

# News bulletin

## £15 billion roads investment welcomed

GOVERNMENT plans for a £15 billion roads investment programme were this week welcomed by Arundel & South Downs MPs Nick Herbert.

The roads programme is expected to include improvements to the A27.

Speaking at the annual conference of the Confederation of British Industry, David Cameron promised investment in more than 100 projects on the Strategic Road Network by the end of the decade, resulting in hundreds of extra lane miles on motorways and trunk roads.

The Prime Minister said that the Autumn Statement, to be delivered by the Chancellor on December 3, will "give the green light given to major projects that have been stalled for years" with "action to improve some of the most important arteries in our country ... which for too long have held parts of our country back."

Although the Prime Minister did not single out the A27 in his speech, mentioning only the A1 and the A303, the news release issued by 10 Downing Street said that "as part of the biggest programme of investment in our road network for decades, this Government will take action and fund solutions to tackle some of the most notorious and longstanding problems on our road network across the country. This includes improvements to ... the A27 on the South Coast."

The Government has been conducting a feasibility study into improvements to the A27, including an Arundel bypass and dualling of the A27 in Worthing. The last meeting of the Department of Transport's Stakeholder Reference Group on the Feasibility Study, held last week, was told that there were around 25,000 traffic movements through Arundel on the A27 every day, 78 per cent of which was through traffic and not local.

Earlier this year Mr Herbert helped to launch the A27 Action Campaign, an alliance of West Sussex MPs, businesses and local councils which has been making the case for improvements to the coastal route. The MP also invited the Transport Secretary to Arundel in the summer to see problems on the road for himself.

Nick Herbert said: "The Prime Minister's commitment to investment in the Strategic Roads Network is very welcome, and mention of the A27 is encouraging. We have been able to demonstrate that there is a strong economic and environmental case for an Arundel bypass, and I hope that this will be recognised when the Chancellor delivers his Autumn Statement in three weeks' time."

Mr Herbert said last week that he continued to support the 'pink blue' route for an Arundel bypass which would avoid the National Park and did not support a proposal which would pass between Binsted and Walberton. The MP pointed out that this option would be significantly more expensive than the 'pink-blue' route.