

Arundel Bypass: Grandmother's Legal Challenge given Go-ahead

Dr Emma Tristram's legal challenge to Highways England's Arundel Bypass decision, making Option 5A its Preferred Route, has been given permission to proceed to Judicial Review. The legal action by the South Downs National Park will also go ahead, and the two cases will be heard together.

'This news shows that a judge of the High Court thinks both cases have enough substance to deserve to be heard,' said Bill Treves of the Arundel Bypass Neighbourhood Committee. 'The National Park's case is based on planning law protecting National Parks. Dr Tristram's case is based on the faulty process in the public consultation, which gave a misleadingly positive picture of Option 5A.'

Dr Tristram points out that part of the case depends on Highways England's own Scheme Analysis Report (SAR) from June 2018, which shows up errors in the consultation. 'In 2017 5A was said to give far better traffic relief to Storrington and Downland villages than the other options. In 2018, the traffic relief from Options 5A and 1 is quoted as being identical.

'Traffic relief was a major factor in decisions by councils – it was the only reason given by Horsham District Council for choosing to support 5A. The councils need to admit that the basis of their decision has been removed. They should stop attacking the National Park's legal action and reconsider their own positions.'

The controversial new bypass would severely damage 100 hectares of semi-natural woodland at Binsted (wholly in the National Park), the village of Binsted (partly in the National Park), Tortington village, and the Arundel watermeadows and views of Arundel. Tony Whitbread, former CEO of the Sussex Wildlife Trust, said: 'The area that would be damaged is of national importance for ecological diversity.' Henri Brocklebank, chair of the South Coast Alliance on Transport and the Environment, agreed: 'We welcome the Court's acceptance of these Judicial Review cases. Being government owned, Highways England should properly consider all national interests, not just that of national road transport.'

Dr Tristram has already raised £11,000 for legal costs from supporters. Her crowd-funding website is www.crowdjustice.com/case/save-arundels-countryside-from-bypass-ruin.

Dr Tristram has separately also challenged Highways England's consultation on its use of 'fake news' and misinformation, by giving evidence to a Parliamentary Committee. www.data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/digital-culture-media-and-sport-committee/fake-news/written/88214.html.

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For the 4-minute 'Save Binsted' Film, click: <https://youtu.be/Pluh8neRCW8>

For more online information about the Arundel Bypass see:

www.arundelbypass.co.uk

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- For more information about Binsted village see www.binsted.org
- For more information about the environment of Binsted see www.maves.org.uk
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