

**Agenda Item No:** 8

**Report To:** Joint Transportation Board

**Date:** 15 June 2010

**Report Title:** Victoria Way

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**Summary:**

This report updates the Board on progress with the scheme and seeks approval for the maintenance plan at Victoria Square and works to the junction at A28 Chart Road/Loudon Way.

The funding agreement with HCA is completed, KCC have entered into contract with Volker Fitzpatrick to construct the works, the land acquisitions and related agreements have all been completed. The tender sums allow the works to be completed with budget

**Key Decision:** NO

**Affected Wards:** Victoria

**Recommendations:** **The Executive be asked to:-**  
**1. Approve the maintenance plan for Victoria Square and the funding implications of that plan**

**Policy Overview:** The new Victoria Way route is a key driver to enable the expansion of the town centre to the south of the main railway lines. The new road is consistent with policy CS15 of the adopted LDF Core Strategy.

**Financial Implications:** The works proposed to create a new public square involve enhanced maintenance regimes and increased costs for both ABC and KCC. It is proposed that these costs be covered for an initial period of 5 years by a commuted sum from the CIF2 budget, whilst the longer term maintenance funding and management options for public realm and green spaces are agreed by Ashford's Future partners.

**Risk Assessment** YES - A full risk assessment has been carried out for the scheme

**Equalities Impact Assessment** NO

**Other Material Implications:** None

**Exemption Clauses:**

**Background  
Papers:**

Plans on display

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## Report Title: Victoria Way - Progress with scheme

### Purpose of the Report

1. Members of this Board gave their support to the scheme at the meeting on 8 December 2009 (minute 331 refers). This report sets out the significant progress that has been made to secure the delivery of the project by 31 March 2011. The report requests members support for the maintenance plan for Victoria Square (to be named John Wallis Square) and works to the junction of A28 Chart Road and Loudon Way to be carried out as part of the scheme funding.

### Background

2. The Victoria Way scheme provides a link between Beaver Road, by the International Station, and A28 Chart Road via Brookfield Road. It will be a high quality 'tree lined avenue' and is required to support the growth of the town centre and provide some additional capacity to the network to partially offset the capacity that was lost with the changes to the former inner ring road. Victoria Road will be improved and the Leacon Road/Brookfield Road junction will be improved and signalised to reflect the changed traffic movements. A new public square to be known as John Wallis Square (see later in Report) will be created by Victoria Road school and adjacent to the Learning Link footpath. It is considered a first phase because ultimately adjacent development will be required to widen the public realm to provide a boulevard layout. Many services are being diverted into the road corridor and new services provided and upgraded to support future development.
3. In order to provide for increased volumes of traffic circulating the town via the new Victoria Way, it is also proposed to implement changes to the Chart Road/Loudon Way junction. These will involve widening the traffic lanes approaching the junction and reconfiguring signal phasing and timings. These works will also be funded by CIF2.
4. Further works to improve Matalan roundabout have had to be deferred following the reduction in the GAF3 funding allocated to Ashford announced by CLG in July 2009. However, GAF3 funds are being utilised to work up a phasing strategy for future improvements to the A28 Chart Road including the Tank and Matalan junctions, linked to progress with development, most notably at Chilmington Green.

### Funding

5. Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF2) funding of £16.5m has been secured. Ashford's Future has provided £0.289m of Growth Area Funding to support some of the earlier scheme development work. CIF2 is provided as grant by the Department of Communities and Local Government and managed on their behalf by the Homes and Community Agency (HCA). The formal agreement was completed in March 2010.

6. KCC is the accountable body for receipt of the CIF2 and delivery of the scheme.

## **Land**

7. CIF2 has a funding deadline of 31 March 2011 and land had to be secured by voluntary negotiation as time did not permit normal compulsory purchase procedures. These negotiations were very complex but land for the main road works was secured to allow the construction contract to be awarded on 13 May.
8. The land for widening of Brookfield Road between the Matalan roundabout and Leacon Road junction is close to being finalised. Land for the improvement of Leacon Road/Brookfield Road junction for all future growth needs to 2031 and future SmartLink bus priority routing is unlikely to be secured in time. An interim improvement involving signalisation within existing highway boundaries will be implemented. The wider improvement of this junction will have to be carried out and funded by the SmartLink scheme at a later date. The improvements planned at Loudon Way do not require land beyond the highway boundary other than land in KCC ownership which is designated for highway.

