

Media Release

from Southend-on-Sea Borough
Council



Ref:

2008 – For immediate release

£13m funding launches two key Southend projects

Southend has just been awarded Government grants worth £13m to help boost housing, jobs, to cut congestion and make the borough more accessible.

The money launches a major programme to reduce traffic congestion at one of Southend's busiest junctions, and to dramatically improve the public realm in the heart of the town.

It was revealed today (Wednesday November 26th) that the Government has agreed £13m to allow both projects – at the Progress Road junction with the A127 and the first phase of The Victorias Public Realm scheme – to be implemented by March 2011.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council together with partners Renaissance Southend, made the announcement at the Thames Gateway Forum in London. The Council's Executive Councillor for Transport and Planning, Councillor Anna Waite says: "Both schemes represent a major step forward for the town. Motorists face major congestion daily at the Progress Road junction, particularly at peak periods and all improvements will significantly reduce journey times for thousands.

"This essential junction improvement will further help regenerate Progress Road Industrial Estate and will improve access to the Town Centre, Airport, Seafront and points further east of the town.

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“This is the first A127 junction to be significantly improved as part of Thames Gateway South Essex and we hope this will be the first of many planned A127 improvements over the next five years. The junction’s capacity will be increased by an additional lane at the traffic signals (A127) in both directions and a lengthened right turn into the Fairway. There will also be better provision for pedestrians and cyclists. A proposal to allow north/south bus movements has been included, and could be extended as part of the South Essex Rapid Transit system (SERT). “

The Victorias approval follows a design process by Renaissance Southend over the last nine months which included extensive consultation with a wide range of stakeholders supported by a public exhibition during the summer. The initial design and development covers work for highway and public realm improvements in Queensway, London Road, Broadway and Victoria Circus. This will improve pedestrian links between Victoria Station and the town centre. The first phase will include the removal of the existing Victoria roundabout and the creation of new public pedestrian space to provide more direct routes to The Broadway and Victoria Circus.

Both schemes are the latest successes for Southend’s regeneration, the result of continued close collaboration between Renaissance Southend and the Council. Both organisations have also drawn up proposals for three other important public realms schemes. They include re-invigorating the seafront, and schemes to improve Warrior Square Gardens and the St John’s Churchyard.

Mike Lambert, Chief Executive of Renaissance Southend says: “I am delighted that we have now received funding for two key schemes that will help improve the environment for residents, visitors and those that have to commute in and out of our town. It particularly shows what can be achieved by working in partnership with all key stakeholders to deliver lasting benefits to the people of Southend.”

Note to Journalists:

For more information, contact Colin Felton at CFA Marketing Communications on 01622 754295 or e-mail to colin@cfapr.com or Sheila Crosbie at Renaissance Southend on 01702 224503

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For more information about this media release please call the press desk on 01702 215505 or email media@southend.gov.uk