

## **Environment, Communities and Fire Select Committee**

**4 June 2018**

### **A27 Chichester Bypass Improvements: Submission to the Government's Roads Investment Strategy**

#### **Report by Executive Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Environment and Director for Highways and Transport**

##### **Executive Summary**

In June 2013, the Government made a commitment in the Spending Review announcement to improve the A27 Chichester Bypass. Following this, the Government published its first Roads Investment Strategy (RIS1) in December 2014, which committed to improving four junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass in Roads Period 1 (2015-20).

In July 2016, Highways England published five options for improving the A27 at Chichester for public consultation. However, none of options secured support from a majority of the consultation respondents and on 28 February 2017, the Secretary of State wrote to Highways England cancelling the scheme because of the lack of local consensus about how the A27 at Chichester should be improved.

In response to the Secretary of State's announcement, the County Council convened a community meeting to try to build consensus and develop a way forward through the 'Build A Better A27' initiative. The BABA27 community group established themes and key requirements to inform a set of 'success criteria' for the A27 Chichester scheme. Transport and engineering consultants, Systra, were appointed to provide independent technical advice and support to the community group to promote a scheme for inclusion in the Government's second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2 - 2020-25).

Systra have worked with the BABA27 community group to understand key issues and constraints and identify a long list of possible options. The long list has been sifted down to a short list of five conceptual options: three are assessed to be 'undeliverable' or 'undesirable' but there are two 'desirable' conceptual options that meet, or meet most of, the success criteria identified by the group; a 'mitigated northern route' and a 'full southern route'. However, there continues to be a wide range of views among local stakeholders and, at present, no clear majority in favour of any conceptual option.

There are three potential approaches to promoting a scheme to the Government for inclusion in RIS2, each of which has different advantages and risks. It is suggested that Approach C is taken forward, that is, promoting one of the two desirable options as a preference but also promoting the other one as a 'reasonable alternative'.

On balance, it is suggested that the submission to Highways England should include the 'mitigated northern route' as the County Council's preferred option,

subject to the inclusion of important mitigation measures that are needed to make the scheme acceptable in environmental terms and the 'full southern route' as a reasonable alternative to mitigate the community consensus and policy fit risks associated with the 'mitigated northern route'.

There is a need for the County Council to set out its views on the way forward to Highways England in June 2018 in order to inform decisions on RIS2.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee is recommended to note the outputs of the work by the BABA27 Community Group and Systra (sections 3 and 4) and to submit its views to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure on:

- (a) the desirability of the 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route' options (section 4);
- (b) the suggestion that Approach C (i.e. promoting one of the two desirable options as a preference but also promoting the other one as a 'reasonable alternative') is taken to promoting a scheme to the Government for inclusion in RIS2, noting the 'fallback' position if no approach is selected (section 6);
- (c) the suggestion that the 'mitigated northern route' should be identified as the County Council's preferred option (section 8).

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In June 2013, the Government made a commitment in the Spending Review announcement to improve the A27 Chichester Bypass. Following this, the Government published its first Roads Investment Strategy (RIS1) in December 2014, which committed to improving four junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass in Roads Period 1 (2015-20).
- 1.2 In July 2016, Highways England published five options (options 1, 1A, 2, 3 and 3A) for improving the A27 at Chichester for public consultation between 14 July and 22 September 2016. The five options published for consultation included a range of improvements to four junctions on the A27 at Chichester. One option also included a proposed Stockbridge link road and another option included carriageway widening between the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions.
- 1.3 The County Council submitted a consultation response indicating that the County Council had no preferred option, as each of the options required further refinement. The public consultation report published by Highways England states that when asked to choose a Preferred Option, 47% of consultation respondents chose not to select one of the five options and instead selected "No Option". The next largest response was for Option 2, with 31% of respondents selecting this as their preferred option. Beyond this, there were 6% in favour of Option 1A, 4% for Option 1, 3% for Option 3, 2% for Option 3A and 7% did not respond.
- 1.4 On 28 February 2017, the Secretary of State wrote to Highways England cancelling the RIS1 scheme noting that the scheme was controversial and

there was a lack of community support, and the withdrawal of support by the local councils for the shortlisted options.

