

**NEWS RELEASE**

11 December 2009

**NEW UNIVERSITY CENTRE BUILDING PLAN APPROVED**

Planning consent has been granted to refurbish and extend the Post Office building in Hastings town centre to turn the building into additional premises for the University of Brighton at University Centre Hastings (UCH).

Plans for new UCH facilities on this site were submitted by Sea Space, the local economic development company, in September and approved this week. The plans show the Post Office remaining on the ground floor, accessed from Cambridge Road, with the frontage cleaned and repaired as part of the refurbishment. The upper floors, which are currently empty, will be renovated and extended.

Sea Space's contractors will demolish and replace the existing poor quality extension at the back of the building, which was built in the 1960s and added to in the 1970s, to allow for construction of the new facility. The 38,319 square foot, six storey building will feature a glass-topped central atrium and an impressive entrance from Priory Square, creating a large hall and an informal gathering space for students.

"The front of the Post Office building is well loved and is a great feature on Cambridge Road. However, the extension at the back, facing Priory Square, is not very attractive and has served its purpose," says Abigail Gilbert, Communications Officer for Sea Space. "The plans for the new UCH building include replacing this extension with space suitable for teaching and seminars. The new building will take the University Centre's capacity to 1000 students."

The Post Office building was identified during the early planning stages for the regeneration of Priory Quarter in Hastings as having potential for educational or office and retail use. Sea Space worked with architects Proctor & Matthews to draw up the plans to protect the building's heritage and maximise its potential as well as maintain its current use as a Post Office.

ENDS



**Picture Caption:** Artist's impression of the new building seen from Priory Square.

**Editor's notes:**

**The Hastings & Bexhill Task Force** was set up in 2001, with members comprising The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, Government Office for the South East, English Partnerships and the local MPs. Having developed a five point economic development strategy, the Task Force, through SEEDA, was allocated £38M of government funding over three years towards the 10 year programme. The Task Force set up **Sea Space** in 2003 as its local regeneration company to deliver the projects within the strategy.

- **For media enquiries**, please contact:  
Abigail Gilbert (Communications Officer): 01424 723141; [abigailgilbert@seeda.co.uk](mailto:abigailgilbert@seeda.co.uk)