Kay Wagland

**8:12pm Mar 16**

**Arundel SCATE Press release:**

**New report: A27 road plans built on sand**

Arundel residents reject the recommendations of the newly published report on the A27, deploring its lack of valid evidence and outdated thinking.

The A27 Corridor Feasibility Study, commissioned by the Department for Transport (DfT), says there is a need to increase road capacity due to the predicted increase in traffic, but Arundel SCATE points out that the same predictions were made in the major 2002 A27 SoCoMMS study, which is referenced by this new report. According to DfT's own figures, whilst the economy has grown significantly since then, the predicted expansion in traffic hasn't happened. Traffic levels in West Sussex have actually fallen since 2000. Traffic along the A27 itself has stayed about level.

Local businessman and Arundel resident, Simon Gray, is concerned by poor value for money of proposals. He points out that the traffic problems at Worthing and Chichester are far worse than those at Arundel and said: 'There is no economic justification for spending the bulk of allocated funds on a controversially damaging road scheme at Arundel, when a far cheaper and less intrusive scheme could relieve choke points here.' He added, 'Building such an expensive road so that traffic can arrive at nearby choke points at Fontwell and Worthing a minute or so earlier, seems a very poor use of public funds.'

The report, which was commissioned from US company Parsons Brinkerhoff last year, was asked to consider road improvements along the A27, and it draws for its economic justification on a 2013 study, commissioned by Arun District Council (also undertaken by Parsons Brinkerhoff). Arundel SCATE says the 2013 study is of extremely poor quality.

The report recommendations have limited the A27 Arundel improvements to two options, both away from the existing road and cutting across the Arun Valley. The residents' group wants to see other options discussed, to include junction and traffic flow improvements to the current A27. They see the potential for some of these to be more effective, better value and significantly less damaging than those recommended by the report. Options considering improvements along or near the existing A27 are rejected by the report arguing that this divides Arundel. However, it proposes creating a dual carriageway through Worthing, dividing the town to a far higher degree. There appears to be no analysis of start and end points of A27 journeys which would create considerable congestion on local roads.

Contrary to previous claims by elected representatives, the new report admits that building a dual carriageway bypass to Arundel does mean increased noise and air pollution, along with increased traffic volume. Other 'adverse impacts' include: wildlife, landscape, historic environment, carbon emissions and waterways.

Arundel SCATE Chair and local businesswoman, Sue White, says: 'We all understand frustrations at peak times at Arundel, but these can be significantly improved by junction improvements around Crossbush and, of course, there is the new A259 road at Bognor which will impact on traffic in the area. Traffic is fairly free flowing for much of the time. People in Arun need investment in public transport for the majority who don't have daily access to a car.'

Arundel SCATE member Jo Kemp, describes the report as narrow and old fashioned: ' It doesn't seem to have learnt the lessons of the past, particularly on wasting money. It is disturbing that this study was not asked to consider an integrated plan for travel, but is just concentrating on hugely damaging new roads.'

Notes:

Arundel South Coast Alliance for Transport and the Environment is a group of Arundel residents concerned at damaging and outdated road proposals along the A27 and looking for better travel options.

fb: Arundel SCATE

www.scate.org.uk