## **2. Community-led Workshops**

2.1 In response to the Secretary of State's announcement, the County Council convened a community meeting to try to build consensus and develop a way forward. The 'Build A Better A27' (BABA27) initiative was launched by the County Council and supported by Chichester District Council (CDC). The BABA27 community group included representatives from local councils, residents groups, user/interest groups and local businesses. The meetings were also attended by County Council members for the Chichester South County Local Committee area.

2.2 The BABA27 community group identified a set of 'themes' and 'key requirements' (a-s) for the A27 Chichester scheme that provide a set of local identified 'success criteria', against which different possible options for improving the A27 can be considered:

Theme: Through and local traffic

- a. Strong separation of through and local traffic and people
- b. Fix the problem right and do it once
- c. Remove the barrier to north – south movement created by the current A27
- d. Facilitate better flow of east to west traffic
- e. Provision of a diversion route which can be used in emergencies
- f. Facilitating local journeys

Theme: Multi-modal transport

- g. Safe separation between motorised and non-motorised road users
- h. Integrated transport plan for road and non-road transport required

Theme: Environmental Factors

- i. A27 scheme must be sympathetic to Chichester area character
- j. Separate A27 traffic and particulates, noise and poor environment from people

Theme: Chichester as a jewel of England

- k. Minimise visual impact of the scheme
- l. A27 should not be seen as a feature of the Chichester area

Theme: Landscape and Conservation

- m. The business and community considers the landscape and visual impact factors to be just as important as business factors
- n. Preserving the positive distinctive features of the Chichester area

Theme: Transport innovations and experiments

- o. New digital capabilities including signage and smart traffic management

Theme: Local/ Regional economy

- q. To understand the negative impact on the economy of the A27 as it is
- r. We need to more clearly understand the potential positive impact of an improved A27
- s. We need to understand the potential future opportunities the A27 brings to a sustainable economy for the Chichester area

2.3 In January 2018, transport and engineering consultants, Systra, were appointed by the County Council to provide independent technical advice and support to the community group. The brief and specification for the project also received input from the Highways England, CDC and members of the group.

2.4 The most recent workshop was held on 18 May 2018. A note of the meeting will be tabled at the Committee meeting, so that the views of the BABA27 community group can be taken into account.

### **3. Option Development**

3.1 Systra reviewed a wide range of previous studies and reports to gain an understanding of the key issues and constraints. Notably, this included information developed and published by Highways England as part of their 2016 consultation on options, including information (e.g. traffic and environmental data) about options not previously published for consultation. Information such as previous technical studies, visions, policies and strategy documents were also provided by members of the community group and information about future development plans was provided by the local planning authorities. The information was used to provide a basis for understanding the key issues, constraints and previously identified solutions.

3.2 Systra generated a long list of scheme suggestions for discussion with the community group, drawing on previous studies, information provided by members of the community group and their own professional knowledge and experience. The long list of suggestions included 'on-line' (i.e. on the existing A27 Chichester bypass), 'off-line' (i.e. away from the current alignment of A27 Chichester bypass) and 'modal' (i.e. relying on road users switching to other modes of transport) options that are detailed in Appendix A. Systra sifted through the long list of suggestions by considering performance of the suggestions against the success criteria in paragraph 2.2 to identify a smaller number of suggestions that were potentially feasible and likely to meet the future needs of the area. The long list of suggestions and choice about the suggestions that were potentially feasible were presented to the community group and some amendments were made to the list.

3.3 Systra subsequently sifted out five conceptual options and included these on a short list for further consideration and option assessment. The conceptual options are described in Table 1.

**Table 1: Short list of five conceptual options for further consideration and option assessment**

<b>Conceptual Option</b>	<b>Description</b>
Marginal gains	Improvements to six junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass identified to mitigate the impacts of planned development in Chichester and Arun districts.
Combined investment	Combined investment in both the 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route'. This option would combine the components of the two options described below.
Tunnel	A tunnel between a point west of the Fishbourne junction and a point east of the Portfield junction.
Mitigated northern route	A new dual carriageway 'off-line' route to the north of Chichester between a point west of the Fishbourne junction and a point east of the Portfield junction. The scheme would include lowered carriageways and green bridges in sensitive sections to reduce severance. There is an option to provide a junction with the A285. Environmental mitigation measures would also be needed to mitigate visual, noise and other impacts.
Full southern route	An 'on-line' improvement to six junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass. The scheme would include underpasses at Fishbourne and Stockbridge junctions, maintaining all existing turning movements. The scheme includes flyovers at the Whyke and Bognor junctions maintaining all existing turning movements. The scheme would also include a flyover and junction remodelling at Portfield. The scheme would include carriageway realignment to provide slip roads and maintain traffic flow during construction. Environmental mitigation measures would also be needed to mitigate visual, noise, air quality and other impacts.

