



Health NHS reveals its vision for the future

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Arundel A27: Second legal challenge is withdrawn

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A second legal challenge to Highways England's selection of a preferred scheme for an Arundel A27 bypass has been withdrawn in response to plans for a new consultation in the spring. Back in May a modified version of option 5a was announced as the preferred route following a public consultation from August to September 2017.

While the proposed improvements have been welcomed in some quarters, the environmental impact of the new road has been challenged by campaigners.

Legal challenges were launched by the South Downs National Park Authority and environmental campaigner Emma Tristram, who argued that there had been errors and omissions in the information provided during the consultation, while the public had not had a chance to comment on revised traffic figures.

Since then Highways England has agreed to stage a new consultation in the spring as 'important new information' about each of the options had become available.

Last week the national park said it had withdrawn its legal challenge and now Dr Tristram has announced she will follow suit and withdraw her claim, with Highways England agreeing to paying her legal fees.

Dr Tristram said: "I am pleased at what's been achieved and thank [law firm] Leigh Day and my supporters. The 2017 consultation has been shown to be faulty, and it will be important to make sure Highways England stick to their agreement in the new consultation. Even better would be a complete rethink to include the locally-promoted New single purple route, a wide single-carriageway version of one of Highways England's options. This is a more modest traffic solution which takes account of the latest statements



Campaigner Dr Emma Tristram

on climate change and species loss."

Her claim will be withdrawn on the basis of assurances about a fresh consultation, comprehensive documents being produced with updated environmental and traffic modelling data and the three options being open for selection and following further consultation a new preferred route announcement (PRA) will be made.

In the meantime the current PRA remains in place so landowners who have applied for compensation can have their applications processed.

Tessa Gregory, a partner at Leigh Day, added: "We are pleased that Highways England have committed to carrying out a new consultation which will correct errors in the previous consultation and allow our client and others a full opportunity to comment on each of the route options.

"Our client will continue to fight to ensure that the environmental damage of the proposed route is fairly and properly considered and we will continue to work with our client to ensure that Highways England keeps the promises it has made."

A Highways England spokesman said: "We welcome the withdrawal of the two legal challenges regarding the A27 Arundel bypass. Our further consultation next spring will give people a fresh look at all the viable options for upgrading the A27 using the latest available information.

"We remain clear that the preferred route announcement we made in May remains in place. This further round of consultation will give people an opportunity to comment on all matters presented at the previous consultation in 2017 and the new information available."

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