## **Approvals**

9. The Victoria Way scheme received planning consent in August 2009. A key planning condition required having an approved remediation strategy for contamination because much of the Victoria Way route and adjacent land is Brownfield and particularly the site of the old gasworks. The Environment Agency has endorsed earlier design decisions that it is not realistic to clear contamination while the adjacent source remains and that an engineering barrier is neither practical or necessary. Monitoring will be required but the issue will only be resolved when National Grid and Southern Gas Networks clear their land.
10. A Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was published but holding objections from landowners would have required a public inquiry and the CIF2 funding deadline could not accommodate the adverse impact on the programme. Similarly a Side Road Order (SRO) was required to deal with minor changes to the existing highways and accesses and that also attracted both statutory and a non statutory objections. Undertakings were given to the landowners that led to the CPO being withdrawn and statutory objections to the SRO withdrawn. The Secretary of State confirmed the SRO in April 2010.

## **Contract**

11. Tenders were invited in accordance with normal European procurement procedures. Tenders were invited from 6 firms and assessed on the basis of 80% price and 20% quality. VolkerFitzpatrick was successful and the contract was formally awarded on 13 May. The formal start date is 14 June. A key part of the contract will involve extensive ducting to allow EDF to relocate extensive high power electric cables into the road corridor.

## **Programme**

12. Advance accommodation works have started to provide temporary facilities for Southern Gas Networks to offset existing premises on the route of the road. Asbestos clearance has started on buildings on the old ABC abattoir site prior to demolition. Trial trenches have been dug to allow initial archaeological investigation. Demolition of Cherry Court will need to be delayed because of a nesting bird. In the coming weeks, VolkerFitzpatrick will be setting up their site offices and compound.
13. The delay in completing the land agreements has led to the delay in awarding the contract and this will put intense pressure on the contractor and site team generally to try and achieve completion by the funding deadline of 31 March 2011.

## **Communications Strategy and Publicity**

14. Ashford's Future has promoted a co-ordinated strategy for handling publicity about the scheme. Publicity about the contract works themselves will be via the site team and KCC's press office. Apart from the works on Brookfield Road, the Leacon Road/Brookfield junction and Chart Road/Loudon Way junction, the main works are fairly discrete and away from the existing highway network and impact a relatively small and defined residential and business community.
15. A detailed letter drop has been made to homes and businesses in the area. Further newsletters will be distributed at appropriate times during the construction period and regular updates will be posted on both KCC and Ashford's Future web sites. Exhibitions in Victoria Road school are also likely as this has been a proven way of successfully communicating with the local community.
16. The planned works to both Victoria Way and M20 J9/Drovers are to be the subject of an exhibition of transport infrastructure schemes needed to support the growth of Ashford. This exhibition will be held in County Square on 24-26 June.

## **Risks**

17. A risk assessment has been carried out and is summarised in a risk assessment table. The estimated cost of the project based on the tender returns and a priced risk register is within the overall CIF2 funding available.
18. The biggest risk will be delivering the project by the funding deadline of 31 March 2011. Working generally off the main highway network is a benefit but the work involves complex utility works and obligations to the adjacent land owners. The site is contaminated brown field and there is always an element of the unknown despite the extensive site surveys. Every effort will be made to achieve by the deadline but HCA recognise that the contract has been awarded later than intended and the practical realities of road construction and would be open to discussion if required.