#### **4. Option Assessment**

4.1 As part of the commission brief, Systra were asked to consider the objectives identified by Highways England for the RIS1 scheme, as these are likely to remain applicable to a future scheme on the A27 at Chichester. The objectives were to:

- Increase capacity on the Chichester bypass;
- Improve road safety, during construction, operation and maintenance for:
  - Users;
  - Non-Motorised Users (NMUs);
  - Workers; and,
  - Other parties.
- Reduce adverse environmental impacts & eliminate where possible;
  - Address existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and ensure no further AQMAs are created as a result of the selected option; and,
  - Address existing noise priority areas and ensure no further noise priority areas are created as a result of the selected option.
- Improve journey time reliability on the Strategic Road Network (SRN);

- Improve capacity and support the growth of regional economies;
  - Facilitate timely delivery of the scheme to enable provision of housing demand in line with the Chichester Local Plan;
  - Improve regional connectivity; and,
  - Improve accessibility to areas with tourist activity.
- Give consideration to buildability aspects including:
  - Design to facilitate ease of construction within the scheme / land constraints;
  - Ensure design minimises disruption from construction / maintenance activities to users & third parties; and,
  - Ensure design facilitates practical traffic management solutions during construction.

4.2 In identifying and sifting the long list of options, Systra additionally identified a set of wider delivery considerations. These are:

- Policy and planning fit
- Engineering feasibility, including required mitigations
- Acceptability
- Funding potential
- Value for Money

4.3 The wider delivery considerations in paragraph 4.2 should be considered alongside the themes and key requirements in paragraph 2.2 and Highways England objectives in paragraph 4.1 when assessing options for improving the A27 at Chichester.

4.4 A summary of the assessment of the five conceptual options is provided in paragraphs 4.5-4.10. Full details of the option assessment are included in Appendix A.

#### ***'Marginal Gains' Option***

4.5 Systra have concluded that the 'marginal gains' option is unlikely to address the problems faced in the Chichester area, other than in the short term. For this reason, they conclude that the conceptual option lacks the ambition needed to satisfactorily meet the success criteria identified by the BABA27 community group or meet Highways England's objectives. This conceptual option is designed to mitigate the impacts of future growth (i.e. to ensure that conditions do not get worse due to development related traffic growth), rather than to address pre-existing issues. Therefore, this option is 'undesirable'.

#### ***'Combined Investment' Option***

4.6 Systra have concluded that the 'combined investment' option could significantly add to capacity to the transport network, for private vehicles and use by buses, cyclists and pedestrians. This conceptual option would though have the same qualities and risks associated with both the 'mitigated northern route' and 'full southern route' options. However, this conceptual option is fundamentally unaffordable (i.e. more than double the RIS1 budget) and would not generate sufficient additional benefits to offer good value for

money and make the investment attractive to Government. Therefore, this option is 'undeliverable'.

### ***'Tunnel' Option***

- 4.7 Systra have concluded that the 'tunnel' option could add capacity to the transport network with fairly limited impacts on the environment. However, this conceptual option is fundamentally unaffordable (i.e. more than double the RIS1 budget) and would not generate sufficient additional benefits to offer good value for money and make the investment attractive to Government. Therefore, this option is 'undeliverable'.

