accordance with the final detailed design;**
  - (3) delegate authority to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport, in consultation with the Lead Member, to make any necessary minor amendments to the scheme; and**
  - (4) approve the publication of the associated Traffic Regulation Orders.**
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## **1 Background Information**

1.1 Through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), East Sussex County Council secured £8m of Local Growth Fund (LGF) monies towards an Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package. £5m of the LGF monies was allocated towards the delivery of the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme (Phase 1) which focussed on the section of Terminus Road between Station Road and Bankers Corner, Cornfield Road and Gildredge Road, and supported the investment made in extending The Beacon (formerly Arndale) shopping centre. Phase 1 was completed in January 2020.

1.2 In February 2019 and following the submission and approval of a business case to the SELEP's Accountability Board, the remaining £3m was allocated towards a second phase of the Eastbourne Town Centre Movement & Access Package focussed on the section of Terminus Road between Bankers Corner (junction of Terminus Road with Cornfield Road) and the junction with Langney Road. This funding is required to be spent by March 2023.

1.3 Throughout 2018 and 2019, East Sussex County Council and Eastbourne Borough Council carried out extensive citizen-led engagement with key stakeholders from a wide variety of business, transport, sustainable travel, youth participation and disability involvement groups in Eastbourne Town Centre. This engagement helped to inform not only the high-level concept designs for Phase 2a, but also a wider masterplan of prioritised options for future movement and access schemes within the Town Centre.

1.4 With the objectives of improving pedestrian safety and accessibility, helping the vitality of the town centre retail environment, modernising the public realm and promoting health and sustainable travel, Phase 2a seeks to:

- upgrade the existing Terminus Road pedestrianised area from Bankers Corner through to its junction with Langney Road; and

- introduce a new pedestrianised section of Terminus Road, thereby creating a civic space outside Marks & Spencer. This would result in the removal of the current one-way traffic movement from Bolton Road, through a short section of Terminus Road and into Langney Road, and the introduction of a two-way traffic configuration at the lower ends of both Bolton Road and Langney Road.

1.5 A plan showing the extent of Phase 2a within Eastbourne Town Centre is at Appendix 1.

1.6 Public consultation on the Phase 2a preliminary design proposals were held during November and December 2019. The outcomes of the consultation were reported to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment at their decision-making meeting on 22 April 2020 and it was resolved that the consultation report be published and the Phase 2a scheme progress to detailed design and construction.

## **2 Supporting Information**

2.1 Following the Lead Member's decision in April 2020, the detailed design for Phase 2a has been progressed and influenced in several ways throughout. The final scheme design is at Appendix 2.

### Stakeholder Engagement

2.2 A critical element of the development of Phase 2a detailed design has been the continued engagement with Eastbourne town centre stakeholders. Workshops held in September and October 2020 and February 2021 have iteratively helped shape the final design, materials and street furniture for Phase 2a. This approach has ensured that the original objectives of the business case have been adhered to, and the positive citizen-led engagement approach that underpinned the development of the scheme from its early stages, has continued throughout.

### Access Audit and Design considerations

2.3 The County Council commissioned the services of an access audit consultant in December 2020 following feedback during the design workshops by disability groups who raised some of the challenges experienced in Phase 1. The consultant assessed the preferred design option and provided advice to the Phase 2a project team in relation to BS8300 standards for the design of an accessible and inclusive built environment.

2.4 The access assessment identified areas where the design had the potential to impact upon groups with protected characteristics. In light of the assessment, positive action has been taken with the following changes made to the final detailed design whilst retaining the objectives of the scheme:

- Redesigning the tonal contrast of materials and street furniture to provide sufficient Light Reflective Value contrast in accordance with BS8300;
- Removal of non-essential street furniture i.e. exhibition boards;
- Providing bench seating that offers a range of seat heights and arm and back supports;
- Relocation of cycle parking to the entry points to the pedestrianised area in line with the proposed restriction on cycling through Terminus Road with a proposal to include a tapping rail in each set of cycle racks to provide cane tapping warning;
- Ensuring drainage channels will be flush with surrounding paving;
- Ensuring selected planters are at least 75cm high and hence easily detectable with a cane. The chosen RAL colour will also have adequate visual contrast against its background; and
- Ensuring the lighting design will be compliant with BS 5489-1 which requires 40% uniformity.

## Blue Badge Parking

2.5 Overall the level of blue badge parking in the town has increased with the extension of the multi-storey parking at The Beacon Shopping Centre. However, because of the restricted entry height into the car park, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) are not able to utilise these additional spaces. Therefore, WAVs have to use on-street parking/surface car parks in the town.

2.6 At present, space exists for 18 blue badge vehicles in Bolton Road, Langney Road and the section of Terminus Road outside the southern entrance to The Beacon between the two roads. With the pedestrianisation of this section of Terminus Road and conversion of the remaining sections of Bolton Road and Langney Road from one-way to two-way, there will be an overall loss of 9 blue badge parking spaces in the area.

2.7 Blue badge, loading bays and the supply of taxi bays has been recognised as essential in continuing to provide access for those with physical and hidden disabilities who do not own a vehicle or cannot use public transport to this section of the town centre. Consequently, we have prioritised their provision at the expense of pay and display parking with 4 x 6.6m blue badge bays to be provided in Bolton Road and 5 x 6.6m bays in Langney Road.

