

SCHEME UPDATE:

BANK STREET

Construction in Bank Street started in September and should be nearing completion at the end of April. Bank Street will reopen to traffic from Elwick Road around June once the work between Church Road and Bank Street on Elwick Road is completed sufficiently to allow two way traffic flow.

ELWICK ROAD/WEST STREET AND FORGE LANE

The work to construct the 'shared space' environment on these roads started in October 2007. Granite kerbs have been laid along Elwick Road to the east of Bank Street and new paving laid in the carriageway. This will compliment the area outside the recently opened County Square extension. Work is likely to be completed in November 2008

VICTORIA ROAD/BEAVER ROAD JUNCTION ALTERATIONS

In October 2007 work on converting the roundabout at Beaver Road/Romney Marsh Road into a traffic signal controlled junction began. This will help open up access south of the railway and help increase safe pedestrian movements. This area of works will be finished in June 2008.

• Bank Street

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ON THE ASHFORD RINGROAD PROJECT

BECOMING GREENER

Around the road works, passers by may have noticed several large holes, filled with gravel.

These holes are the foundation stage of the final project and will actually end up being large green, grassy mounds with trees, bringing more greenery into Ashford.

This is all part of the wider picture in making the town more open, friendly, bright and greener.



FACTBOX

At the end of the project, Ashford will have **73** extra trees around the town centre.

WHO WILL BE YOUR CONTACT?

If you have any general queries during this phase of the scheme please contact the Kent County Council call centre or alternatively if your query is regarding contractor/traffic management you can contact Jackson's Site Manager - Jonathon Stewart.

You can now access our website via www.kent.gov.uk by going to the transport section or type in 'Ashford Ring Road' in the site search box.

The Kent County Council Call Centre Tel: 08458 247 800 • www.kent.gov.uk

Site Manager: Jonathan Stewart Tel: 07929 027 677



AWARD WINNING TOWN

Ashford's 'shared space' scheme has won a prestigious award for its innovative design, and is now being heralded as a model project for the UK.

The award from the Landscape Institute, against 400 competitors, was given for the projects pioneering development and the judges said that

"This proposal is pioneering in this country. What is being attempted has huge potential both at Ashford and elsewhere in the UK."

Kent County Council Regeneration and Projects Manager, Richard Stubbings said: "This award is a credit to the Integrated Design Team comprising landscape architects, Kent Highway Services, traffic planners and artists.

"They have worked together to create a distinctive design that will be a credit to Ashford and which will attract people and businesses to the town."

LINKS TO BEIJING OLYMPICS

Sculptor John Atkin, a member of the Integrated Design Team of engineers, landscape architects and artists for the Ashford 'shared space' scheme, has been selected to create a new work for the Olympic Park in Beijing later this year.

Chosen from 2,600 applicants, Atkin's designs received an 'outstanding award' from the judging panel. The Beijing public art exhibition launches in May 2008 and is based on the 2008 Olympic theme of One World, One Dream.



'SHARED SPACE' – WHAT IS IT?

'Shared space' is an innovative street design approach for town centres. It is new for Kent County Council, but is a tried and tested approach, particularly in continental Europe, and it has now been adapted for conditions in this country.

This approach will help us transform dangerous town centre roads into more civilised quality streets, still capable of handling traffic flows, but allowing pedestrians more freedom in greater safety.



It is all a question of getting a better and fairer balance between the motorist and other street users. It is only applicable in the town centre and in housing estates where there are a lot of pedestrians. The key to success is to change the whole character of the street, and to reduce traffic speeds down to 20mph. Such a design is being developed initially for Bank Street, Elwick Road parts of Godinton Road, West Street and Forge Lane in Ashford town centre. These streets are being narrowed for traffic and repaved to emphasise a change in character, and a large number of new trees will be planted. New bespoke

seating and street lighting will also be introduced.

One of the historic problems with the town has been that the old ring road had cut off people from the town centre. With its fast moving traffic it was intimidating to pedestrians, and the town centre had become very inward facing. This new 'shared space' approach will open up the town centre again, and make it more civilised, with new street cafes and shops facing onto the new streets.

The 'shared space' philosophy will mean just that, but it will not mean the removal of kerbs or pavements, and there will still need to be a mutual respect between motorists and pedestrians.

Discussions have, in particular, been held with those representing the access and disabled groups and the scheme has been adapted to their needs as much as possible.

Ashford looks forward to this significant investment in its public areas, making them more usable by all and the envy of other towns in Kent.

THE NEW BANK STREET AN ARTERY INTO THE HEART OF TOWN



Residents of the town and traders walking through Bank Street may have noticed something unusual looking, forming a part of the kerb foundations as the new street works take shape.

The current visible track will form the foundations of a new feature that will give Bank Street a unique identity, leading visitors from the rail stations, via Elwick Road and into the heart of the town.

The work by international artist Simeon Nelson called 'Flume' will be a part of the paving of the street, and is a representation of a natural river system, complete with tributaries and pools, pointing towards the River Stour. When it rains the 6mm deep feature will glisten until it dries again.

Running along Bank Street from the town centre to Elwick Road and then around to the stations, the artwork will act as a striking guide for visitors to the town.

Simeon says that;

"Flume will bring the 'river' back into the town, making people aware of the natural landscape around them, even though they are in an urban environment."

Stage one of Flume on Bank Street will be finished by the end of May with stage two from Elwick Road to Church Road due for completion in June. A further stage will take the flume to the railway station.

FACTBOX

There has been a significant contribution from the EU including £100,000 for the Flume feature

RESTRICTED PARKING NEW PARKING RESTRICTIONS FOR TOWN

The 'shared space' environment in Bank Street, Elwick Road, Godinton Road, West Street and Forge Lane will be accompanied by a new restricted parking zone.

This is similar to a controlled parking zone but does not need double and single yellow lines to be placed on the carriageway to identify where parking is not allowed.

Parking will only be allowed in marked bays as will loading and unloading.

Loading bays are being provided off the carriageway in Elwick Road, Godinton Road and Bank Street and additional on street parking bays are being provided in Godinton Road and West Street. These Parking Bays will be metered.

A loading restriction has been placed on the above streets between the hours on 7.00am and 7.00pm which means that only areas that are marked as loading bays can be used for this purpose within these hours. It also means that blue badge holders will not be able to park outside of marked bays within these times. Outside these hours, normal loading/unloading restrictions apply.

There will be signs that identify the marked bays and inform users as they enter the restricted parking zone.

The above parking restrictions have been placed so that the potential for parking related congestion on the new narrower streets will be reduced.

A 20mph speed limit has also been introduced throughout the Town Centre shared streets.

Taxi Ranks and bus stops have been provided in Elwick Road and bus stops provided in Bank Street.

