

# Chichester District Council

THE CABINET

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## A27 Chichester Bypass Improvement Scheme Response to Highways England Public Consultation

### 1. Contacts

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#### Executive Summary

Highways England (HE) is carrying out a public consultation on its proposed options for the A27 Chichester Bypass Improvement Scheme, which is a Government spending commitment in the Roads Investment Strategy 2015-2020. The purpose of this report is to provide a formal Chichester DC response to the HE consultation which closes on 22 September 2016.

This report sets out the background to the current consultation, and summarises briefly the five A27 options that HE has published for consultation. Council officers have reviewed the consultation documents and considered the potential benefits and adverse effects of the different A27 options, looking at how they could impact on the Council's own work and how they may affect local communities, businesses and visitors to Chichester District.

The report and its appendices present officers' analysis and comments on the A27 options proposed for consultation. The report concludes that Option 2 appears to offer the greatest long term benefits for the Chichester area, providing increased highways capacity and improvements in journey times, reliability and safety. For these reasons, officers consider that Option 2 (or an amended version of it) offers the greatest potential to support economic growth and future development and would therefore provide the greatest benefit to Chichester District. However, it is recognised that Option 2 will have potentially significant impacts on the landscape, natural and historic environment and on some residential areas, including some loss of land and property. Additional studies and design work to mitigate these impacts will be required once a preferred scheme has been identified by the DfT.

Appendix 3 sets out officer comments in the form of a draft Council response to the HE consultation which Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council as the Council's formal response to the HE consultation.

## **2. Recommendation**

### **2.1 That the Cabinet recommends to the Council that it:**

- (1) Agrees the overall conclusions of this report set out in paragraphs 5.27 to 5.29, providing qualified support for Option 2, based on the information published by Highways England at this stage.**
- (2) Approves the comments set out in Appendix 3 for submission as Chichester District Council's formal response to the Highways England consultation on options for the A27 Chichester Bypass Improvement scheme.**

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 Highways England (HE) is undertaking a public consultation on proposed options for the A27 Chichester Bypass Improvement Scheme over the period 14 July to 22 September. The purpose of this report is to provide a formal Chichester DC response to the HE consultation.
- 3.2 Proposals for improving the Chichester Bypass have a long history dating back to the 2000 South Coast Multi Modal Study (SoCoMMS). A previous public consultation on proposed Bypass improvements was undertaken in 2004/05, which led to the inclusion of a proposed scheme in the South East Regional Transport Programme. However, in response to budgetary constraints, the Government's Spending Review in 2010 delayed the implementation of any scheme until an unspecified date in the future. In 2013 the Government's White Paper 'Investing in Britain's Future' included a new proposal 'A27 Chichester Bypass - Upgrading 4 junctions on the existing 3.5m bypass' and the proposal was subsequently included in the 2014 Road Investment Strategy which included a commitment to upgrade the junctions in the 2015-2020 period. It is understood that a budget of £100 - £250 million has been identified for the scheme.
- 3.3 Over the past two years, HE has developed a number of options to help improve capacity along the Bypass, while supporting the planned development growth, particularly housing, within the Chichester Local Plan. Initially a total of 20 options were reviewed, which were assessed using Department for Transport (DfT) guidance tools to determine those that had the most potential to address HE's identified objectives for the scheme.

