

3. Matter 2, Issue 2.4, re landscape character

Update to the third section of my previous statement, headed 'The Arundel bypass conflicts with several policies in the Sustainability Appraisal'

3.1 It is inconsistent for the Local Plan to contain policies (TSP3, LAN DM2) which protect the line of part of the Pink/Blue route (now Option A) for the Arundel bypass, and state that the District Council will work towards early delivery of the Arundel bypass, when both routes proposed by the Study (and any offline route) are against many policies in the Local Plan such as Sustainability Objective 6 ('Will this protect and enhance the distinctive character of Arun's settlements, built environments and landscapes?') and Strategic Objective 5 ('To protect and enhance Arun's outstanding landscape, countryside...historic, built and archaeological environment...reinforcing local character and identity').

3.2 The setting of Arundel is specifically protected in ALP 7.5.5 to 7.5.9. Even though the Study is faulty and inconsistent, its conclusion in Report 2, Table 6-8 under 'Landscape' is indubitably true. For all three bypass options in that Table (A, B and an Option C that was not progressed), 'Heavy traffic would cross Arun Valley on 1.5km embankment south of Arundel with severe impact on the character of the valley, its tranquillity and the setting of the historic town of Arundel'. The ALP's support for the Arundel Bypass is shown to be incompatible with its landscape and character protection policies.

3.3 The effect of either version of the new Option B at Binsted would also directly contradict the Inspector's suggested new wording (in 'Draft Matters and Issues') for the policy LAN DM1: 'Landscape Development within the setting of the South Downs National Park must have special regard to the conservation of that setting, including views into and out of the Park, and will not be permitted where there would be harmful effects on these considerations'. The more northerly new Option B, with its four overbridges, passing in and out of the woods, by its impact on the edge of the Park would ruin views into and out of the Park over a wide area. The more southerly version of new Option B, being in the open through fields just outside or within the National Park, presumably with the same number of overbridges, would have an even more devastating impact on views into and out of the Park. It would also (like Option A south of Arundel) contradict the ALP's landscape and character protection policies.

3.4 Since my previous representation the Inspector's report on the Durham Local Plan (18 February 2015) has recommended cancelling Durham City Council's Western and Northern relief road plans. See <http://durhamcc-consult.limehouse.co.uk/file/3333199>. Durham is somewhat similar to Arundel in having a famous old building on an eminence (Durham Cathedral) surrounded by beautiful landscape. I hope that the Inspector will at least recommend that 'Sustainable travel initiatives' and 'traffic restraint measures', as described by the Durham Inspector, should also be considered in the proposed public consultation, the more so because of the changed situation described in 1 above, with both routes for the western section of the Bypass (Options A and B) largely or partially in the National Park.

3.5 It would remove the inconsistency mentioned above if the Inspector would follow the lead of the Inspector on Durham City Council's EIP and recommend that the ALP should no longer support the Arundel Bypass as the 'most appropriate strategy' (NPPF, para 182).