### ***'Mitigated Northern Route' Option***

- 4.8 Systra have concluded that the 'mitigated northern route' option offers the best long-term transport solution to the problems of the A27 at Chichester. This conceptual option will add capacity and resilience to the transport network that will help to maintain long-term economic vitality. The environmental impacts of this option will be significant, even with carefully configured environmental mitigation measures and there may be some challenging business impacts particularly during construction. Mitigation measures would need to be set out in a Construction Management Plan and Systra have concluded that significant mitigation should be possible. This conceptual option will conflict with national and local policies due to impacts on South Downs National Park. As a consequence of the additional environmental mitigation measures, the cost of this option is estimated to be between £350-400m with additional uncertainties over land and business impact costs. There is potential to develop 'lower cost' or 'next best' alternatives to this conceptual option but the environmental mitigation measures are essential to reduce the otherwise potentially significant environmental impacts.
- 4.9 Systra conclude that the value for money assessment for the 'mitigated northern route' is unlikely to be significantly different from the initial value for money assessment previously carried out by Highways England on options 4 and 5 that were developed but not published for consultation with the public in 2016. This is because Highways England's option 4 and 5 demonstrated substantial journey time savings that far exceeded the Government's minimum criteria on value for money. Systra conclude that the 'mitigated northern route' option offers the best long-term solution for the A27 in best fitting with the success criteria, Highways England's objectives and wider delivery considerations. They are also of the view that the environmental and business impacts can be largely mitigated, but with a risk of compliance with planning and policy fit. Systra recommend that consideration is given to whether the 'mitigated northern route' concept offers enough to build community consensus to invest in developing the concept. Therefore, this option is 'desirable'.

### ***'Full Southern Route' Option***

- 4.10 Systra have concluded that the 'full southern route' option offers a medium to long-term solution to the problems of the A27 at Chichester. Engineering

mitigation measures set out in a Construction Management Plan would reduce the adverse impacts during construction, but there will still be significant residual impacts on users of the A27 during construction. Network resilience will improve to support medium to long-term economic vitality. The conceptual option can largely address the environmental issues affecting the Chichester Harbour AONB. As a consequence of the additional engineering and environmental mitigation measures, the cost of this option is estimated to be between £300-350m, with additional uncertainties over land and business impact costs. There is potential to develop 'lower cost' or 'next best' alternatives to this conceptual option and some components of the scheme could be implemented without others and still provide some of the benefits of the scheme but this is likely to compromise delivery of the BABA27 critical success factors.

- 4.11 Systra conclude that the value for money assessment for the 'full southern route' option is unlikely to be significantly different from the value for money assessment carried out by Highways England for the options published for consultation in 2016. This is because scheme benefits are expected to increase in line with the additional costs as almost all junction movements will be retained. Systra conclude that the 'full southern route' option provides a medium-to long-term solution addressing all key concerns raised with earlier 'south' RIS1 options. It will also address, but not fully, many of the success criteria, Highways England's objectives and wider delivery considerations. Systra conclude that the concept is deliverable, but with some difficult and costly engineering challenges to overcome. Systra recommend that consideration is given to whether the 'full southern route' concept offers enough to build community consensus to invest in developing the concept. Therefore, this option is 'desirable'.

## **5. Dialogue with the Government and Highways England**

- 5.1 In September 2017, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure wrote to Highways England stating that it was the County Council's preference that a scheme for the A27 at Chichester should not be taken forward in RIS1 and that work with the community group should continue to promote a scheme for inclusion in the Government's second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2) that will cover Roads Period 2 (2020-25). RIS2 is currently being prepared and is expected to be published in autumn 2018. The County Council and Transport for the South East (the emerging Sub-national Transport Body) have requested that the A27 Chichester scheme be included in RIS2 although no details have been provided to the Government about the scheme that should be included.
- 5.2 In parallel with the BABA27 community group workshops, the County Council, together with CDC and the MP for Chichester, have continued to engage with Highways England to ensure they have been provided with opportunities to influence the consultants' brief and the long list of options. During the project, Highways England have also provided advice about the RIS2 timetable and evaluation process. They have also confirmed that the level of technical work being carried out as part of the project is suitable for the current stage of the project. Highways England have also agreed to undertake a technical assessment of Systra's final technical report with a focus on both the 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route'.



Both conceptual options will be treated equally. The findings will be shared with the County Council, CDC and the MP for Chichester.

- 5.3 Highways England have identified that as the RIS1 scheme was cancelled because of a lack of community consensus, this is the most important issue to be addressed in order for a scheme to have the best chance of being included in RIS2. In addition to addressing the need for community consensus, Highways England have stated that any new scheme will need to be very different from the options identified as part of the RIS1 scheme.
- 5.4 Highways England also confirmed that although the budget range for the RIS1 scheme was up to £250m, no budget is currently allocated to the A27 Chichester scheme in RIS2, or to any other potential RIS2 schemes. Therefore, in order for the scheme to be included in RIS2, it would need to be considered against other potential priorities nationally. It will be for the Government, not Highways England, to decide whether or not to include the A27 Chichester scheme in RIS2 and, if included, to set the budget for the scheme.