- 3.4 Earlier this year, HE planned to consult on six A27 options plus one sub-option. These options included two off-line routes to the north of the City and a hybrid option including some off-line sections south of the City. A public consultation was planned for March/April 2016, but then postponed. The current consultation proposes an amended set of options, all of which primarily involve online improvements to the existing A27 junctions. HE's stated reason for not pursuing the off-line options is that, after detailed consideration of these options, the available budget and the criteria set out in the 2015-2020 Road Investment Strategy, they have been discounted as not being viable.
- 3.5 The options now published for consultation therefore focus on improvements along the route of the existing A27, which HE considers will provide the best solution for the budget available. The options published for consultation are summarised below:
- **Option 1** – Fishbourne and Bognor junctions to be grade separated with flyovers (with diversion of Terminus Road and Vinnetrow Road), Stockbridge and Whyke roundabouts to be replaced with signalised junctions allowing no right turns, Oving Road and Portfield junctions largely as agreed for Shopwyke Lakes planning permission with some adjustments. The total estimated cost is £182 million.
  - **Option 1A** – As for Option 1, but retaining the existing Stockbridge and Whyke roundabouts. The total estimated cost is £139 million.
  - **Option 2** - As for Option 1, but Stockbridge and Whyke junctions to be closed (with A286 and B2145 crossing the A27 on bridges), and a new single carriageway Stockbridge Link Road (SLR) provided running from the Fishbourne junction to the B2145 at Hunston. The total estimated cost is £280 million.
  - **Option 3** – Fishbourne roundabout to be converted to a 'hamburger' roundabout, Stockbridge and Whyke junctions as for Option 1, Bognor roundabout to be enlarged and controlled with traffic lights, Oving and Portfield junctions as agreed for the Shopwyke Lakes planning permission. The total estimated cost is £47 million.
  - **Option 3A** – As for Option 3, but with the Bognor junction grade separated with flyover (with diversion of Vinnetrow Road), Terminus Road diverted away from the Fishbourne 'hamburger' junction, and widening A27 to 3 lanes in each direction between the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions. The total estimated cost is £172 million.
- 3.6 HE has used traffic modelling to assess the projected traffic flows and journey times for each of the options under consideration, which have been assessed against a baseline 'Do Minimum' scenario<sup>1</sup> for the years 2020, 2035 and 2041. The resulting traffic forecasts have been used for design development, economic assessments and environmental assessments.

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<sup>1</sup> The 'Do Minimum' scenario was based on the current highway network at 2014 together with already identified highway changes in adopted planning documents that are expected to be in place by the relevant forecast years.

- 3.7 To support the A27 options consultation, HE has published a consultation brochure and questionnaire which includes detailed maps of the junction proposals included for each of the five options. HE has also set up a consultation website which includes several background documents, including an Economic Assessment Report, Environment Study Reports, and Traffic Forecasting Report, and an online visualisation tool which provides 'fly-throughs' of the different options. It has also organised a series of public exhibitions in the local area, including at Chichester city, Fishbourne, North Mundham, Boxgrove, Lavant, Selsey and East Wittering/Bracklesham.
- 3.8 Following the end of the public consultation, HE will review all the comments received and report the findings and conclusions to the Department for Transport (DfT). The consultation brochure suggests that a preferred route announcement will be made by the Minister before the end of 2016.
- 3.9 After a preferred route is announced, HE will develop detailed proposals for the scheme and undertake further public consultation (currently expected to be in 2017). They will then submit a formal application for a Development Consent Order (DCO). This will be examined independently by the Planning Inspectorate, which will ask for representations from interested parties, including the Council in its role as statutory consultee. The Planning Inspectorate will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, who will make the final decision on the scheme. Assuming the DCO is granted, consent will be given for HE to construct the scheme, which will allow them to compulsorily purchase any land required. Currently the A27 improvement works are expected to start in 2019, with the scheme being completed sometime in the period 2021-2023, depending on which option is chosen.

#### **4. Outcomes to be Achieved**

- 4.1 The Council will wish to see the implementation of a well planned scheme to improve the A27 Chichester Bypass that will reduce traffic congestion, improve accessibility and safety, benefit local communities and the economy, and protect the environment. Implementation of a scheme which meets these objectives would support several of the Council's corporate priorities including: 'Improving the provision of and access to suitable housing', 'Supporting our communities', 'Managing our built and natural environments', and 'Improving and supporting the local economy'.

#### **5. Proposal**

- 5.1 Council officers have reviewed the published HE consultation documents and considered the potential benefits and adverse effects of the different A27 options, looking at how they could impact on the Council's own work and how they may affect local communities, businesses and visitors to Chichester District.

