

[Press release: Major A27 Arundel bypass plans go on show today](#)

Three options for upgrading the road are being put forward, valued between £135m and £260m, including two proposed new routes for the A27 to the south of the town and one proposal widening the A27 mostly along its existing route. Each would create a new dual carriageway to join up the two existing sections of dual-carriageway either side of Arundel to reduce journey times, improve reliability and make the road safer.

Options for upgrading the A27 at Arundel

A public consultation on the proposals starts today and runs until 16 October. Highways England is holding eight information exhibitions at venues across Arundel and Littlehampton so that people can examine the proposals and put any questions directly to project team.

Highways England programme manager Valerie Stephens said:

The single carriageway A27 through Arundel has been a missing link in the road network for decades. Now, major improvements are finally within reach. People's input will be vital in finding the right way forward, and I encourage anyone with an interest in the A27 to get involved – whether they're commuters, or live nearby, depend on it for business or to keep in touch with friends and family or use it to access one of the many leisure destinations along the south coast.

Arundel has a special environment and a unique cultural heritage and, while building any new road will have an impact, we are committed to delivering the improvements responsibly and have developed our proposals with the environment very much in mind. Again, people's ideas about how we can protect and enhance the environment are very welcome indeed.

Funding for the scheme comes from the Department for Transport's £15 billion Roads Investment Strategy that is improving journeys, cutting congestion and boosting the economy. The project is one of three major improvements for the A27 being taken forward by Highways England, including upgrades between Worthing and Lancing and to the East of Lewes.

The three options are:

Option 1

A new dual-carriageway from Crossbush junction, passing to the south west of Arundel railway station, re-joining the existing A27 east of Ford Road, which

will be widened to a dual carriageway. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun and a new pedestrian/cycle path from Crossbush junction.

Option 3

A new dual-carriageway from Crossbush junction, south of the current A27, rejoining the A27 at a new junction near Havenwood Park. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun and a new pedestrian/cycle path between Crossbush junction and Yapton Lane.

Option 5A

A new dual-carriageway following the same route as option 3 between Crossbush junction and Ford Road. From Ford Road the route continues west passing between the South Downs National Park and Binsted Woods, re-joining the existing A27 at a new junction near Yapton Lane. This option also includes improvements at Crossbush junction, new bridges over the railway line and the River Arun and a new pedestrian/cycle path between Crossbush junction and Yapton Lane.

All responses to the consultation will be carefully considered before an announcement is made on a preferred route this winter. Subject to a successful outcome, construction could start as early as 2021 and take around two years to complete.

Details on the proposals and feedback forms will be available online from today until 11:45pm on 16 October 2017 on the [scheme pages](#).

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Press release: Oil and gas regulators host public drop-in event](#)

Agencies that regulate Third Energy's oil and gas activities are hosting a drop-in event in Kirby Misperton to explain how they are working together to protect the community and the environment.

The Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive, Oil and Gas Authority, Public Health England and Ryedale Borough Council are hosting the event at Kirby Misperton Village Hall on Thursday 7 September.

These agencies work together to assess the impacts of the oil and gas industry, to oversee industry operations, and to ensure that any exploration and development, including fracking, is done in a way that does not put people or the environment at risk of harm.

The drop-in session will give local people a chance to talk to agency staff on a one-to-one basis to find out about agencies' roles and to hear more about the plans that have been put in place since permissions have been granted, along with what will be done in the coming months to regulate site activities.

Everyone is welcome to attend at any time between 2pm and 7pm.

[Press release: Minister Field visits China for trade, security & human rights talks](#)

Mark Field, the FCO minister for Asia and the Pacific, will arrive in Beijing today (Tuesday 22 August) for high level talks on regional security, trade and investment, human rights and the illegal wildlife trade.

He will become the first UK minister to visit China since the general election in June 2017 and will meet China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi, Vice Foreign Minister Wang Chao and Assistant Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou.

The minister will also meet representatives of organisations involved in combating the illegal wildlife trade, ahead of the Illegal Wildlife Trade conference being held in London in March 2018.