## **6. Potential Approaches**

- 6.1 In response to Highways England's 2016 consultation on options, the County Council did not indicate a preference for an option, as each of the options required further refinement. Systra have presented five possible conceptual options and concluded that three of these options are not deliverable or desirable, leaving two desirable options that could potentially be taken forward. The 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route' are sufficiently different from the options previously presented by Highways England. They seek to address many of the key issues and concerns expressed by stakeholders and the public during the Highways England's consultation in 2016 and more recently as part of the BABA27 project.
- 6.2 There are three potential approaches to promoting a scheme to the Government for inclusion in RIS2. The drivers behind these approaches are the need to demonstrate community consensus and the desire to show local leadership and accountability in decision-making. Each potential approach has different advantages and risks. The approaches are either:
  - A. Promoting both the 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route' as being desirable without indicating a preference for either option; or
  - B. Promoting only one of the desirable options (either the 'mitigated northern route' or the 'full southern route') and not promoting the other one; or
  - C. Promoting one of the desirable options (either the 'mitigated northern route' or the 'full southern route') as a preference but also promoting the other one as a 'reasonable alternative' that could be delivered if, following development, the preferred option was found to be undeliverable.

### ***Approach A: Promote Both Options***

- 6.3 Approach A would provide two improved conceptual options that more effectively respond to local issues and concerns and if either option ultimately proved to be undeliverable, then the other option could be delivered. However, this approach is unlikely to demonstrate to Highways England and Government that there is community consensus and that the two councils support a scheme. This has been identified by Highways England as the single most important aspect that needs to change in order to have the best chance of being included in RIS2. The decision about which scheme to implement would rest with the Government and Highways England rather than locally elected representatives. Therefore, this potential approach carries a high risk that it will not give Highways England and Government sufficient confidence to invest in the scheme. For this reason, it is not suggested that this approach is taken forward.

***Approach B: Promote Only One Option***

- 6.4 Approach B is likely to demonstrate that there is community consensus if the same preference is indicated by the County Council and CDC.. However, it would effectively rule out the other desirable option that would meet at least some of the success criteria identified by the BABA27 community group, Highways England's objectives and wider delivery considerations and that is also likely to have some support within the community. This potential approach would demonstrate local leadership on this issue, provided that the Government and Highways England accept the decision. As Highways England's decision to rule out options prior to public consultation was previously criticised, this approach could be criticised for the same reasons. Also, if the preferred option ultimately proves to be undeliverable for some reason, there would be no alternative scheme to address the issues that affect the Chichester area. For these reasons, it is not suggested that this approach is taken forward.

***Approach C: Promote a Preferred Option and a Reasonable Alternative***

- 6.5 Approach C is likely to demonstrate that there is a degree of community consensus if the same preference is indicated by the County Council and CDC. This potential approach would satisfactorily address the reasons why Approaches A and B are not recommended and would demonstrate local leadership and accountability for the decision. For this reason, it is suggested that Approach C is taken forward.

***'Fallback' Position (i.e. no major scheme)***

- 6.6 If none of the above approaches are taken forward and, as a consequence, Highways England do not take forward a major scheme for inclusion in RIS2, the 'fallback' is that improvements to the junctions on the A27 Chichester Bypass will still need to be delivered to mitigate the impacts of development in the Chichester and Arun Local Plans. The improvements identified to support the Chichester Local Plan (2015) are small-scale, at-grade improvements that involve restricting movement to ensure the junctions will continue to operate effectively. As the improvements will be developer-funded, they are likely to be delivered incrementally as development comes forward over the local plan period to 2029. They are only expected to

mitigate the impacts of development rather than to improve conditions overall.