- 5.2 The appendices to this report set out officers' analysis and comments on the A27 options and set out a draft Council response to the HE consultation which Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council for approval.
- Appendix 1 presents a summary analysis of the A27 options and their potential impacts.
  - Appendix 2 presents a summary table setting out the potential positive and negative aspects of each of the five A27 options.
  - Appendix 3 presents CDC officer comments in the form of a draft Council response to the HE consultation.
- 5.3 It should be emphasised at the outset that traffic modelling of the 'Do Minimum' scenario shows that journey times will increase considerably over the next 20-25 years if no action is taken to improve the A27. Increasing congestion, with longer and more unreliable journey times will have a detrimental effect on the local economy, adversely affect the provision of local services, and cause greater disruption for residents, local communities and visitors to the District. In addition, it will act as a major constraint to planning future development, services and infrastructure.
- 5.4 The following paragraphs summarise officers' conclusions as set out in Appendix 3 in terms of the specific junction proposals and other improvements proposed for each of the A27 consultation options.

#### Comments on specific junction proposals and other improvements

- 5.5 Fishbourne junction - The grade separated flyover (Options 1, 1A and 2) would encroach into the AONB, Fishbourne Meadows SNCI and the Fishbourne Conservation Area and would have significant impacts on the landscape, particularly in terms of views to/from the AONB and Chichester Cathedral, cultural heritage including the Fishbourne Conservation Area, and biodiversity (particularly the Fishbourne Meadow SNCI). It would also require some loss of land and the demolition of 3 non-residential buildings. The proposed diversion of Terminus Road would impact on the Council's Enterprise Centre scheme, although it is assumed that the re-routeing of the road could be accommodated. The alternative 'hamburger' junction design (Options 3 and 3A) would have much more limited impact, but would not reduce journey times or congestion to the same degree. To some extent, it is considered that the visual and environmental impacts of the flyover could be reduced through high quality design, tree planting/acoustic screening etc and by compensation for habitat losses, as set out in the specific comments and recommendations in Appendix 3.
- 5.6 On balance at this stage, officers consider that grade separation with a flyover at Fishbourne is likely to be required in order to provide for a significant improvement to the Bypass, and would probably also be needed to facilitate the Stockbridge Link Road (see below). However, this is a particularly sensitive location and it is acknowledged that the flyover option would potentially have a significant adverse effect in terms of its impact on the wider landscape and the natural and historic environment.

- 5.7 Stockbridge and Whyke junctions - Officers consider that leaving the existing roundabouts in place (Option 1A) would continue the existing problems of congestion and queuing for traffic to/from the City and Manhood Peninsula and would thereby limit the benefits of any improvements elsewhere on the A27 Bypass. This appears to be borne out by the analysis of journey times, which shows that, despite the introduction of grade separation at the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions, Option 1A would still not perform significantly better than Option 3 in terms of journey times along the A27.
- 5.8 At the other extreme, the closure of the Stockbridge and Whyke junctions and their replacement with overbridges (Option 2) would have significant adverse impacts on the surrounding residential areas. At Stockbridge, it would require demolition of 7 residential properties on the west side of Stockbridge Road south of the junction, the Mormon Church at 1 Queen's Avenue, and the historic Stockbridge House (Grade II listed) on the west side of Stockbridge Road north of the junction<sup>2</sup>. At Whyke, it would involve demolition of 4 residential properties along Whyke Road north of the junction<sup>3</sup>. In both locations, the required land take would also involve some loss of residential garden space and private car parking, whilst the flyovers and associated embankments would cause major visual impact and loss of amenity for a significant number of properties in the vicinity of the junctions. The closure of the junctions would also impact on accessibility and some journey times from the A27 to the south of the City where the Council is seeking to promote major redevelopment in the Southern Gateway area. However, closing the junctions would improve journey times to/from the City from the Manhood Peninsula, whilst journeys east or west from the Peninsula would be improved by the Stockbridge Link Road.
- 5.9 Traffic light controlled junctions at Stockbridge and Whyke (Options 1, 3 and 3A) could provide some benefit, but the restriction on right turns would inevitably lead to longer journeys and journey times for some routes, particularly journeys to the Peninsula from the A27 west and from the Peninsula heading east along the A27. This appears to be borne out by the journey time analysis in the Traffic Forecasting Report and Economic Assessment Report. In addition, unless the junctions are well designed, some drivers may be tempted to ignore the right turn restriction creating an increased risk of accidents. There would also potentially be safety concerns due to cyclists and pedestrians seeking to cross the junction, so the existing footbridge would need to be replaced by a better designed dual use cycle/pedestrian bridge (as is already proposed in Option 3A).
- 5.10 Officers consider that there may be some merit in HE considering options which include the Stockbridge Link Road but retain either or both of the existing Stockbridge and Whyke junctions, potentially incorporating more

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<sup>2</sup> The HE's Environment Study Report refers to demolition of 3 properties along Stockbridge Road north of the A27 Stockbridge junction, but it is not clear from the consultation brochure plans which properties (other than Stockbridge House) are referred to.

