

## BYPASS NOT A27 THROUGHPASS UPDATE TO MEMBERS

NUMBER 31 – MARCH 2019

### Message from Jack Delbridge, Chair of the group.

Welcome to e-update number thirty-one.

I want to show you a recent exchange of correspondence with the Secretary of State for Transport Mr Chris Grayling MP. I published the previous exchange in e-update 29.

### CORRESPONDENCE WITH HIGHWAYS ENGLAND

*Dear Mr Grayling,*

*Please find enclosed a copy of the letter I sent to you on 3 November 2018 and the response received from James Dickson from your office dated 30 November 2018.*

*If you are passing the responsibility of replying to your correspondence to a member of your staff surely it would be prudent to ensure that they can give a proper response to the questions being asked.*

*Mr Dickson answered none of the points raised in my original letter. When members of the public take the time to write to you specifically, with specific questions, as the Secretary of State for your Department, you're responsible for what happens in that Department. That includes ensuring that letters are answered and people are not "fobbed" off with a standard letter. That is my purpose for writing to you again.*

*You and your department may not consider an A27 Bypass for Worthing, Sompting and Lancing of great significance but to the 120,000 residents who live here and the large number of people who travel through the area, it is - particularly with recent evidence stating that pollution is causing unnecessary early deaths in some people. At Grove Lodge on the A27, pollution levels are at danger level several times a day. Worthing College is situated beside this location where over a thousand students have to negotiate the road and roundabout.*

*Would you please answer the questions which I asked. To make it completely clear, I have bullet pointed the questions on the next page.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Jack Delbridge*

*Chair of Bypass Not A27 Throughpass*

### QUESTIONS FOR RESPONSE

- 1. Has the amount of money allocated to the A27 for Worthing, Lancing and Sompting been increased?*
- 2. In a statement you made, reported in The Guardian on Wednesday 5 July 2017 – "England's local roads to get boost from government cash pot" It was initially envisaged that the cash, held in a national roads fund, would be spent on the motorways and major A-roads managed by Highways England. You announced a change of tack, stating that some of it should be diverted to be spent on roads run by local authorities and placed a particular focus on a "bypass fund." In addition, I*

*note that in the Budget Report 2018 in the Red Book dated 29 October 2018, Paragraph 4.8 states that the “National Road Fund will be £28.8 billion between 2020 – 25.” Will this fund provide for long awaited investment for a bypass for the A27 in Lancing and Worthing?*

- 3. The only realistic solution to increasing pollution and traffic congestion in Worthing is a “bypass”. The residents’ action group which I lead has put forward a suggested route using Long Furlong (which is already an existing road), joining the A24 to Washington (already a dual carriageway) and then using the A283 bypassing Steyning (already an existing road) re-joining the A27 at the Shoreham flyover. We were provided with a costing by Highways England for this route in an email dated 16 September 2017 from Peter Phillips of between £500 million and £600 million. Why should an area with a population of around 120,00 people have the daily traffic using the south coast route and the high levels of pollution shortening the lives of many residents when a bypass is the best and most obvious solution?*
- 4. Already hundreds of thousands of pounds must have been spent to develop Highways England’s earlier scheme and consultation. Since then surveyors have been seen along the A27 which we assume is for Highways England’s second attempt before another consultation with the same budget - a huge waste of taxpayers’ money. Is this a second attempt?*

And the reply? Please read on...

*Dear Mr Delbridge*

### ***Follow up case on funding A27 Worthing, Lancing and Sompting***

*Thank you for your letter to the Secretary of State for Transport on the 16<sup>th</sup> January about the funding for the A27 Worthing, Lancing and Sompting. As you will appreciate, Ministers receive large numbers of correspondence and are unable to answer them all personally. Therefore, I have been asked to reply on his behalf.*

*Firstly, the amount of money for the A27 Worthing and Lancing has not changed, and no additional funds have been made available.*

*Secondly, as you say, the Chancellor announced the forecast for £28.8bn to be made available through the National Roads Fund between 2020-25 for delivery of the second Road Investment Strategy (RIS2) and enhancement schemes on the most important local roads. The Department and Highways England will use the information gathered about the performance of the strategic road network, including the A27 at Lancing and Worthing, to determine an affordable, deliverable investment plan for RIS2. We expect to announce RIS2 later this year.*

*Thirdly, Options for the A27 through Worthing and Lancing were developed according to the usual Highways England process, including stakeholder engagement and the review of previous and current studies.*

*The options looked at have also been assessed against whether or not they fulfil the brief set by the Department for Transport, known as the Roads Investment Strategy (published in March 2015), which you can find at the link below:*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/408514/ris-for-2015-16-road-period-web-version.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/408514/ris-for-2015-16-road-period-web-version.pdf)

*You will note that the budget and the objectives effectively preclude the further consideration of the bypass route you mention in your correspondence. When considered during the “options sifting” process, the bypass option was discounted as poor value for money.*

*Finally, Since the scheme was paused in November 2018, there have been no scheme-based surveys on the A27. However, the other A27 schemes (the A27 Arundel Bypass and the A27 East of Lewes), Designated Funds schemes, and our usual maintenance programme are progressing and the surveyors on site may be connected to these activities. The sight of surveyors on the A27 does not indicate further consultation on the A27 Worthing & Lancing scheme.*

*Yours sincerely,*

*Jasper Goddard*

## **OUR CAMPAIGN**

As you will have seen from the response from the Secretary of State for Transport, plans for changes to the A27 in Worthing, Lancing and Sompting are on hold. As soon as we have any more news, we'll be sure to keep you informed.

## **OUR EMAIL ADDRESS**

Please remember, our email address is [bypassworthing@gmail.com](mailto:bypassworthing@gmail.com)

Thank you for continuing to support us and we'll continue to keep you up to date with what we're doing. As always, any comments and ideas are always gratefully received.

Jack