

# A27 Arundel Bypass

## Environmental Appraisal Summary

### Introduction

This note describes how and why we assess the potential environmental impacts of the A27 Arundel Bypass scheme options. It also summarises the process of identifying land to purchase to offset the loss of Ancient Woodland or floodplain land.

### What is an Environmental Impact Assessment?

Environmental Impact Assessment is the process of assessing the potentially significant environmental impacts of a proposed scheme. It looks at a series of environmental factors and uses industry-standard criteria to measure the likely environmental changes resulting from the proposed scheme. It measures the likely environmental performance and helps us develop the proposal in a way that avoids (where possible) or reduces negative environmental impacts and enhances positive environmental impacts. This can include the development of “mitigation measures”, which are measures implemented to reduce negative impacts. Impacts that cannot be mitigated and residual impacts post mitigation will be identified in the assessment process.

### How are environmental impacts assessed, measured and documented?

Potential environmental impacts are assessed through a combination of desk-based studies, site visits and surveys and modelling of future environmental conditions. They are measured using a combination of an environmental asset’s sensitivity (usually defined by its importance, for example an internationally important wildlife site or National Park, and its baseline quality or condition) and the size or scale of the anticipated impact resulting from the proposed scheme.

The first stages of environmental assessment are reported in the Environmental Study Report, which is available on the project website [www.highways.gov.uk/a27arundel](http://www.highways.gov.uk/a27arundel) and at the public exhibitions. The Environmental Study Report sets out how the initial assessment has been undertaken, the baseline information collected and a preliminary assessment of potential impacts. We use the Environmental Study Report to help us identify the option to be taken forward for further assessment through the Environmental Impact Assessment process. A Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) will be produced prior to the full statutory Environmental Impact Assessment and application for Development Consent; this will be an opportunity for stakeholders to express opinions before submission.

## What topics are examined in the Environmental Impact Assessment?

The Environmental Impact Assessment considers the potential for impacts on:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- People and communities
- Noise and vibration
- Geology and soils
- Human health
- Landscape and visual
- Water and flood risk
- Equality
- Cultural heritage
- Materials and resources
- Vulnerability to major accidents and disasters

A geographical study area is designated for each of these topics, which is identified by our initial scoping studies and published industry best practice guidance. These geographical study areas vary by topic, since some effects can be experienced across a wider area than others. Further information on the individual study areas is provided in the Environmental Study Report.

## Why is an Environmental Impact Assessment required?

The Environmental Impact Assessment process has a basis in European and UK legislation, and is one of the documents required in support of an application for Development Consent.

Infrastructure developments of certain sizes or likely to cause significant environmental impacts are required to undertake a statutory (legally compliant) Environmental Impact Assessment.

The A27 Arundel Bypass will require an Environmental Impact Assessment due to the nature and scale of the scheme.

The Environmental Impact Assessment process is transparent in identifying the potential positive and negative environmental impacts of a scheme, and gives the public the opportunity to comment on the proposals as well as the measures to reduce, offset, or eliminate significant negative environmental impacts. The information contained within an Environmental Statement (the report setting out the results of the Environmental Impact Assessment) is used when engaging with potentially affected individuals and communities. It can ultimately influence the Requirements (planning conditions) of Development Consent.

## How is data gathered and used in the assessment?

We undertake surveys and desk-based investigations to establish the baseline conditions (i.e. what is already there) within the topic specific geographical study area. We can then identify the possible impacts on sensitive resources, such as protected species, habitats, designated sites, historic features and people and communities. To these we assign mitigation measures to avoid or minimise impacts. Environmental data gathering, both desk and field based, has been on-going since work started in April 2015. We will continue to collect data and undertake surveys to investigate a number of different factors, including ecology, noise levels, cultural heritage, landscape and water quality. In planning this work we approached landowners to request land access prior to the surveys being undertaken.

## Who checks and comments on whether the work is carried out to a sufficient standard?

Prior to the application for Development Consent being submitted, the technical content of the Environmental Impact Assessment will be reviewed by senior technical specialists. Statutory organisations, such as the Environment Agency,

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Natural England, Historic England, the South Downs National Park Authority and Forestry Commission, are engaged early in the process to inform the full scope of the assessment. These parties will then be consulted by the Planning Inspectorate once the application for Development Consent has been submitted.

### What further work will be undertaken at the next design stage?

The next stage of design is the preliminary design phase when we develop the preferred option, taking it through the necessary statutory processes. In order to do this, we need to:

- undertake further surveys (such as topographical, geotechnical, environmental)
- complete and fix the preliminary design of the preferred route
- prepare a draft Development Consent Order under the Planning Act 2008
- undertake statutory consultation and produce the Preliminary Environmental Information Report
- complete the Environmental Impact Assessment and prepare the Environmental Statement.

### Why might we need to purchase compensatory land?

Options 1, 3 and 5A are all expected to involve some land which is currently Ancient Woodland. As this is against national policy, legislation requires us to agree with Natural England a ratio of land required to offset the loss in line with the process of previous large infrastructure schemes. The scale of this offsetting and potential locations are yet to be identified, and will be agreed as a result of consultation with relevant environmental bodies and stakeholders. Details of the quantities of land required will be available at the statutory public consultation on the preferred route in spring 2018.

Options 3 and 5A also involve building on floodplain land. The Environment Agency may therefore require us to purchase land to compensate for this loss.