

A27 Worthing-Lancing Consultation – response to proposed option from Campaign for Better Transport

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1. Campaign for Better Transport's Response

1.1 Comment on proposed option

While road based interventions would not be Campaign for Better Transport's first point of call we welcome the fact that Highways England is only proposing modest road proposals and not more damaging schemes for the Worthing-Lancing area. Large road building in the area would cause significant impact on communities and the environment, whether in or out of town.

However, we do have concerns about the proposals and their impact on the South Downs National Park and vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. Little attention has been paid to improving local links for pedestrians and cyclists, while bus routes and services do not appear to have been considered at all. This needs to change if this option is progressed.

We believe that a holistic approach is required to address transport need in the area and focussing on road building will not provide the solutions required in the long term or provide value for money.

1.2 Concern about justification for harm to South Downs National Park

We do not believe that the scheme justifies the harm that it will cause to the South Downs National Park, albeit the impact might be considered fairly minor compared to alternative scheme impacts. This is particularly so if the scheme is only seen as a temporary stop-gap.

1.3 Wider impact not considered

We are concerned that the wider impact of progressively expanding road capacity along the A27 is going to significantly increase the levels of induced traffic, undermining any 'benefits' of the schemes. The overall level of induced traffic could be significantly higher than that calculated for the individual schemes when considered in isolation as they have been up till now.

We do not believe these schemes should be going ahead in the form that they are and that a more holistic transport approach should be taken that prioritises sustainable transport.

1.4 What a more holistic approach would look like

We believe that a much stronger focus should be given to:

- reducing the need to travel
- investing in public transport – the coastal railway and more bus services which are properly integrated with the trains, park and ride (where appropriate), etc.
- investing in better walking and cycling links within Worthing-Lancing but also across the A27 and into the surrounding areas
- demand management measures such as workplace parking
- addressing specific local safety issues
- making small scale localised junction changes
- getting HGVs to pay their true costs for using the road network

1.5 Dismissing sustainable transport

We do not believe that Highways England has any sound basis with which to dismiss investing in walking, cycling and public transport and concluding that it would make little difference to traffic levels on the A27. While it might be correct in stating that there are no significant plans for bus improvements in the area or that there is no evidence to suggest that there will be any significant switch from road to rail, that's because

Highways England is not looking at transport issues in the round. It is trying to apply an old fashioned road based solution when a very different approach is required. By its own figures most of the traffic using the A27 is what it considers local traffic and much will be related to the local travel to work area. A targeted set of local interventions could probably bring about significant traffic reduction but unless this is properly invested in, it is unlikely to happen.

We would much prefer to see the money allocated for the road improvements spent on sustainable transport measures instead. This is likely to offer greater resilience and capacity for accommodating development in the longer term.

1.6 Little understanding of the needs of vulnerable road users

We are extremely disappointed to see Highways England coming forward with yet another road scheme where the needs of vulnerable road users appear to be misunderstood. Providing formal pedestrian and cycle crossings will do little to improve the current situation. In fact, the complexity of the proposed new junctions could actually make it harder for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the road and the length of time they have to wait could lead to them losing patience waiting for the lights to turn.

The two junctions causing most concern in this respect are Offington Corner and Grinstead Lane / Manor Road. Offington Corner will require 7 separate crossings going from the south west (Goodwood Road) area to the north east corner, or from the south-east corner to the north-west corner (Durrington Cemetery). This is far too many and will expose pedestrians and cyclists to unnecessarily high levels of noise and air pollution, apart from the huge amount of time they will have to waste waiting to cross, when they will also be exposed to the elements.

Grinstead Lane / Manor Road junction will become much bigger and more daunting for pedestrians and cyclists. Crossing times will have to increase as the road is being widened to 3 lanes each way, from the current two, while a two stage crossing will become three stages.

Much greater thought needs to go into significantly reducing the number of crossings for vulnerable road users and reducing the time they have to wait. Even better would be to offer some form of direct grade separation for crossings which would not only increase safety but could reduce traffic delays.

Where grade separation is proposed it would need to be to a high standard and suitable for both pedestrians and cyclists with the ramps as straight as possible on the desire lines, not a large number of zig-zag ramps. These significantly increase walking distances for pedestrians when pedestrians already have to deal with a height change.

Any cycle facilities should ideally be separated from pedestrians and designed to Interim Advice Note 195/16 of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

1.7 The benefits of non-road solutions

Investing in non-road solutions, could provide substantial health and economic benefits both direct and indirect and reduce long-term pressure on the NHS. It would help people access jobs more effectively, particularly new entries into the job market, who often have less resources and don't own a car. We have research that shows the value in investing in these lower cost measures¹.

Creating better walking and cycling links to form a safe and attractive network would also boost the tourism industry. Many holiday makers are increasingly looking for good quality activities and this combined with the

¹ [Improving local transport helps the economy – experience from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund](#)

increase in popularity in cycling make high quality cycle networks an increasing requirement for any serious holiday destination. Improving links into the South Downs and along the coast should be a priority.

Investing in the public realm and encouraging more people to walk and cycle or to get into the area by public transport would also help make it a more pleasant and attractive place to be. This would not only draw in more visitors but it would also attract investment as businesses will want to relocate and stay in the area as part of their appeal to keep and recruit new staff.

All of the above show how an alternative approach could have a real and positive impact on the local economy , as well as transforming the area into a more attractive and accessible location.

1.8 Lack of local integration

If this scheme goes ahead, we cannot see any evidence that West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) as the local highway authority is in any position to take advantage of reduction in traffic that is projected for the A259. If the changes to the A27 are to have any lasting benefit, then WSSCC needs to be making preparations now to lock in the benefits for Worthing and Lancing and to take the opportunity to use the freed up road space for more efficient forms of transport such as buses or cycles. Unless this is done very soon after the A27 changes are made, more traffic will rapidly refill the town and the opportunity will be lost.

1.9 Conclusion

Overall, while we welcome the fact that Highways England is not proposing large scale road building at Worthing and Lancing, we would much prefer the funding to be allocated to sustainable transport measures to reduce traffic and to give people a real choice of how to get around.

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Campaign for Better Transport's vision is a country where communities have affordable transport that improves quality of life and protects the environment. Achieving our vision requires substantial changes to UK transport policy which we aim to achieve by providing well-researched, practical solutions that gain support from both decision-makers and the public.

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