

# West Sussex Local Access Forum

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Sent by email to: [A27ArundelBypass@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A27ArundelBypass@highwaysengland.co.uk)

4/3/2022

Dear Sirs

## **Re: A27 Arundel By-Pass Scheme Consultation**

I am responding to the above consultations on behalf of West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF).

West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) is an independent advisory body, established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to give access advice to local authorities, statutory organisations and non-government organisations. In giving that advice, the Forum's main objective is to ensure the existing network of public rights of way (PRoWs), as well as the wider access network, is protected and where possible enhanced. The Forum has a balanced membership of knowledgeable and experienced users (walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers), landowners and other interests (including conservation, disabled access, landscape). For further information about the Forum please visit [www.wslaf.org](http://www.wslaf.org).

WSLAF's response to the above consultation was discussed at the Forum's meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2022, and our comments reflect the Forum's main objective to ensure PRoW and the wider access network is protected and where possible enhanced.

1.1 We welcome that due consideration has been given to where PRoW cross the line of the proposed route, with the provision of either an overbridge or underbridge, and that they have not been severed. The lengths of the diversions to original path routes to access the bridges are not excessive, which is also welcomed. The new approach paths should be constructed to WSCC standards in relation to widths, surfacing, gradients etc., appropriate to their current or future status, and where applicable to LTN 1/20 guidelines and standards.

1.2 However, these paths form part of a network and are not used in isolation. Whilst relieving traffic congestion is the primary reason for this National Highways (NH) Scheme, the proposal to build this new road should also be seen as a major opportunity to make a holistic assessment of the PRoW and wider access network in the whole area. NH, WSCC and SDNP should work together to enhance and improve the network and its' connectivity both northwards into the National Park and southwards into the Coastal Plain for all NMUs.

1.3 PEIR Vol 2b 12.8.42 states that "The Scheme would introduce new PRoW within the study area, which can bring benefits to the local population, including increased access to community facilities, improved safety whilst travelling, encouragement to take part in recreational activity and increased opportunity to travel using sustainable modes."

**Doing this would achieve the “positive legacy” which is NH’s stated aim, a unique opportunity which should not be missed.**

1.4 Off-road paths on the Coastal Plain are mainly footpaths, with only two bridleways south of the A27 in this area. Off-road cycling or horse-riding opportunities are very limited, so local roads and lanes have to be used. Many of these are now very busy and unsafe for NMUs to use or cross (not all have footways), and they are likely to become even more so as housing development increases. This will inevitably cause major problems for NMUs over the construction phase of the proposed Scheme.

2.1 The revised DMRB 42/17 Walking, Cycling & Horse Riding Assessment and Review (published May 17), encourages the consideration of NMUs within all schemes, with a shift in focus towards identifying opportunities for improvements to facilities, and maximising these. The

production of a Public Rights of Way Strategy to demonstrate how these improvements will be achieved in detail, would enable local communities and user groups to become better engaged with proposals, especially in regard to the de-trunked section of the existing A27.

2.2 BW 392 The provision of a bridleway bridge at the western end of the Scheme, to carry this path over the new road is excellent and will be welcomed by all NMUs (walkers, cyclists, horse riders and the disabled), restoring a direct link into the SDNP that has been severed for many years.

2.3 Of equal importance, however, is the provision of safe NMU routes to access the bridge from the south. We note that there is a predicted increase in traffic flow on The Street and Eastergate Lane, Walberton, as a result of the Scheme, and both are roads that would be used by cyclists and horse riders to reach BW 392 (Copse Lane) and the new bridge.

2.4 FP 350 will be realigned, with the Binstead Rife watercourse, beneath an underbridge structure. This path, if upgraded to bridleway, would provide an off-road link for cyclists and horse riders between Binstead Lane (well used by all NMUs) and Yapton Lane.

2.5 PEIR Vol 2b 12.8.43, under the general heading of Walking Cycling and Horse riding, states that “A new PRoW would be introduced on Tye Lane, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel safely on the newly constructed overbridge by Tye Lane over the Scheme. A new PRoW that connects to the existing PRoW 350 footpath would provide a connection to Binsted Lane.” As this could be of importance for NMU access to the new bridleway bridge it is a concern that more information about this ‘new PRoW’ is not available, and that horse riders appear not to be included.

