

'We need a joined-up transport approach for the Sussex coast'

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Bob Lanzer, cabinet member for highways and infrastructure at West Sussex County Council, which backed option 5a, said: "This option generates the greatest savings in journey times and the greatest benefits overall. It also doesn't take anywhere near as much ancient woodland as option 3, and had the greatest support from the Highways consultation."

"We cannot stand still again for 30 years without doing anything; something needs to happen."

"As the highways authority, we want to work with Highways England to limit environmental impact as much as we can and maximize the benefits to residents and the West Sussex economy overall."

Regarding the judicial review, Mr Lanzer said: "When people feel so strongly about a matter such as this, it is their right to invoke all due process to make their point. We will have to see what comes of it."

Arundel Town Council worked with Highways England to organise a public meeting in September and additional exhibitions so residents could make an informed decision on what route they would choose in the public consultation.

They also supported option 5a, having backed the idea of an



Artists' impression of the the new bypass at Crossbush (above) and Binsted Lane (right)

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'offline' bypass since 1993.

A spokesman said they 'hoped that residents can unite in this decision and move forward'.

Environmental groups have blasted the decision. The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) Sussex said the proposed route would 'simply create two new bottlenecks at either end of the dual carriageway'.

CPRE director Kia Trainor said: "This decision does not fully take into account the enormous

damage to irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland which this new road would create.

"CPRE believes Highways England's piecemeal approach is deeply flawed and that building the new section of dual carriageways will actually worsen the free flow of traffic along the A27.

"We are very concerned that the countryside is being sacrificed in order to move a traffic jam further along the A27.

"What we need is a more

strategic approach to transport infrastructure. We see a role for the new South East Regional Transport Body in helping put together an integrated approach to mobility instead of constantly building bypasses of our bypasses."

Henri Brocklebank, director of conservation at the Sussex Wildlife Trust, said option 5a would result in 'the destruction of woodland, ancient hedgerows and rare chalk stream habitat which is simply irreplaceable', and

while acknowledging the modifications, felt 'frustrated that this option was even on the table in the first place'.

She said: "It is tragic to see important decisions like this taken with such a lack of innovation. This is the 21st Century and we have a road scheme fit for the 1980s."

Kay Wagland, chairman of Arundel Scate, an offshoot of the South Coast Alliance for Transport and Environment, said it was 'devastating news' and that this bypass would mean

more traffic hitting Worthing and Chichester, which are still in need of bypasses. She said: "It's out-dated, based on old thinking, destroying part of the National Park and its special wildlife, splitting communities."

"We need an up-to-date, joined-up transport approach for the whole Sussex coast that supports the South Downs, with local road proposals that meet actual needs and cut congestion at half the cost, without damaging the park or ignoring local people."