

EXCLUSIVE



Artist's impression

## First glimpse of a 21st century Broadmead

THIS is the first glimpse of how Broadmead shopping centre could look within a few years.

The clutter of street furniture that gives the area a "drab and downmarket" look, according to Broadmead manager John Hirst, will make way for pavement cafes and information terminals.

Street lighting will move from pavement level to the

sides of shops, while the paving will be replaced. Signs directing visitors around the centre will be improved, so will floral displays.

These are some of the proposed changes that the Broadmead Board is putting before shopkeepers in the area.

They will vote in June on whether they want the area to become a Business Improvement District (BID).

If they agree they would pay an extra 1.5 per cent on top of their current business rates over the next three years to pay for the work.

The amount that the Broadmead Board has to spend could be £2 million over three years.

Retailers can study the detail of the proposals and view artists' impressions by

visiting a special display site at The Podium.

Mr Hirst said: "After a lot of detailed research, we have been most encouraged by the positive feedback from retailers. They have given us a clear insight into their aspirations and concerns for the future of the area."

The BID concept, introduced by the Government last year and based on successful initiatives in America, encourages businesses in a defined area to decide on projects that will improve their locality.

Broadmead is one of 23 projects from UK cities and towns chosen as pilot BID areas and the changes would affect the part of Broadmead that will not be touched by the £500 million redevelopment of Broadmead.

Key areas that would see

work include Merchant Street North, Broadmead West and The Horsefair.

Retailer Andy Bush, who owns four Broadmead stores including Millennium II and Just Diamonds, said: "The refurbishment of The Arcade in Broadmead last year boosted my sales by 20 per cent.

"I believe that the BID improvements could do the same for the whole of Broadmead. I will be voting yes."

The Bristol Alliance, owner of substantial landholdings in the BID area, has voiced its support.

The Mall Corporation, owners of The Mall Galleries, has agreed - subject to a yes vote - to revamp areas around the Galleries' entrances in Broadmead West and Merchant Street South.