**John Wallis Square – see Appendices A and B**

19. Victoria Way is more than just a highway scheme. It will be to a high standard to create an attractive street scene to support development and for the community. The central focal point for the scheme will be John Wallis Square – named after the celebrated 17<sup>th</sup> century mathematician who was born in Ashford and credited with inventing calculus. Previous Reports to the Board have indicated the concept of paved areas with soft landscaping, a pavilion and screening to EDF sub station and Victoria Road School boundaries. The designs for the square have been prepared by an integrated design team and have received support from a group of district and county members.
20. The capital cost and maintenance costs are key issues to be considered particularly in the current economic climate. The capital cost is estimated to be £470,000 and a breakdown is given in Appendix A. The HCA who are responsible for the CIF2 funding are keen to see a high quality of public realm to encourage a quality of design in the buildings that will eventually front Victoria Way and the square. Ashford's Future Partnership Board has also endorsed the proposals at their meeting on 7 June.
21. Incurring capital expenditure is only worthwhile if there is adequate funding and arrangements in place to ensure that it is maintained properly. This is a difficult issue for both the Borough and County Councils where capital funding unfortunately does not fully recognise the ongoing liability and revenue funding pressures. KCC have previously made it clear that areas of high quality public realm would not be adopted as public highway without a clear future maintenance and management plan being agreed.
22. The evolving design and engineering aspects of the Square do not lend themselves to a harsh division of responsibilities along the lines of what is public highway and what is quality public realm, and so a more pragmatic arrangement is now proposed. In summary, KCC will take ownership of the whole square and maintain the paved areas and underground surface water drainage pipes and attenuation tanks and the trees adjacent to the highway and the low walling supporting the soft landscape areas. The Borough Council will maintain the soft landscaping, amenity lighting and carry out the routine street cleaning.
23. Maintenance of the pavilion and screening is a concern. However with HCA support the supply contracts will include an obligation to maintain a set number of damage replacement and vandalism remedial works for a period of 5 years. In addition HCA will accept the further capitalisation of £100,000 to cover the enhanced maintenance of the Square for 5 years. Options for the funding of longer term future maintenance are under consideration. Details of the estimated standard and enhanced maintenance costs are given in Appendix B.

## **A28 Chart Road/Loudon Way see Appendix C**

24. Traffic modelling has been undertaken to assess the effect on the highway network, of opening Victoria Way as a new through route from 2011. It was originally hoped that improvements to Matalan roundabout could have been carried out by 2011 using GAF 3 funding, but following the reduction in GAF3 funding available to Ashford announced by the government in July 2009, the improvement at Matalan roundabout was one of the schemes to be deferred.

25. This modelling work coupled with observations of current peak hour traffic conditions, has identified that when Victoria Way opens by 2011, the general affect of more traffic circulating around the south of the town centre and potentially adding traffic to the A28 Chart Road, is offset by traffic from the south west of Ashford using the new Victoria Way route heading towards the town centre and international station. During observations of morning peak traffic flows it is observed that much of the delay extending down the A28 towards Singleton results from there being a single lane for traffic heading northbound at the signals at Loudon Way. By altering the lane configuration, and carrying out works to widen the exit lanes, coupled with alterations to the signal phasing and direction signing, two traffic lanes can be made available for northbound traffic on the A28, thereby easing congestion at this point. A number of options for improving this junction have been examined, but it is felt that this scheme offers the best value for money, and least disruptive as an interim improvement. It is therefore proposed to carry out these works using the CIF2 funding available, to enable completion by March 2011, as shown on a plan to be shown at the meeting..
26. A phasing plan for future improvements to the A28 Chart Road is currently being worked up, that will identify the costs and timescales for the improvements needed to this route linked to progress with the growth of Ashford generally, and also specifically to the rate of development at Chilmington Green (where up to 7000 new dwellings and other uses are planned by 2031). This work should be completed by the end of 2010.

## **Conclusion**

27. Considerable effort has been made across the Partnership to allow award of construction contract for Victoria Way. The pressure will continue to try and ensure that the scheme is completed within the CIF2 funding period.
28. John Wallis Square is an important cultural and aesthetic component of delivering an attractive street scene for Victoria Way. It is considered that the capital cost is justified taking into account the support of HCA and the Ashford's Future Partnership Board and the wider benefits to Ashford. Much of the impact of the medium term maintenance costs have been mitigated by HCA allowing capitalisation of the enhanced maintenance costs within the CIF2 funding.
29. The effects of opening Victoria Way on the surrounding road network have been tested, and in addition to the works included in the main contract to Victoria Way, Leacon Road/Brookfield Road junction and widening Brookfield Road towards Matalan roundabout, further works are recommended to be carried out at Chart Road/Loudon Way junction to provide an interim improvement and to be completed by March 2011 utilising the CIF2 budget.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

30. Updates on all Ashford's Future led projects and the Growth Area Funding programme are regularly reviewed at Ashford's Future Company Board meetings now attended by new director Councillor John Kemp (previously Cllr Paul Bartlett), and at Ashford's Future Partnership Board meetings chaired by Councillor Paul Clokie.