Beijing will be the first stop in a ten day visit to Asia, which will include meetings in Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore.

Mark Field, minister for Asia and the Pacific, said:

China is a key global player and an essential partner for the UK in many areas, not least trade and investment and foreign policy. This has been particularly clear in recent weeks as we worked closely with China and other United Nations partners to respond to the threat North Korea poses to regional stability and security. We exported £16.7 billion worth of goods and services to China in 2016

and that figure will continue to grow as we strengthen links between our countries.

I look forward to discussions on these issues in Beijing, and harnessing the UK-China Global Partnership to tackle issues of global concern such as the illegal wildlife trade.

Notes to editors

1. Mark Field MP was appointed as minister for Asia and the Pacific at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in June 2017.
2. China has the world's second largest economy (contributing 15% of global GDP) and the UK remains one of the top destinations for Chinese investment. The UK's total exports to China have grown by almost 68% between 2010 and 2016. £16.7bn worth of goods and services was exported in 2016.
3. Over half a million Chinese visitors applied for visas to come to the UK for tourism and study last year. There are currently over 155,000 students from China, Hong Kong and Macau studying in the UK.
4. The UK is committed to tackling the illegal wildlife trade, including for ivory. The London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade in early 2014 brought together the international community, including representatives from the Chinese Government, to strengthen cooperation. China has since increased its enforcement and publicly destroyed over six tonnes of seized ivory.

Further information

[Press release: Trial of improved smart motorway emergency areas continues](#)

The new look emergency areas have bright orange road surfaces to help improve visibility so they are more obvious to drivers on smart motorways. It is also hoped that it will encourage drivers to only use them in emergency situations.

The first of the new emergency areas went live on the M3 near Camberley in Surrey last month. This change is part of a review into the design and spacing of emergency areas on smart motorways.

The first orange emergency area on the M25 is on the anti-clockwise side, between junctions 25 (Waltham Cross) and 24 (Potters Bar). The remaining 22 emergency areas on the M25 will have the distinctive orange colour added between junctions 23 (Hatfield) to 27 (for the M11) and junctions 5 (interchange with M26) and 7 (for the M23) if the trial is successful.

Highways England Chief Executive Jim O'Sullivan said:

We recognise the public concern about smart motorways and we also believe that changes such as these will help drivers have confidence when using them and be clear about where they can stop in an emergency.

That is why we are trialling these highly visible new style emergency areas. The bright orange colouring will make them as easy as possible to spot and should also discourage drivers from using them in non-emergency situations.

This is just one of the ways we are helping drivers to understand smart motorways and their benefits. I hope it helps drivers feel more confident about using a smart motorway. !!n Smart motorways use variable speed limits to manage traffic and tackle frustrating stop-start congestion, new technology to give drivers better information on road conditions ahead and – in smart motorway upgrades delivered since 2004 – convert the hard shoulder into an extra traffic lane. Evidence shows that smart motorways are successfully adding extra capacity, improving journey times and are just as safe as conventional motorways.

The redesigned emergency area supports Highways England's drive to improve awareness of smart motorway driving, including what to do in an emergency and when to use an emergency area. It sits alongside a national TV, radio and social media campaign covering key themes such as not driving in lanes closed by Red X signs, how to stop in an emergency and the importance of carrying out appropriate vehicle checks, like checking fuel levels, before setting out on a journey to avoid unnecessary breakdowns.

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[News story: Response to Daily Telegraph story on new GCSE grades](#)

Today's Daily Telegraph (22 Aug) contains both inaccurate and misleading statements in relation to new GCSEs. The assessment of new GCSEs has been designed to support 9 to 1 grading and we have not 'warned' about their use as suggested. The Ofqual report cited is not a commentary on the new grades

and the selected excerpts within the story are taken completely out of context.

Dr Michelle Meadows, Executive Director, Strategy, Risk and Research said:
“New GCSEs have been designed from first principles to deliver better differentiation on the new 9 to 1 grading scale. The new GCSE exams and mark schemes have been created to support the increase in the number of grades, with better spread of grade boundaries and reliable assessment.”