## **7. Policy Fit**

- 7.1 The West Sussex Transport Plan (2011-26) (WSTP) identifies that improvements to the A27 at Chichester, Arundel and Worthing are the County Council's highest priority for transport. The WSTP also includes improvements to the junctions on the A27 at Chichester as one of the aims for Chichester. Since the WSTP was prepared, more information has been collected about travel patterns and environmental issues that affect the Chichester area, now and in the future. The local community has also been provided with opportunities to highlight key issues and concerns about the A27 and potential solutions by responding to Highways England's consultation on options or as part of the BABA27 project. For these reasons, there appears to be sufficient justification to consider; a) whether the aims of the WSTP are still up-to-date, and b) whether one or both of the desirable options would deliver the aims of the WSTP.
- 7.2 Systra have identified that the 'mitigated northern route' option would conflict with national policy. This is because major road building or widening in national parks can only take place in exceptional circumstances and where it is in the public interest. There is also a duty on the County Council to have regard to the purposes of national park designation when considering projects outside national parks that may have impacts within them. It is understood that in order to demonstrate that such exceptional circumstances exist, there would be a need to demonstrate that the strategic objectives could not be achieved in another way that would have less impact on the National Park.
- 7.3 For the reasons that the West Sussex Transport Plan sets out that one of the aims for Chichester is to improve the A27 junctions at Chichester and due to the conflict with national policy associated with the 'mitigated northern route', it is recommended that the 'full southern route' is developed as a reasonable alternative.

## **8. Selection of a preferred option**

- 8.1 The 'mitigated northern route' would offer the best fit with the success criteria identified by the BABA27 community group, Highways England's objectives and the wider delivery considerations. This conclusion is based on a level of technical work that is satisfactory for the current stage of the project and set out in Appendix A. However, this option carries risk due to conflict with national policy on protected landscapes. Systra have also recommended that consideration be given to the whether there is likely to be sufficient consensus to promote this option.
- 8.2 Although it does not fully meet the success criteria identified by the BABA27 community group, Highways England's objectives and the wider delivery considerations, the 'full southern route' would offer a reasonable alternative to the 'mitigated northern route', provided that the environmental impacts can be satisfactorily addressed.

- 8.3 As identified in paragraph 12.5, there is a risk that insufficient funding will be allocated in RIS2, therefore, on balance, it is suggested that the full 'mitigated northern route' is identified as the County Council's preferred option and the 'full southern route' being developed as a reasonable alternative to mitigate the community consensus and policy fit risks associated with the 'mitigated northern route'.

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the outputs of the work by the BABA27 Community Group and Systra and to submit its views to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure on:
- (a) the desirability of the 'mitigated northern route' and the 'full southern route' options (section 4);
  - (b) the suggestion that Approach C (i.e. promoting one of the two desirable options as a preference but also promoting the other one as a 'reasonable alternative') is taken to promoting a scheme to the Government for inclusion in RIS2, noting the 'fallback' position if no approach is selected (section 6);
  - (c) the suggestion that the 'mitigated northern route' should be identified as the County Council's preferred option (section 8).

## **10. Consultation**

- 10.1 A number of community-led workshops have been held as part of the BABA27 initiative and members of the group have provided feedback on key issues, constraints and potential solutions. This information has been summarised in Appendix A. The key themes of the feedback received are:
- A package of junction improvements could have some merit in conjunction with a 'smart A road' concept of using technology and signage to improve traffic flows and reliability;
  - Any on-line improvements should avoid flyovers and turning restrictions, but should still offer separation of local / through traffic;
  - Concern over the impacts of disruption during construction for 'on-line' improvements;
  - Southern 'off-line' routes are seen as challenging because of land availability and environmental impacts, particularly on Chichester Harbour AONB;
  - Split views on the merits of northern 'off-line' routes;
  - A local 'off-line' northern route is seen as being particularly challenging due to conflicts with proposed housing developments, the impact on the Portfield junction and local villages;
  - Strategic 'off-line' northern routes are acknowledged to provide capacity and separation of through and local traffic, but would require significant mitigation of environmental and business impacts; and
  - Modal measures are generally supported as a vital part of the wider strategic solution, but will not address the issues of A27 on their own.