<sup>3</sup> These are stated in the Environment Study Report to be 91-93 Whyke Road (4 terraced houses on the east side of the road) although the consultation brochure plans appear to indicate demolition of 4 houses at Whyke Court on the west side of the road.

limited improvements. This would avoid the significant adverse impacts of flyovers in these locations, and could reduce the traffic using the junctions, whilst maintaining greater accessibility and more direct routes for journeys involving an origin or destination in the south Chichester and Stockbridge areas. Retaining either or both junctions in some form may to some degree reduce the benefits of Option 2 for traffic using the A27, although presumably the Stockbridge Link Road will help to divert some traffic away from the junctions.

- 5.11 Bognor junction – Compared to the Fishbourne junction, the landscape/visual impact of a flyover (Options 1, 1A, 2 and 3A) would be less significant (although it would affect some views of the Cathedral and South Downs) and there would be only minor impacts on the historic environment. However, the required realignment of the A27 would involve some loss of land, including from the Lakeside Holiday Park and Chichester Gravel Pits and Leythorne Meadow SNCI. There would also be some loss of land from the MOD Fuel Depot site, where outline planning permission has recently been granted for retail and industrial uses. The flyover proposals would also require the loss of the existing bridge across the A27 on the Chichester-Bognor cycle route.
- 5.12 Officers consider that there are strong arguments for grade separation of the Bognor junction, particularly as the increased junction capacity could be critical in helping to support new development in the Bognor Regis area of Arun District, as well as in the Chichester Local Plan area. In general, the impacts of an A27 flyover at the Bognor junction are less significant than at Fishbourne, and mitigation could be achieved through good design and planting/acoustic screening. It would also be important for the design to provide a replacement A27 cyclist/pedestrian crossing to serve the well used A259 cycle route.
- 5.13 Oving and Portfield junctions - All the options include junction designs based on, or very similar to, those already agreed as part of the existing Shopwhyke Lakes outline planning permission. The alterations have therefore already been largely agreed by the Council when determining the Shopwhyke Lakes planning application and will have only minor landscape/visual and environmental impacts. However, these proposals were designed specifically to mitigate the impact of Shopwhyke Lakes. It is assumed that HE's traffic modelling indicates that they would be sufficient to accommodate the forecast traffic growth to 2041 associated with the A27 options tested, although it appears that the options tested by HE have given only limited consideration to the design of the Oving and Portfield junctions.
- 5.14 Officers are concerned about the capacity of the Portfield roundabout to accommodate traffic flows in the longer term, particularly after closure of the Oving junction and the increase in traffic on Portfield Way/Westhampnett Road as a result of new strategic developments. In addition, the proposals at Portfield would not separate strategic from local traffic or offer opportunities for enhancing public transport, which will become more significant in the future due to the developments planned in this area.

