

### Purpose of the A27Alliance - FIX IT FIRST

To promote a sensible, sustainable and evidence-based solution for the A27 upgrade. This would be evolutionary, delivered quickly, doesn't cost the earth financially or environmentally, enables innovation and supports the CDC Local Plan requirements within the structure of the existing corridor.

### The context



**WSCC Gambling with Reality?** All the evidence points to the fact that funding is just not available to deliver WSCC Councillors' preferred option for a Mitigated Northern Route. Officers had previously advised the Council that this was a high risk, high cost option.

As recently as 22Nov18 Chris Grayling commented on the set back to this project. In response to Gillian Keegan's question as to whether Chichester will be included in the RIS2 budget, he referred to the WSCC rejection of RIS1 funding and stated that improvements will be necessary .... "in the future".

WSCC's "reasonable alternative" to upgrade the existing road junctions should now be accepted (but to include a new link road from the Fishbourne junction to the Birdham road outside the AONB). Aspirations by some for a MNR should be discarded. This will not only serve the CDC Local Plan Review (a legal requirement) but also facilitate many of the concerns voiced by BABA27. This project would thus likely be back on track for RIS2 funding and not cast the whole project into the political wilderness.

If the insistence of WSCC councillors persists then this will inevitably endanger any certainty of an outcome for RIS2 funding that would mitigate the impacts of congestion on Chichester residents. This is not an acceptable outcome following the intervention that led to the £250m loss to Chichester for this project.

Central government funding is the only option to deal with the A27 junction and other improvements required by the CDC local plan and simultaneously deliver improvements for through traffic. There is only one pot of money and contributions from developers will be scant in comparison. WSCC have none.

With funding crises in many core sectors there is no scope for budgets to be squandered. The sustainable and environmental upgrade of the junctions along the existing route will bring relief from air pollution, improved access to the Witterings and other benefits to many people.

This approach is likely to resonate with Highways England in view of previous work that discarded a new northern road and optimise the opportunity for RIS2 funding. The community of Chichester would be seen to be realistic in their ambitions.

The application for funding for the MNR should therefore be withdrawn. All efforts should be focused on this realistic concept which the ChiOb has reported: *“of all the options...on line and offline...there was greatest support for improvements to the existing A27”*. This is not surprising as this is sustainable, affordable and deliverable. There is not a shred of evidence to support an alternative new road.

BABA27 could make a positive contribution to discussions with HE to address their particular requirements but only if this dichotomy of routes is removed. Coalescence around a single option would focus on ideas for innovation, the integration of proper non-vehicle transport options, etc.

### 10 Goals of the A27Alliance for an A27 evolutionary upgrade project

1. **It must be sustainable and environmentally sensitive, grounded in reality and benefit the greatest number of people.**
2. **It must be deliverable and evidence based by complying with existing policies and putting an end to the interminable delays**
3. **It must be possible to be constructed incrementally using innovative techniques to avoid simultaneous disruption and to facilitate cash flow.**
4. **It must lessen dependency on high risk funding from RIS2 which will be unknown until December 2019 and may never happen**
5. **It must provide access to (and not be remote from) all planned new housing, schools, Chichester Gate and rail and bus interchanges to enable the CDC Local Plan to be delivered.**
6. **It must improve access to the Manhood Peninsula, with particular regard to reducing the impact of heavy traffic to the Witterings and relieving congestion in Stockbridge.**
7. **It must recognise that a MNR is a high-risk plan that will not deliver the improvements in any reasonable timeframe and must be removed from the WSCC RIS2 funding application.**
8. **It must focus on an upgrade to the existing route as the only ‘reasonable alternative’, improving junctions to serve both local and through traffic and mitigating the impacts of congestion.**
9. **It must recognise the evidence based research done by reputable organisations (eg CPRE, CBT, etc) . Transport choices on the Sussex coast can be achieved without the need for expensive and environmentally damaging new road schemes\*.**
10. **It must employ in its design innovative options - tunnel sections, construction techniques (jack box tunnelling) , car-only underpasses, relocation of junctions, smart traffic management, etc)**

### 3. 10 reasons why the A27Alliance is acting now

1. **WSCC have not implemented their 2011-26 Transport Plan** for the A27 junctions upgrade. The preferential submission to HE for RIS2 funding will result in major environmental impact, demands a large funding requirement and offers no certainty . WSCC has disregarded the result of their own survey which found the majority of people want an upgrade to the existing route.

2. **A new approach is needed, with sustainability and early environmental benefits at its heart around which communities can coalesce and have their say to achieve the optimum solution.**
3. **There is an urgency to deliver a project within a reasonable timeframe to support the housing, commercial and economic ambitions of the CDC Local Plan Review.** In challenging times for retail, Chichester city centre requires good access or will suffer from being bypassed.
4. **The Government's Draft Road Investment Strategy 2: Government objectives Oct 2018 takes a cautious stance on expressways, while committing to continue investment in retro-fitting current environmental standards to existing roads.** The National Audit Report on RIS1 (March 2017) highlighted: *"The Department and Highways England need to agree a more realistic and affordable plan if they are to provide optimal value from the Road Investment Strategy". Highways England has been working to address the risks to deliverability, affordability and value for money...."*
5. **Taxpayers want value for their money.** A high risk strategy with a long-term programme will benefit no-one. There is also great uncertainty about potential economic benefits.
6. **Analysts suggest there will be major changes in the way we use our roads in the coming decades thereby rendering obsolete the expensive and contentious new highway projects of today.** Too often they are a historic solution to a historic problem.
7. **Highly contentious plans for the building of a second road should be scrapped.** It would be wrong for any consideration pending the ongoing review of National Parks.
8. **WSCC has proved itself to be unworthy stewards of a project of such importance to so many people.** Highways England needs to lead the project and engage with local residents.
9. **The construction of new roads is failing to provide the promise of congestion relief and economic boosts promised whilst devastating the environment\*\*.** New roads are a betrayal of future generations on the impact of climate change.
10. **BABA27 has not explored with CDC and WSCC a new alignment for a new road to the N of the city as claimed.** This was not the remit of BABA27.

The Government's objectives contained in the "Draft Road Investment Strategy 2 - Moving Britain Ahead" are manifold and clear. The "realistic alternative" and NOT a preference sought by WSCC for a MNR would match the vision of the Government that includes the following intent:

- *"...a 'roads revolution' based on a range of new vehicle and infrastructure technologies will, we expect, visibly and powerfully transform the way the SRN is used and maintained. This will maximise the efficient use of road space, enabling more journeys to be accommodated ...."*
- *"... to challenge Highways England and its supply chain to improve their innovation and creativity ..... This will mean rethinking the way things are done..."*
- *"...objectives for RIS2 are evolutionary rather than revolutionary"*
- *"Enhancements to the SRN will meet high standards of design, responding to a local sense of place, and working wherever possible in harmony with the natural, built and historic environments."*
- *"...investment is not just about transport needs; it should also meet what we know are people's wider priorities – whether that be rebalancing the economy, supporting the development of new housing, or safeguarding the environment."*
- *"Our vision is shaped by other messages from the consultation: a desire for an SRN that provides reliably smooth journeys for its users, has a positive impact on its surroundings and the people who live, work and relax around it, and that makes intelligent use of emerging technologies and green infrastructure."*

\* A New Transport Vision for the Sussex Coast commissioned by SCATE( The South Coast Alliance for Transport and the Environment)

\*\* CPRE Transport for Quality of Life March 2017 – The impact of Roads Projects in England