

Louise Goldsmith
Leader of the Council

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The Rt. Hon. Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport
5/15, Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
LONDON
SW1P 4DR

31st January 2017

Dear Chris

It is disappointing that you will not meet me and my Chief Executive to discuss the important matter of your decision for the A27 (Chichester) following the consultation which took place some 4 months ago. I must therefore re-state my position on this important issue for the people and businesses of this area.

It is clear from my recent meeting with some of our MPs, that we must now bring this matter to conclusion not just for the A27 (Chichester) scheme but the entire A27 programme. This whole scheme is critical to the infrastructure and economy of the South-East and one which must now have future certainty by your early decision.

You are aware of the level of disquiet locally over the public consultation process and, in particular, the decision to exclude certain options from that consultation without a clear explanation. That deprived many people of an opportunity to voice their concerns and preferences about something that they feel very strongly about. It also removed the opportunity for a full public response from which you could have drawn a decision based on a transparent process of public engagement.

I understand, although not confirmed, that you will now not consider a re-running of the consultation and I must accept that. I do however urge you to publish the consultation results and to include an explanation of why certain options were not included. That level of transparency will go a long way to removing the concerns being expressed by so many people and allow them to focus on the plans you do have.

I also ask that you make your decision on the preferred option as soon as possible so that we might work together to ensure the preferred option is taken forward in a way which demonstrates that the Department of Transport has listened to our local communities.

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In order to obtain a positive response and to retain the support of this council and other key players it will be essential that the preferred option demonstrates your strategic objectives for the scheme, namely: -

- Improve capacity and support the growth of regional economies;
- Improve road safety;
- Minimise adverse environmental impacts;
- Improve journey time reliability on the local and strategic road networks;
- Facilitate timely delivery of the scheme to enable provision of housing to meet demand, in line with the Chichester District Local Plan and the Highways England Delivery Plan;
- Improve regional connectivity; and
- Improve accessibility to areas with leisure and visitor attraction.

As your preferred option will also need to be consulted upon, I feel I should again stress the importance of being open and transparent so the residents can put their comments forward and see that they have been considered. This is the very least they will expect after the past year.

I remain willing to meet you and your officials to discuss this further if that would be helpful.

I await your announcement.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Goldsmith', written over a horizontal line.

Louise Goldsmith

Leader

West Sussex County Council

cc: Sir Peter Bottomley MP
The Rt Hon Nick Herbert MP
Nick Gibb MP
Jeremy Quin MP
Henry Smith MP
Tim Loughton MP
The Rt Hon Sir Nicholas Soames MP
The Rt Hon Andrew Tyrie MP
Mr Tony Dignum, Leader, Chichester District Council
Jim O'Sullivan, Chief Executive, Highways England