- 5.15 At the Oving junction, it is unclear why the amendments to the Shopwhyke Lakes design proposed in Options 1, 1A and 2 have been considered necessary, the most significant of these being the proposed removal of the bus only access from Oving Road East. It is assumed that West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) may comment on this.
- 5.16 Stockbridge Link Road (SLR) – Since this would be a new road, it would have significant impacts on what is currently open countryside. The landscape/visual impacts would be accentuated by the fact that the route runs across flat/low lying areas and would have to bridge the River Lavant and Chichester Canal. There would be significant biodiversity impacts on the River Lavant Marsh SNCI, Chichester Canal SNCI, and other natural habitats (e.g. the River Lavant and Mile Pond on Birdham Road), as well as through loss of hedgerow, severance effects and the introduction of noise and lighting into currently tranquil areas. In terms of cultural heritage, the road would affect the setting of the listed Donnington Manor and potentially have a significant visual impact on the view of the Cathedral from the Chichester Canal (depicted in the painting ‘Chichester Canal’ by JMW Turner). In addition, the Link Road would require the loss of nearly 10 ha of high quality agricultural land (classified mainly Grade 1 and 2).
- 5.17 Although the road would undoubtedly have a major impact on the character of the area that it would run through, it would also potentially provide major benefits in improving accessibility for the Manhood Peninsula as a whole and helping to reduce congestion. Without a new east-west link road such as the SLR, there will always be a fundamental difficulty in improving the Bypass junctions to benefit east/west traffic flows along the A27, without this creating greater congestion on the north/south routes crossing the A27 junctions or requiring access restrictions across or onto the A27. Either of these outcomes would tend to lengthen journey times between the Manhood Peninsula and City. Without a Link Road, the existing problems of congestion on local roads on the Peninsula are likely to remain and it would be difficult to plan for future new development.
- 5.18 Widening the A27 to three lanes - Option 3A proposes widening the A27 by adding a third lane in each direction between the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions. This would require some additional land take, including from the Chichester Gravel Pits and Leythorne Meadow SNCI and some minor losses from residential gardens. Overall, the harm arising from this proposal appears to be relatively limited, although the benefits can only be assessed in the context of Option 3A (see below).

#### Comments on Consultation Options

- 5.19 Option 1 appears to work reasonably well in reducing journey times and increasing journey time reliability (though not generally as well as Option 2). However the journey time improvements appear to be mainly concentrated on east/west routes along the A27, with indications that journey times to/from the Manhood Peninsula from the west and from the Manhood Peninsula to the east would worsen (presumably as a result of the right turns restrictions at the

Stockbridge and Whyke junctions). It is also noted that this option is predicted to lead to an increase in accidents overall, so further refinement of the design would be necessary.

- 5.20 Option 1A is less expensive than Option 1 with a substantially shorter construction period, but in other respects it appears to offer few advantages. It includes the A27 flyovers at the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions with their associated visual and environmental impacts, but proposes no improvements to the existing Stockbridge and Whyke roundabouts, which will therefore continue to cause congestion and traffic bottlenecks on the A27. It performs less well than Option 1 for overall peak journey times (particularly along the A27 itself) and is the worst performing option in terms of journey time reliability.
- 5.21 Option 2 is the most comprehensive of the proposals, involving grade separated flyovers at the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions, with the closure of the Stockbridge and Whyke junctions and the construction of the Stockbridge link Road. Traffic from the Manhood Peninsula heading west would therefore use the Link Road to join the A27 at Fishbourne, and traffic heading east would have to join at the Bognor junction using the B2166 and Vinnetrow Road. As described above, this option would clearly have the most substantial environmental and landscape impacts, particularly resulting from the proposed bridging of the A27 at Stockbridge and Whyke and the Stockbridge Link Road. It would also involve the greatest loss of property and land take. However, this option clearly performs best in terms of overall journey times both for the A27 and local roads, and also scores best in terms of journey time reliability, and reducing accidents. Although it achieves only the second best Benefit to Cost Ratio based on the HE's criteria, it performs best in terms of the costed benefits for businesses, commuters and other users.
- 5.22 Although it has the longest construction time (together with Option 1), officers consider that Option 2 will have the greatest positive impact on the economy in the longer term. The Economic Assessment Report indicates that Option 2 will provide substantially more growth than any of the other options and over twice the amount for Option 3. From an economic development perspective, it is the scheme most likely to encourage inward investment and to benefit existing local businesses, by making the District more accessible. In particular, it provides the greatest reductions in journey times, not only along the A27 itself, but also to/from Chichester city and (to a more limited degree) to/from the Manhood Peninsula. It also offers the greatest potential to support future development and would therefore provide most benefit for the forthcoming Local Plan Review. However, this option would have considerable environmental impacts and further work would be needed to reduce these to a minimum and provide acceptable mitigation or compensation.
- 5.23 As noted in Paragraph 5.10 above, consideration could be given to varying Option 2 by retaining (and potentially altering) either the Stockbridge or Whyke junctions (or both) to avoid the adverse impacts of flyovers maintaining

greater accessibility for areas close to the junctions. This would also have the advantage of reducing overall costs for Option 2.

