

View needs to be challenged

I HAVE been reading with interest the news stories regarding possible alterations to the A27 at Arundel and Worthing.

Some of our local MPs and local councillors appear to believe this would be a good expenditure of public money - amounting to billions of pounds - to build what will effectively be a new road between Lancing and Binsted.

I think this view is mistaken and needs to be challenged.

Having recently returned from a short holiday in the New Forest, which is bisected by the M27/ A31, I was impressed not by the amount of traffic this 'superhighway' diverts from nearby towns and villages, but rather how bad traffic congestion was in local communities.

As with the M25, this motorway attracts ever increasing amounts of road users, beguiled by the promise of faster travel. Short-term benefits are soon replaced by even worse congestion in the medium to long-term.

Then there are the environmental considerations.

I would ask anyone tempted to support the preferred route for the new A27 at Arundel to walk the route as I have.

A vast new bridge spanning the Arun valley would then head straight through peaceful woodland for several miles until



Photo taken by Louise Yates in Petworth last week.

rejoining the existing A27 at Binsted.

As for Worthing, are we really going to contemplate the compulsory purchase of possibly hundreds of properties for the third time in forty years? Is this really what we should be doing in the 21st century?

Can we think of nothing more creative or sustainable than indulging a fetish for road building?

Far better to look at the very sensible and far cheaper junction and widening improvements recently suggested by Highways engineers, W S Atkins, who had been contracted by West Sussex County Council for this very purpose.

Let's also look at promoting public transport links and staggered working and school hours to ease congestion at peak periods.

Spending billions of pounds, at a time of austerity, on last century solutions to traffic management does not give one much confidence in the long term vision of some West Sussex politicians.

Chris Hare