

To Gary Shipton, Editor West Sussex Gazette

Sir

Your report 'Roads minister examines A27 congestion' (22 October 2014) was factually inaccurate. The meeting on 16 October at Avisford Park Hilton Hotel was not for the minister to 'meet elected representatives', but for the minister to meet local community representatives with a variety of concerns about the current A27 'Feasibility Study' and emerging options. Nick Herbert was originally not invited, but was notified of the meeting and tried to hijack it by bringing various pro-bypass local councillors from Arundel at the last minute.

Once at the meeting, for which 45 minutes had been allocated to cover representations from people from the Lewes and Polegate, Worthing and Arundel areas, Nick Herbert and the uninvited councillors tried to 'talk out' the people connected to Arundel, whose turn to speak was last, leaving them only a few minutes to make their points. I wanted to point out how the Study's 'Option B' would ruin the beautiful village of Binsted but there was so little time left that I did not speak, only handed over my notes.

Whilst the people brought by Nick Herbert - who acknowledged that they were surprised to be brought along at the very last minute - were identified by name in your article, the people for whom the meeting was arranged are simply identified by you as 'anti-roads campaigners' rather than named and identified as Sussex businessmen, landowners and local residents concerned at plans to sacrifice countryside and heritage, without consultation. These people were not invited to challenge the assertions in your article.

Arundel Town Council has refused to hold a public meeting about the bypass. When shown a map of Option B through Binsted (recorded by the CPRE representative as shown on the screen at the Study's August meeting) and asked if he could stop it, Nick Herbert refused to look at it, saying he did not know where it went. The MP and the A27 Action Campaign are trying, through the Feasibility Study process, at semi-secret meetings without public consultation, to limit the options to an offline bypass.

The elected representatives at Arundel have so far refused to represent public opinion they do not agree with. It is 21 years since the Pink/Blue route was chosen, the landscape has changed during that time, opinions may have changed, and many people do not know anything about the bypass or the latest Study. The public should at least be informed and allowed to discuss all the options.

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