2.8 To offset the loss, alternative locations for blue badge parking in and around the town centre have been identified in discussion with members of local disability groups. These will include 4 spaces in Lismore Road (former on road 'Doctors' allocated spaces for the former Bolton Road surgery) and the potential to utilise 4 spaces in Tideswell Road (to the rear of Marks & Spencer). It has been proposed that these spaces are incorporated into a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which will be advertised later this summer; any unresolved objections that are received to the TRO will need to be reported to the County Council's Planning Committee for their consideration in the autumn.

2.9 In addition, discussions have been held with officers at Eastbourne Borough Council on the Borough Council also providing compensatory spaces to help offset the loss in blue badge parking, specifically in the central area of Hyde Gardens. The provision of spaces across these various locations in the town centre will, subject to the necessary statutory processes, mean that there will be no net loss of blue badge spaces as a result of the Phase 2a scheme.

## Equalities Impacts Assessment

2.10 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out for Phase 2a in conjunction with the public consultation in 2019. An updated version of the assessment has also been undertaken as part of the detailed design stage of the programme is attached at Appendix 3. A further review of the EqIA will take place during the construction stage of the programme.

2.11 2011 Census data and updated baseline equalities data from October 2020<sup>i</sup> shows that by 2032 the combined total figures for people in Eastbourne who have a limited long-term illness and disability is projected to reach 51,038. In addition, young (16-29) and older people (65+) are potentially more sensitive to the changes proposed for Terminus Road, Bolton Road and Langney Road because of the impact on taxi services, safety and footways. Community safety is an important priority for everyone, but we are aware that some women and transgender people may feel particularly vulnerable to crime and anti-social behaviour. By carrying out an EqIA and seeking feedback from stakeholder groups, potential impacts have been identified and all potential actions to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination and foster good relationships have been documented.

## Extent of pedestrianisation on Bolton Road

2.12 An ePetition was started on 24 March 2021 calling on the County Council to revise plans for Phase 2a, specifically in relation to the closure of Bolton Road being located further up, to allow businesses in the vicinity the opportunity to promote alfresco dining in the street. 61 people signed the ePetition which closed 14 May 2021.

2.13 The current final design shows the extent of the pedestrianised area in Bolton Road. The pedestrianised area will be in place between 10am and 6pm, during which time access will be restricted by bollards, overseen by the Eastbourne Town Centre Management team, at the Bolton Road and Langney Road extents of the area, with access for loading/unloading available outside those times. Careful consideration has been given to the extent of the pedestrianised area whilst also ensuring access is maintained to private parking areas off Bolton Road, ensuring any turning movements can be made safely, as well as maximising the opportunity to provide blue badge, loading and taxi bays in the area.

#### Traffic Regulation Orders and Construction Timescales

2.14 Proposed changes will need to be made to the existing Traffic Regulations Orders (TROs) in the area in support of the scheme which will be advertised later in the summer. These include the extension of the existing Terminus Road Pedestrian Zone from Bankers Corner to Trinity Trees, with cycling prohibited within the Pedestrian Zone. In addition, the proposals to change the existing one way sections of Bolton Road and Langney Road to two way will be advertised, alongside the relocated blue badge, taxi and loading parking provision in these roads and the additional proposed on street blue badge parking in the town centre. As highlighted in section 2.9, any unresolved objections will need to be presented to the County Council's Planning Committee for their consideration.

2.15 Construction is currently planned to begin in March 2022 and last for approximately one year.

### **3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

3.1 Phase 2a of the Eastbourne Town Centre Movement and Access Package focuses on the section of Terminus Road between Bankers Corner and Langney Road and builds on the earlier phase that was completed in January 2020. The Phase 2a scheme, to be funded using £3m of Local Growth Fund monies, was consulted upon in late 2019; the consultation outcomes were reported to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment's decision making meeting in April 2020, who resolved that the scheme progress to detailed design and construction.

3.2 Since the Lead Member decision last year, the shaping of the final detailed design has been positively influenced in a number of ways through the ongoing engagement with Eastbourne town centre stakeholders, the outcomes of the access assessment undertaken on the scheme design and the Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA). This has resulted in changes to the palette and location of materials and street furniture being used within the scheme design to address any impact on groups with protected characteristics. In addition, alternative provision of on road blue badge parking in the town centre, as well as in surface car parks, has been sought to negate the loss in current blue badge spaces in Bolton Road and Langney Road area. The necessary Traffic Regulation Orders related to the Pedestrian Zone in Terminus Road as well as changes to traffic movements and parking restrictions required as part of the scheme will be advertised later in the summer.

3.3 Therefore, the Lead Member is recommended to approve the final detailed design, as shown at Appendix 2, the advertisement of the associated Traffic Regulation Orders and the construction of Phase 2a of the Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Scheme.

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#### LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillors Stephen Holt and Barry Taylor

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

[LMTE 22 April 2020 Eastbourne Town Centre Movement Access Package Phase 2.pdf \(eastsussex.gov.uk\)](#)

[South East Local Enterprise Partnership Phase 2 Capital Project Business Case](#)

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<https://www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk/webview/index.jsp?v=2&resource=https%3A%2F%2F10.128.25.249%3A80%2Fobj%2FcEGMSResource%2FEGMS20200710080702948&submode=egmsresource&mode=documentation&top=yes>