- 5.24 Option 3 proposes relatively minor at grade improvements for all the junctions, and is very similar to the indicative junction mitigation measures identified in the Council's 2013 transport study undertaken to support the Chichester Local Plan Key Policies 2014-2029. However, the Local Plan measures were designed purely to mitigate the additional traffic impacts of the planned development in order to make that development acceptable in planning terms, and did not seek to address the underlying issues of traffic congestion on the A27. In terms of journey times, Option 3 appears to provide some benefits compared to 'Do Minimum' in reducing peak journey times along the A27. However, it would provide very limited reductions for journeys using local roads and would increase journey times for many routes to/from the Manhood Peninsula. In addition, the Traffic Forecasting Report indicates that journey times for Option 3 along the A27 would by 2035 be slower than in 2014.
- 5.25 Therefore, officers consider that Option 3 would at best provide a very short term benefit and would not provide significant additional highways capacity in the longer term. Although this option performs best when measured against HE's Benefit to Cost Ratio, this appears to be largely because it is low cost and requires limited mitigation, rather than because it offers substantial benefits to vehicle and non-vehicle users. It should also be noted that this option at £47 million falls well below the stated Road Investment Strategy budget of £100 - £250 million for the A27 Bypass improvements.
- 5.26 Option 3A is a variant of Option 3, but includes a grade separated junction with flyover at the Bognor junction rather than a traffic signal controlled roundabout, and also proposes widening the A27 to three lanes each way between the Fishbourne and Bognor junctions. The overall journey time savings for this option are similar although slightly below those for Option 1, as are the construction costs. Compared to Option 1, this option includes a 'hamburger' roundabout design at Fishbourne rather than a grade separated flyover, resulting in less significant impacts on landscape and the historic environment. However, the reduced impact on biodiversity at Fishbourne is counter-balanced by a greater impact on the Chichester Gravel Pits and Leythorne Meadow SNCI, where it would require greater land take than any other option. As with Option 1A, it is also forecast to lead to a slight increase in accidents and performs least well against the HE's Benefit to Cost Ratio (although only by a relatively small margin). Generally, Option 3A appears to provide a reasonable alternative to Option 1, if the A27 flyover at Fishbourne is considered to have too great an environmental impact, but still falls a long way short of Option 2 in terms of journey time savings and increased reliability.

### Overall Conclusion

- 5.27 Based on the information provided as part of the current HE consultation, Option 2 appears to offer the greatest long term benefits for the Chichester area. This option clearly performs best in terms of travel and accessibility,

providing the greatest reductions in journey times, the greatest improvements in journey time reliability and the best performance in reducing accidents. These benefits would occur not only along the A27 itself, but also to/from Chichester city, whilst the Stockbridge Link Road offers potential journey improvements to/from the Manhood Peninsula. As such, officers consider that Option 2 (or an amended version of it) offers the greatest potential to support economic growth and future development and would therefore provide most benefit for local residents, businesses and visitors to Chichester District. Option 1 or Option 3A appear to provide some journey time benefits, although not to the same extent as Option 2, and principally for journeys along the A27, with much less benefit for journeys to/from the Peninsula.

- 5.28 Option 2 (or an amended version of it) would increase the potential to plan for future development needs in locations which are most sustainable overall, rather than reaching a future scenario where the location of new development is dictated largely by highways capacity. These advantages will need to be balanced against the potentially significant impacts on the landscape, natural and historic environment, and the loss of land and property. Further assessment will be needed through additional studies and design work once a preferred scheme has been identified by the DfT.
- 5.29 Officers are concerned that a relatively small scale A27 improvement such as Option 3 would be likely to constrain future economic growth and the scope for planning future housing and other development, and would also limit the locations where such development could be supported. If the DfT funded scheme does not release significant additional capacity on the A27 and local road network, it is not clear how far any additional highways and transport improvements needed to support new development could be funded through developer contributions or other sources available to the Council and WSCC. It should be noted that the current Local Plan measures already require significant developer funding towards transport mitigation collected through S278/S106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (over £20 million, including local transport improvements and 'Smarter Choices' as well as the A27 mitigation).
- 5.30 Appendix 3 provides comments by Council officers on the additional work that should be undertaken and specific measures that should be taken into account at the detailed scheme design stage.