- 10.2 During the BABA27 initiative a community survey was carried out to check the acceptability of the long list of suggestions between 15 - 29 March 2018 via the Chichester Observer, the County Council website and through email and written responses. 3,798 responses were received. The key themes of the feedback received are broadly consistent with the themes fed back during the community workshops and listed in paragraph 10.1.
- 10.3 The wide range of views shared during the community workshops and through the community survey demonstrates that there continues to be a wide range of views within the local community. No significant majority appears to have developed during the course of the project in favour of any of the conceptual options. This makes it challenging to demonstrate that there is community consensus. For this reason, locally elected representatives including the County Council, CDC and the MP for Chichester should consider setting out a single joint position on the way forward to demonstrate a degree of local consensus on this issue.
- 10.4 The Chichester South County Local Committee, together with a representative from CDC have formed a Member Working Group (MWG) to oversee the BABA27 project. The MWG previewed information before it was presented to the BABA27 community group and notes of all meetings have been published to provide transparency of the process.
- 10.5 The approach taken to community engagement as part of the BABA27 project has been more transparent and inclusive of local community stakeholders than with the RIS1 options developed by Highways England. Although this approach has required resourcing and careful management, it has offered greater involvement for local stakeholders and transparency of the process. Highways England should consider continuing to engage with members of the BABA27 community group through the development of a RIS2 scheme as this could help to achieve community consensus and a different outcome following a future public consultation. Consideration should be given to including the South Downs National Park Authority and the Chichester Harbour Conservancy as key stakeholders in the project.
- 10.6 Officers from Arun District Council have informally indicated that they do not have a particular preference for a route to south or north of Chichester. However, they are concerned about construction impacts of 'on-line improvements', particularly on the operation of A27, A259 and the B2166 as there is a lack of alternative routes. Therefore, they are keen to see an 'off-line' improvement to the A27 at Chichester.

## **11. Resource Implications and Value for Money**

- 11.1 The resource implications of the recommendation are that officer time will be required to prepare a RIS2 submission to Highways England and, if a scheme is included in RIS2, to work with Highways England and the community to support the development of the A27 Chichester scheme. Resource to prepare a RIS2 submission and provide technical support to Highways England is allocated for this purpose within existing service plans.

- 11.2 The County Council has offered, in principle, to contribute to the cost of implementing the A27 Chichester scheme. The Capital Programme includes provision for a £10m contribution; there are no constraints on its use, other than demonstrating good value for money. No decision needs to be made at this stage about how and when the financial contribution should be used.

## **12. Risk Management Implications**

- 12.1 There is a risk that the local plan improvements (the 'fallback' position – paragraph 6.6) will not be publically acceptable as they involve the same types of interventions (e.g. restrictions on movements at junctions) that were a source of concern for the local community during Highways England's consultation on options in 2016. There is also a risk that developer contributions may only result in smaller scale improvements being delivered that will not fully mitigate the impacts of development. This could lead to a worsening of traffic conditions (e.g. queuing, rat-running and peak-spreading) once development takes place.
- 12.2 There is a risk that if one of the desirable options is taken forward by Highways England, it will not have public support. This could potentially be mitigated by local stakeholders agreeing to support the same option.
- 12.3 There is a risk that if different stakeholders present very different views about the way forward, this lack of local consensus may not be viewed favourably by Highways England and Government. This could result in the scheme failing to be included in RIS2.
- 12.4 There is also a risk that further technical work to develop the concept will result in some elements of the scheme being removed from the design for technical feasibility, cost or other reasons before it is published for public consultation; as a consequence, therefore, it may fail to meet the needs of local stakeholders.
- 12.5 There is a risk that when the costs and benefits of the County Council's preferred option for the A27 Chichester are considered against other priorities nationally, it will not be selected for funding in RIS2 or that insufficient funding is allocated to deliver the scheme in full. Technical work is currently underway to prepare RIS2 and the newly formed sub-national transport body; Transport for the South East, has indicated that the A27 Chichester remains a priority for RIS2. However, there is no guarantee that the scheme will be selected and this should be viewed as a high risk. The 'full southern route' is potentially scalable because some components of the scheme could be implemented without others and still provide some of the benefits of the scheme but this approach may compromise delivery of the BABA27 critical success factors. However, the 'mitigated northern route' is not scalable because it relies on providing a continuous route with connections to the existing highway network at both ends in order to provide the benefits of the scheme. There is some limited potential to reduce the cost of both conceptual options but, in doing so, care would need to be taken not to compromise delivery of the BABA27 success criteria.

## **13. Equality Duty**

An Equality Impact Report is not required because it relates to the actions of an external organisation.

#### **14. Crime and Disorder Act Implications**

There are no identifiable Crime and Disorder Act implications in making this response.

#### **15. Human Rights Act Implications**

There are no identifiable Human Rights Act implications in making this decision.

##### **Lee Harris**

Executive Director for Economy,  
Infrastructure and Environment

##### **Matt Davey**

Director for Highways and  
Transport

#### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Systra Technical Report

#### **Background Papers**

HT15 (16/17) Response to Highways England's Consultation on Options for the A27 Chichester Bypass (Sept 2016)

IH14 (17/18) A27 Chichester Bypass Improvements (Sept 2017)

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