31. Members of the Boards have expressed continued support for the project.

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**To attach:-**

Appendix A – Capital costs of works to John Wallis Square

Appendix B - Maintenance costs table



**Victoria Square, Ashford – Project B0501400**  
Screens and Pavilion – Budget Costing – Update 10<sup>th</sup>.May 2010

**Appendix A**

Screens

Foundation Costs		Budget Cost
EDF Sub-station screen	33 metre length	£10,500
School Boundary to Square	43 metre length	£12,000
School Boundary to Learning Link	43 metre length	£12,500

Screen Costs

EDF sub-station section excluding electronic gate access	£37,500
School Boundary excluding electronic gate access	£55,000
Electronic gate access	£4,000 per gate
School Boundary to Learning Link	£49,800

Specification Detail for screens

All screens to be made up of PFC sections with stiffened perforated steel sheets on both front and rear faces.

All components to be hot dip galvanised and powder coated for surface protection.

Supply of one panel for consultation purposes	£4,500
	Delivery time – 5 weeks from order

Pavilion

Budget Cost for Pavilion	£52,800
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Pavilion costs include galvanising and powder coating to one side. Costs include for fabrication, delivery and erection.

Pavilion cost excludes the base slab.

TOTAL costs for screen boundaries and pavilion **£234,600**  
Excluding automated gates.

All costs quoted are for budget purposes only and do not represent quotations.  
Costs exclude the cost of and provision for feature lighting.  
Costs are based on the proposed detail current at 10<sup>th</sup>.May 2010

**VICTORIA WAY INITIAL PHASE**  
**Maintenance Schedule for Victoria Square (Non Essential Highway)**  
Draft 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2010

**Appendix B**

Ref. No	ASSET	SCHEME CAPITAL COST (£) (Funding source - CIF2)	ANTICIPATED MAINTENANCE REGIME	OPERATION INTERVAL	QUANTITY/MEASURE	'STANDARD' ANNUAL MAINTENANCE COST (£)	ENHANCED ANNUAL MAINTENANCE COSTS (£)	MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY (KCC/ABC)	TOTAL ANNUAL MAINTENANCE COST (£)	NOTES
<b>SOFT LANDSCAPE</b>										
1	Amenity turf Enhanced to include edging twice per year to reflect 'crispness of design lines'	£600	Cutting Weed control Reinstatement Application of Fertiliser	16 times per year twice per year 10% per year yearly	220m <sup>2</sup>	£3500	£600	ABC	£4100	Approx £190/visit (16 visits)
2	Wildflower turf On opposite side of highway to Victoria Square. Maintenance by Highway Authority.	£750	Cutting Weed control Reinstatement	Yearly Yearly 5% per year	94 m <sup>2</sup>	£75*	£260**	KCC	£335	Approx £300 per visit. * Standard maintenance assumes provision of amenity turf (i.e Ref. No.1). Visits allowed for in 1 above, additional reinstatement only. ** Increased works compared to amenity turf
3	Shrub and ornamental grass planting Enhancement allowing for 'hand pruning'	£5000	Pruning/cutting back Regular hoeing and weed control Reinstatement/replacement Application of fertiliser Top up mulching	Yearly Bi-monthly 5% per year Yearly Yearly for first 5 years	358 m <sup>2</sup>	£1400	£800*	ABC	£2200	Maintenance costs likely to reduce after 5 years £190 per visit (6 visits) * Cheaper to maintain than amenity turf hence no enhanced costs
4	Herbaceous planting and bulbs	£3000	Regular dead heading/cutting back Regular hoeing and weed control Reinstatement/replacement Application of fertiliser Top up mulching	Bi-monthly Bi-monthly 20% per year Yearly Yearly for first 5 years	238 m <sup>2</sup>	£750	£750	ABC	£1500	Maintenance costs likely to reduce after 5 years.
5	Large Nursery Stock Tree Enhancement for straightening and checking guying etc.	£22,000	Pruning/crown lifting Weed control Reinstatement/replacement Application of fertiliser Top up mulching	Yearly Yearly 5% per year Yearly Yearly for first 5 years	74	£1000	£1000	KCC	£2000	Formative pruning required long term due to proximity to highway
5a	Large Nursery Stock Tree	As above	At approximately YEAR 10 adjust aperture of tree grille/aluminium collar from 400mm to 1200mm to allow for tree growth	Once in scheme lifetime	3 (Central reserve)	£180	-	KCC or ABC (in highway central reserve)	£180	'One off' operation converted to annual rate
6	Existing mature trees	£600 (Initial inspection and tree surgery works)	Safety check Safety works Formative pruning	Yearly Every 5 years Every 5 years	1	£500	£0	KCC	£500	Long term safety inspections required
7	Watering		All planting areas	3 times per year (for first 5 years)	Item	£1200	£0	KCC	£1200	Will vary with weather conditions
<b>HARD LANDSCAPE</b>										
8	Paved surfaces Enhancements for higher specification cleaning	£54,000	Sweeping and cleansing Reinstatement Gum removal	Weekly Annually 2% 4 times/annum	1200m <sup>2</sup>	£12480*	£2000** £2000	*ABC **KCC	£16480	* Sweeping & Cleansing ** Reinstatement £0.2/m <sup>2</sup> /day*365 = £9000 2% of £50,000
9	Litter bins (Geo by Woodhouse)	£1,800 per bin	Empty Wash Replace	twice per week 4 monthly 10 years	3 No	£235*	£465**	ABC (?)	£700	* Assumes standard bin @ £250/bin ** Woodhouse Geo bin used £0.50 per bin per visit – emptying £2 per bin per visit – washing £1800/10*3 = £540 - £250/10*3 = £75
10	Dog waste bins	£200 per bin	Empty Wash Replace	twice per week 4 monthly 5 years	2 No	£160	£0	ABC	£160	£0.50 per bin per visit – emptying £2 per bin per visit – washing £200/5*2 = £40
11	Seating (Concrete Walls)	£30,000	Cleansing and removal chewing gum Inspection / damage repair Replacement	Monthly 6 Monthly 5 Yearly	138m	£3000	£600*	ABC (?)	£3600	£100 per hour for 2 hours *12 1 day @ £200 plus £100 materials * 2 10% per 5 Years * Replacement costs
12	Cycle hoops (Geo by Woodhouse)	£500 per hoop (£50 for standard hoop)	Cleaning Replacement/damaged repair	4 Monthly 5 Yearly	3 No.	£50*	£270	KCC (?)	£320	£2 per hoop per visit 3 * £500 / 5 years * Assumes Standard hoop @ £50