## **6. Alternatives that have been considered**

### Not to express a preference for any of the proposed A27 Options

- 6.1 The HE consultation questionnaire offers the opportunity for consultees to favour 'No option' and it is open to the Council not to support any of the published consultation options. As is set out clearly in Appendix 2 and the other appendices supporting this report, all of the A27 Options published for consultation would have some benefits and some negative impacts to a greater or lesser degree. Also the benefits and costs of the different options

clearly differ for different locations, communities and road users (drivers, public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians).

- 6.2 However, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 5.27 – 5.29 above, officers believe that Option 2 would clearly provide greater potential benefits for Chichester District and would align more closely with the Council's priorities than the other options proposed. This is not to downplay the substantial environmental impacts that would result from this option, and the need to undertake further work to ensure that such impacts are fully addressed and mitigated.
- 6.3 It should also be noted that Option 2 at £280 million exceeds the upper limit of the stated Road Investment Strategy budget for the A27 Bypass improvements. The Council and WSCC have jointly committed to providing an additional £20 million towards the scheme<sup>4</sup> (of which CDC is committed to provide £10 million to be provided through developer contributions from planned strategic housing development which the Council has already begun to secure through Section 106 planning agreements<sup>5</sup>).
- 6.4 There is a risk that budgetary constraints may favour a cheaper but more limited option, or could lead to downgrading the priority of the Chichester improvements against other spending priorities elsewhere. However, as indicated by the comments above, a cheaper, more limited scheme would only deliver limited and short term improvements to the area's traffic problems, and that the A27 would continue to constrain local economic growth and development required to meet the needs of the District. Furthermore, the longer term continuation (or potential worsening of) traffic congestion on the A27 Bypass would result in increasing impacts on the environment in the longer term (e.g deterioration in air quality). The opportunity to upgrade the A27 is unlikely to happen again in the near future and it is considered vital to achieve the best possible scheme at this stage. Therefore, officers consider that it is in the Council's interest to state an in principle preference for Option 2 and argue strongly for the comprehensive and long term approach that it represents.

#### To promote other options not published for consultation

- 6.5 The published HE documents set out clearly that the A27 options published for consultation have been selected from a wider range of options following a detailed technical appraisal process. The options which have not been brought forward for consultation include off-line (or partial off-line) route options to the north and south of the City which it is stated were considered not to be viable when assessed against the available budget and criteria set out in the Government's Road Investment Strategy. The HE's preference is

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<sup>4</sup> This commitment is set out in a letter dated 11 February 2013 from the leaders of West Sussex County Council and Chichester District Council to the Government Transport Minister, Philip Hammond.

<sup>5</sup> The Council is using Section 106 agreements linked to planning permissions to require the relevant housing developers to provide financial contributions directly to HE through agreements under Section 278 of the 1980 Highways Act.

now for an online improvement scheme (although the Stockbridge Link Road proposed in Option 2 would be an entirely offline route).

- 6.6 In these circumstances, officers have not spent time assessing options that do not form part of the current consultation. In any case, it is not clear that any alternative route options would perform better than Option 2 in terms of benefits weighed against environmental costs. In addition, it is considered that promoting an option substantially different to those proposed in the current consultation would risk leading to further delays in HE's process of identifying a preferred scheme.

## **7. Resource and Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Any major A27 improvement scheme taken forward will be primarily resourced by HE and the DfT. However, as noted in Paragraph 6.3 above, the Council and WSCC have jointly committed to provide a financial contribution of up to £20 million to the overall cost of delivering an A27 Chichester scheme, with the District Council's contribution provided through developer contributions secured from planned strategic housing development.
- 7.2 In addition, Council officers will need to provide continuing input and comment on the HE proposals during the detailed development of the scheme.
- 7.3 During the construction phase, there will be a financial cost to the Council due to the disruption, as businesses affected (especially those along or near the A27) will have the right to appeal their rating assessment for business rates. Some businesses likely to be affected are among the Council's largest rate payers (including major superstore and other retail operators). However, the direct financial loss to the Council is difficult to quantify. In the longer term, these potential losses should be more than offset by increased revenue if the A27 improvements help to facilitate new housing and commercial development in the District.

