

Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

12 October 2017

Dear Mr Grayling,

Concern about impact of A27 Arundel proposals on national assets

We, the undersigned, are writing as a group of transport and conservation organisations with a combined member / supporter base of over 3 million people. We are extremely concerned by the options put forward by Highways England for a dual carriageway bypass of Arundel.

We recognise the challenges of addressing issues concerning traffic volume and the A27 but must advise that all three options in the current public consultation would involve unacceptable development within the South Downs National Park and the loss of a significant amount of ancient woodland. No option has been presented which avoids this significant harm which is a major oversight and in contradiction of the RIS 1 objective of delivering no net loss of biodiversity by 2020.

We are concerned that this sets a dangerous precedent and goes against Government guidance to avoid major development in National Parks and to avoid routing traffic through them. It is in stark contrast to the announcement on the A27 East of Lewes where a Selveston bypass was recently dropped not least because of its impact on the South Downs National Park.

We are concerned by an assessment of the options that appears to conclude that the benefits of the road are great enough to justify its construction in a protected landscape, but not so great as to justify effective mitigation, such as by placing it in a tunnel.

A national asset should be protected for its own sake: appropriate mitigation must be an integral requirement of any major development affecting it. If a road proposal brings insufficient benefit to justify the cost of this mitigation, then it should not go ahead.

As a Government committed to leaving the environment in a better state than we inherited it, we are sure that you will understand and share our concerns.

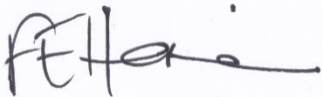
We believe there is a positive alternative way forward and this should be explored. We understand that local groups in and around Arundel are working to identify alternative options that would relieve the worst bottlenecks on the A27, while protecting priceless national assets.

We would urge you to instruct Highways England to expand the options on offer to include much less damaging alternatives and for the Department for Transport to provide strategic solutions to travel along the Sussex Coast which are less roads focussed.

Yours sincerely,



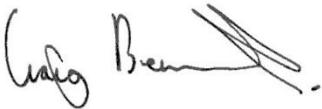
Stephen Joseph OBE, Chief Executive, Campaign for Better Transport



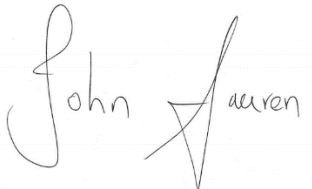
Fiona Howie, Chief Executive, Campaign for National Parks



Crispin Truman, Chief Executive, Campaign to Protect Rural England



Craig Bennett, Chief Executive, Friends of the Earth



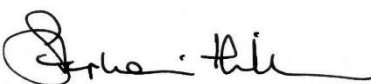
John Sauven, Chief Executive, Greenpeace



Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, Open Spaces Society



Nicola Scothern, Regional Director, RSPB



Stephanie Hilborne OBE, Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts



Beccy Speight, Chief Executive, The Woodland Trust

cc: Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Rt Hon Savid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Jesse Norman MP, Minister for Transport
Andy McDonald MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Transport
Rachael Maskell MP, Shadow Minister for Transport
Sue Hayman MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Andrew Gwynne MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Lillian Greenwood MP, Chair, Transport Select Committee
Nick Herbert MP, Arundel and South Downs
Councillor Louise Goldsmith, Leader, West Sussex County Council
Councillor Mrs Gillian Brown, Leader, Arun District Council
Margaret Paren OBE, Chair, South Downs National Park Authority