13	Architectural screens	£180,000 (includes £35,000 for foundation costs - no replacement required) (£7,000 for standard palisade fencing)	Cleansing (all screens) Integrity Inspection Minor Repairs Damage Repair	Yearly Quarterly 2 sections/year 1 complete panel 5 yearly	119m	£600	£4100	ABC (?)	£4700	<u>Standard fencing</u> Assumes palisade/security fencing Inspection 6 monthly Repair/cleansing once per year (graffiti etc) <u>Screens</u> Equip £400, labour £400, 2 days = £1600 Inspect – 2hrs*£50*4 = £400  £300 per day visit for installation £600 per section of perforated sheet and £3000 per complete panel)
14	Gates to architectural screens	£4,000 per gate (£500 standard gate)	Cleansing Integrity Inspection Minor Repairs Damage Repair	Yearly Quarterly 1 complete gate 5 yearly	2 No	£100*	£700*	ABC (?)	£800	Inspections/cleansing Included within screen maintenance.  *Replacement/Repair £600 / 5*3 = £360
15	Signage (bollards)	£600 per bollard (Stainless steel) (£300 standard bollard)	Replacement	Replacement 5 yearly	3 No	£180	£180	KCC	£360	
16	Pavilion structure (excludes foundation)	£52,800 (excludes base slab) (£3,000 standard bus shelter)	Cleansing (all screens) Integrity Inspection Minor Repairs Damage Repair	Yearly Quarterly 2 sections/year 1 complete panel 5 yearly	1 No	£500 (to be confirmed)	£1900	ABC (?)	£2400	Inspections/cleansing included within screen maintenance Shelter replaced 10 yearly  <u>Repair/replacement</u> £300 per day visit for installation £600 per section of perforated sheet and £3000 per complete panel)
17	Feature lighting (non highway)	£90,000	Lens cleansing Damage replacement (2% per year)	3 monthly 3 monthly	Item	£0	£2,600	ABC (?)	£2,600	1 day cleaning @£200 * 4 = £800 2% of £90,000 = £1,800
18	CCTV	£12,000	Electrical Testing Replace	6 monthly 5 years	1 No.	£400	£0	ABC	£400	1 day @ £200 £1000 camera / 5 = £200

**TOTALS**

**£467,850**

**£26310**

**£18225**

**£44535**