## **8. Consultation**

- 8.1 CDC officers have been kept informed during the option development process through regular meetings with HE and their consultants Mott MacDonald and Jacobs. CDC officers have also provided input into the economic and environmental assessment work.
- 8.2 During development of the options, HE and their consultants held several stakeholder meetings involving senior officers, Council leaders and transport portfolio holders for CDC and WSCC. All CDC and WSCC members were invited to a short briefing and presentation by HE at the Chichester Assembly Rooms at the start of the consultation period on 18 July.
- 8.3 HE has published a consultation brochure with a questionnaire and has set up a consultation website which includes an online visualisation tool with 'fly-throughs' of the different options, a FAQ and technical background documents (the contents of which are summarised Appendix 1).

8.4 Officers from the Chichester Harbour Conservancy have highlighted the statutory duty of the Council and HE under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to “have regard to the purpose of conserving or enhancing the natural beauty” of AONBs when coming to any decisions or carrying out activities relating to or affecting land within these areas. Activities and developments outside the boundaries of AONBs that have an impact within the designated area are also covered by the ‘duty of regard’.’ As noted in Paragraph 5.5 above, the proposals for the Fishbourne junction, particularly the grade separated flyover, would encroach into the Chichester Harbour AONB and would have significant adverse impacts on the landscape, cultural heritage and nature conservation within the AONB. The proposed formal response to the consultation (Appendix 3) therefore requests that HE sets out formally how it proposes to meet its duty under Section 85 with regard to the impacts of the A27 proposals on the AONB.

## **9. Community Impact and Corporate Risks**

9.1 The A27 scheme options under consideration will have potentially significant and wide ranging impacts for the local community. The main impacts have been summarised in Section 5 above and are addressed in the Council’s proposed formal response to HE in Appendix 3.

9.2 With regard to corporate risks, it should be noted that the proposed diversion of Terminus Road to join Cathedral Way (Options 1, 1A, 2 and 3A) would involve routeing the road on an embankment across Council owned land. If these road alterations were to take place, the Council would require an access spur from the new link road to access around 3 acres of employment land to the south.

9.3 The Council will be commencing construction of an Enterprise Centre in autumn 2016 on land to the east of Cathedral Way to the north of the proposed new section of Terminus Road. The construction works associated with the Fishbourne Roundabout and Terminus Road alterations are likely to have a detrimental effect on gaining and retaining tenants for the building. There may also be an increase in noise levels associated with the Terminus Road alteration once complete as the proposed re-routeing would bring traffic closer to the site of the proposed building. There is also a visual impact associated with having cars queuing on this new embankment to access Cathedral Way.

9.4 The proposed formal response to HE (Appendix 3) raises these issues, stating that the Council wishes to seek assurance that HE will take into account the impacts of diverting Terminus Road on the Council’s land, and will ensure that the Council’s future development proposals are not compromised and that any impacts will be addressed.

## 10. Other Implications

	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>		✓
<b>Climate Change</b>  All of the proposed A27 options will have implications for climate change, through a combination of factors, including the construction work itself, the creation of additional traffic capacity, the impacts on journey lengths and routes, improvements to traffic flows and reduction of congestion. However, the specific impact of each of the options has not been modelled and is not quantified at the current time.	✓	
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b>		✓
<b>Safeguarding</b>		✓
<b>Other</b> (please specify)		✓

## 11. Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1: CDC officer summary and analysis of A27 options - pages 16 to 30
- 11.2 Appendix 2: Summary table showing positive and negative aspects of A27 options - pages 31 to 34
- 11.3 Appendix 3: Formal CDC comments in response to the A27 options consultation - pages 35 to 64

## 12. Background Papers

- 12.1 The consultation brochure together with supporting documents and other background material can be viewed on the HE's consultation website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/a27-chichester-bypass-improvement-scheme>