

BACKGROUND TO THE TRO HIGH STREET, OLD TOWN, HASTINGS

1.1 For a number of years the Hastings Old Town Residents' Association (HOTRA) has been calling for improvements to be made in Old Town Hastings, particularly to improve conditions for pedestrians in the area. In June 2006, the County Council consulted on proposals to improve pedestrian facilities in the Old Town, including the High Street. A number of these improvements have already been implemented including footway improvements in the middle section of the High Street, the introduction of a pedestrian zone in Courthouse Street and the upgrade of two pedestrian crossing facilities on The Bourne.

1.2 In addition, a package of footway improvements on the lower end of the High Street, including the provision of a new footway along the western side from George Street towards Swan Terrace has been developed. These works were originally programmed for implementation in January 2010 but they were deferred pending the implementation of the traffic management improvements associated with the Jerwood Gallery development.

1.3 In October 2011, the County Council received a petition requesting that East Sussex County Council (ESCC) improve safety in the High Street, Old Town. The petition was considered at the Lead Member for Transport and Environment's decision making meeting in March 2012. The Lead Member agreed that ESCC would undertake a full assessment of the traffic impacts in the Old Town of the newly opened Jerwood Gallery and the outcomes would be used to help inform the need for any potential improvements in the High Street. In addition, ESCC would continue to work with the local community through the newly formed Old Town Combined Residents and Traders Working Group to investigate and develop proposals to improve conditions for pedestrians in the High Street.

1.4 In October 2013, a public consultation exercise was undertaken to seek people's views about proposed pedestrian and traffic management improvements in the High Street, Old Town, Hastings. The proposals consisted of the following:

- Provision of a new footway on the western side of the High Street from George Street towards Swan Terrace
- Extending the area of red surfacing in the vicinity of the High Street/George Street junction
- Widening the footway on the eastern side of the High Street between George Street and Swan Terrace
- Widening the footway at the entrance to the High Street at its junction with East Parade to reduce the speed of traffic
- Reversing the direction of the existing one-way in the High Street so that it becomes one-way southbound from Roebuck Street to George Street
- Reversing the direction of the existing one-way working in Courthouse Street so that it becomes one-way westbound (this is necessary to enable larger vehicles such as refuse vehicles and fire tenders to continue to be able to use Courthouse Street)
- Raising the carriageway outside the museum to reduce the height of the kerb
- Widening the footway on the eastern side of the road between Swan Terrace and Courthouse Street

1.5 The results of the analysis of the consultation clearly showed that a majority of respondents supported the proposed pedestrian improvements:

- 59% of respondents supported or strongly supported the overall package of improvements.

- 70% of respondents supported or strongly supported the widening of the footways.
- 70% of respondents supported or strongly supported the loss of one parking space at the bottom of the High Street to enable the footways to be widened.
- 74% of respondents either supported or strongly supported the extension of the red surfacing to cover all of the junction between George Street and the High Street.
- 54% of respondents supported the proposal to reduce the kerb height outside the museum by raising the carriageway.

1.6 A report setting out the results of the consultation together with recommendations about which of the measures should be taken forward was considered at the Lead Member for Transport and Environment decision making meeting in January 2014. The Lead Member agreed that the following measures should be taken forward to detailed design and possible construction as part of the 2014/15 Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements:

- (a) the widening of the footways and associated loss of pay and display parking space at the bottom of the High Street;
- (b) the extension of the red surfacing to cover all of the junction between George Street and the High Street; and
- (c) the raising of the carriageway outside the museum to reduce the kerb height.

At the meeting, the Lead Member also agreed that the proposals to reverse the existing one-way working in part of the High Street and Courthouse Street should not be taken forward.

1.7 At an update meeting in December 2014 with East Sussex County Councillors and Hastings Borough Councillors, it was agreed to defer the proposal to raise the carriageway outside the museum to reduce the kerb height given the uncertainty about the future use of the building and the potential impact on the number of on-street parking space in the High Street. As a consequence, the proposal to widen the footway in the vicinity of the museum on the eastern side of the road between Swan Terrace and Courthouse Street also had to be deferred.

1.8 In order to introduce the new 39 metres long section of footway in the High Street between George Street towards Swan Terrace, it will be necessary to make a modification to the existing 12 metres length (2 car space equivalent) of on-street pay and display parking space in front of 61 High Street. This will involve removing 6 metres length (1 car space equivalent) of the on-street pay and display parking space and replacing it with 6 metres length of prohibition of waiting at any time (double yellow lines). This is because the width of the road has been reduced to accommodate the new footway and therefore any vehicle parked in this pay and display parking space would block the flow of traffic using the High Street.