

Roads Investment Strategy 2025-30 Consultations

West Sussex County Council comments

September 2023

Introduction

In July 2023, the Department for Transport consulted on a Roads Investment Strategy 2025-30 (RIS3) Initial Report as part of its work on deciding future investment priorities on the Strategic Road Network.

In August 2023, National Highways consulted on a set of Route Strategies for the Strategic Road Network.

The consultations will inform decisions by the Government about its third Roads Investment Strategy that will cover the 2025-30 period (RIS3).

Initial Report

The County Council submitted a consultation response to the Department for Transport making a range of comments that can be summarised as:

- The County Council supports the RIS3 strategic objectives which are all important or very important but there is a need to ensure that increasing the use of technology will provide benefits to all users of the network.
- The County Council requested no changes to the list of proposals for trunking and de-trunking.
- The County Council supports the proposed customer experience focus areas.
- The County Council strongly agrees with National Highways' approaches to; improving safety on its network; making best use of the existing Strategic Road Network; and driving decarbonisation and environmental sustainability on the Strategic Road Network.
- The County Council strongly agrees that National Highways should evolve its offer to customers and communities and proposals for designated funds.
- The County Council disagrees with National Highways' approach to its future enhancements programme. This is because the proposed approach is overly reliant on small-scale interventions which may leave other areas behind. Budgets for future enhancements should take account of the cost of delivering network enhancements in protected areas such as national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty.
- The County Council disagrees with the assessment of the most important performance outcomes. This is because the framework will not spur National Highways to improve their engagement with communities.
- National Highways' Project Control Framework should be changed to spur development of environmental mitigation measures from the earliest stages of scheme development as the current approach can leave this until too late in the design process.
- The County Council has expressed concern that increasing the use of technology may exclude some users so National Highways should take steps to mitigate this.

- The County Council highlighted its priorities for investment in the Strategic Road Network as outlined in the West Sussex Transport Plan 2022-36. These are strategic improvements to the A27 at Arundel, Chichester, Worthing and Lancing.

Route Strategies

The County Council submitted a consultation response to National Highways making a range of comments that can be summarised as:

- Overall, the Route Strategies do not fully reflect Transport for the South East's area studies and Strategic Investment Plan so they should be updated to reflect this evidence.
- As the Government has deferred the A27 Arundel Bypass to RIS3, the Route Strategies should set out the strategic case for investment in this scheme on the same basis as other potential priorities for investment.
- National Highways' Project Control Framework should be changed to spur development of environmental mitigation measures from the earliest stages of scheme development as the current approach can leave this until too late in the design process.
- The Route Strategies should acknowledge that in order to manage the cumulative impacts of development, National Highways may need to take on an active role in delivering mitigation schemes using developer contributions.
- The Route Strategies should acknowledge that some sections of the Strategic Road Network do not have a parallel route on the Major Road Network and local roads may be unsuitable for diversions.
- The County Council highlighted the additional challenges that; alternative modes of transport can be uncompetitive in some areas; and, there is a need for the environmental outcomes to acknowledge the role of areas of outstanding natural beauty (in addition to national parks).
- The route objectives and outcomes should be changed to; seek to reduce rat-running on less suitable routes; ensure capacity on A27 is closer matched to demand; and support delivery of complementary public transport improvements.