2.6 FP 354 Binstead Lane (east) is well used by all NMUs, who would then all need to use the Binstead Lane Overbridge (a green bridge), this means cyclists and horse riders as well as pedestrians. The grade of the access slopes to the bridge need to comply with standards to be safe and suitable for all NMUs

2.7 FP 3403 Tortington Lane is also well used by all NMUs, who would then all need to use the Tortington Lane Overbridge (a green bridge), meaning cyclists and horse riders as well as pedestrians. The grade of the access slopes to the bridge need to comply with standards to be safe and suitable for all NMUs.

2.8 FP 206 The Arun Infrastructure Investment Plan includes a project to upgrade this path alongside the River Arun as a leisure and recreational route for all NMUs, and this should be taken into account by NH in design work.

2.9 There has long been a need for a safe A27 NMu crossing near Crossbush at the eastern end of the Scheme, where at present users cross at grade at Poling Corner/ Blakehurst Lane. It is possible there is an opportunity here for NH, WSCC and SDNP to work together and investigate the provision of a safe NMu crossing as part of both the A27 Arundel Bypass and Lyminster Bypass schemes.

3.1 The de-trunking of the original A27 provides a further opportunity to provide safe routes for NMUs, connected to the enhanced PRow network. There is an assumption that traffic flow on this section will decrease significantly, and for through traffic this is likely the case. However, significant development is already happening on the CP in this area, and more is being applied for, so in the future the amount of local traffic will increase. It would be unwise to assume that in the future NMUs will be able to cross this section of road at grade safely and with ease.

3.2 At present there are cul-de-sac footpaths and bridleways on both north and south sides of this section of road. From west to east these are

North side - BW 392, BW 397, FP 388, BW 386, FP 3067, FP 346, FP 348, BW 415, RB 3061.

South side - BW 392, BW 3667/336, FP 3400, FP 347, FP 348.

3.3 BW 392 is the location for the new bridleway bridge. BW 397 north and BW 3667/336 south is a direct bridleway crossing which was very well used many years ago, and a signalised crossing (Pegasus) here would bring significant benefits for all NMUs (especially horse riders) who are unable to safely reach the new bridleway bridge to the west.

3.4 On page 40 of the consultation brochure, NH mentions providing pedestrian, cyclist and disabled access east from the new bridleway bridge. We would agree that an off-road route, running east and parallel to the road on the northern side (with appropriate screening), connecting all the cul-de-sac PRow into Arundel would be very beneficial for NMUs, and would provide an important utility route into Arundel, as well as allowing many circular recreational routes of differing lengths to be made.

3.5 However, the exclusion of horse riders from such a route cannot be justified, as a number of the paths being connected are bridleways. We would ask that this exclusion is reviewed, and that horse riders are included as much as possible so that they can also benefit from the connectivity the new path would bring. FP 3067 (Long Lane) is a track and we would suggest should also be considered for upgrading to bridleway as a link to BW 415.

4.1 The construction phase of the Scheme (estimated from 2024 to 2027), is likely to have a very negative impact on NMUs. Paths which cross the proposed line of the new road will need to be temporarily closed during part or all of the construction works, which will be over a period of years.

As a minimum, a schedule of PRow closures is therefore required, giving details of the time period of the closure, which should be kept to a minimum and of any possible temporary diversion to keep the paths open as long as possible.

4.2 As mentioned previously (para 1.4) cyclists and horse riders have to use local roads and lanes in the area, due to the lack of bridleways. A Construction Strategy is needed to provide information for local communities on the exact roads and lanes which will be used by construction vehicles (HGVs etc), including hours of working and whether this will include weekends.

5.1 The project documentation recognises that there will be permanent adverse noise effects to residential areas close to the road and it will also affect the adjacent countryside. This noise will adversely affect the amenity of using paths for leisure and health and well-being and could be a deterrent to use. All possible noise attenuation measures should therefore be taken.

**This letter constitutes formal advice from the West Sussex Local Access Forum. Highways England is required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this Local Access Forum in carrying out its functions.**

The Forum looks forward to being updated on progress on the Scheme.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Noble', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jane Noble, Forum Officer  
West Sussex Local Access Forum

Copy for information to: All WSLAF members