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PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

7 December 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Bower (Chair), Hughes (Vice-Chair), Chapman, Dixon (Substitute for Coster), Lury and Thurston

Councillor Roberts was also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

Apologies: Councillors Coster, Elkins, Goodheart and Yeates

503. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

504. MINUTES

The Chair confirmed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2022 were still to be published and would go to the next meeting on 26 January 2023 for approval.

505. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items.

506. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that there had been no questions from the public submitted for this meeting.

507. A RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL HIGHWAYS A27 ARUNDEL FURTHER CONSULTATION

The Chair opened this item by explaining that though the Director of Growth had delegated authority to respond to this consultation, following discussion they had decided that it was important that Members were involved and hence why it had come to Committee. The Chair advised that the decision of the Committee at the meeting would be submitted to National Highways in order to meet the consultation's deadlines but he suggested that this be clearly identified as an interim conclusion subject to ratification at Full Council in order for all Members to have an opportunity to discuss the matter. Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Director of Growth presented the report which informed the Committee of the content of National Highways' supplementary consultation to that undertaken between 11 January to 8 March 2022 regarding its proposals to improve the A27 by building a bypass around Arundel and invited the Committee to determine what view the Council should provide as its response. He highlighted an Officer addition to the first recommendation, since publication of the

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agenda, due to Walberton Parish Council having undertaken their own traffic survey and potential differences between base data coming to light.

Members (including one non-Committee Member attending as a Ward Member) then took part in a full debate on the item where a number of points were raised, including:

- the importance of the matter and the need for it to be referred to Full Council, and in doing so the public getting another opportunity to ask questions
- perceived inaccuracies in the consultation brochure and the absence of minor roads (not just from Walberton but also the wider area) from the traffic model used
- concerns that analysis was based on flawed and inaccurate data and did not stand up to scrutiny
- the proposed bat bridge being insufficient for its intended purpose (not wide enough to provide a dark central corridor for safe flight) and therefore failing to mitigate negative impacts, nor any evidence having been provided that satisfactorily showed National Highways had studied the different species of bat in the area or their flight paths
- the importance of biodiversity, only at the last Committee meeting having adopted the Biodiversity Net Gain Study which specifically referenced the rare species of bats in the area and measures to protect them
- design changes between the statutory and supplementary consultation documents and the impacts to key traffic flows (The Street west of Tye Lane was given as an example, with 119 in the technical note whilst over 800 was stated in the brochure), and concerns therefore that these changes radically reduced the efficacy of the mitigation measures put in place for the scheme. The increase in road dangers to the walking and cycling routes to the local primary school were also raised
- if the technical note had already been superseded by the brochure by the time it was being prepared then it may not be safe to rely on it
- the detrunking strategy for existing A27 and questions over what Arun Officers knew of the strategy and its impact on design changes
- that the Council previously supported the grey route on the grounds of satisfactory mitigation of rat running, and the impact on minor roads missed out of National Highway's modelling and concerns over the sufficiency of the mitigation measures proposed by National Highways to ensure these minor roads (West Walberton Lane, Wandleys Lane and The Street were highlighted) did not become rat runs and shift the impacts of the scheme elsewhere
- the lack of mention in the consultation for the signals at Fontwell East and their impact on other local infrastructure, and a more general point about Arun's role in ensuring the scrutinising of schemes and developments is not done in isolation from their surroundings and communities
- National Highways' traffic forecasts and whether Arun's Officers had questioned the assumptions made in the data
- the impacts on the business case for the A29 Realignment scheme
- housing assumptions and the impact on Arun's Local Plan

- how the Council can support mitigation measures unsupported by any evidence (for example, the proposed bat bridge)
- the golf course, the need to retain it in that location for its exercise value and as part of Arun's health and wellbeing package, but also the costs associated with the proposals and who would be paying
- the importance of properly scrutinising the figures and assumptions used in the supplementary consultation to ensure it was not just a tick box exercise
- Constituents claiming that National Highways were not responding to questions and feeling that a better route for their concerns to be raised was through their District Councillor as part of Arun's consultation response
- the suggestion that members of the public concerned with the consultation process take their concerns to their MP as this scheme was one of national strategic importance
- the business case for a Ford Road junction and the inclusion of the junction having been another condition of the Council's support and its absence from the consultation and proposals
- the Council's response to the statutory consultation having been reluctant and conditional and none of the conditions having been met, so whether support should have been withdrawn at this stage
- that the Officer report accepted National Highways' proposals without asking the questions Members had been raising
- no indication of the extra costs of the work or any impacts to value for money forecasts following the changes
- the effect of the current A27 on the economy of Arun and the need that the local economy was properly served by whatever came forward from National Highways

The Director of Growth provided Members with responses to the points raised, including:

- that Arun had no involvement in determining the content of the consultation and this was solely the responsibility of National Highways
- that Officers from Arun had discussed matters relating to the detrunking of that part of the A27 and the expectation that these would form part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) process
- that Officers were aware of the minor roads identified by Members but missed by National Highways whilst also noting that Arun was not the local Highway Authority (that being West Sussex County Council) and did not have Highway Officers and so the report presented the best interpretation of the data with the expertise available given the short deadline for response there was no time to seek any external highway advice
- that the public did get to have a say as consultees to the process

The Committee, with the guidance of the Director of Growth, then discussed the Officer recommendations in the report. Points raised included that they be referred to Full Council to ensure the widest possible penetrating debate on the matter, Arun's conditional support for the grey route be reiterated and that these conditions had not been met be noted, the need for a Ford Road junction be stressed, the insufficiency of

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the rat running measures or bat bridge designs proposed be highlighted, and the data in light of the traffic survey undertaken by Walberton Parish Council be questioned.

Following consensus decision-making, amended recommendations were proposed by Councillor Dixon and seconded by Councillor Lury. The amendments are shown below with additions shown in **bold** and deletions shown with ~~strikethrough~~;

The Committee recommend to Full Council the following responses to the supplementary consultation and matters of clarification:

1. ~~The Council supports the proposed measures to reduce the anticipated scale of traffic flows passing through the village of Walberton (as originally set out in the statutory consultation) arising from the proposed A27 Arundel Bypass scheme based on the information provided in the supplementary consultation but would~~ **The Council's support therefore for the grey route is conditional on satisfactory mitigation to reduce rat running. The Council does not have confidence that the rat-running issue has been satisfactorily resolved and also asks that National Highways review the veracity of their conclusions in light of the traffic survey data commissioned by Walberton Parish Council.**
2. The Council supports the provision of ~~the proposed~~ **a** bat crossing at Tye Lane.
3. ~~The Council would encourage National Highways to consider retaining a course in the form of a 9-hole par 3 course possibly in public ownership as there is a lack of public facilities in the locality instead of full closure.~~ **The Council views the exercise value of a round of golf as an important part of its health and wellbeing package for the district and would like to see golf (option 1 or option 2) retained at this location (not par 3 pitch and putt which has minimal exercise value).**
4. The Council supports the proposed changes to the Crossbush Junction.
5. For the avoidance of doubt the Council supports the offline solution to bridging the proposed road at Yapton Lane.
6. **The Council's support for the grey route is conditional on the inclusion of a junction with Ford Road and the new A27 as so we are disappointed that this matter is not included in this consultation. That we draw the attention of National Highways to the potential to reduce rat running by taking forward the Ford Road A27 junction as previously proposed. Given that there is currently no provision for this the council continues to withhold its support.**

The amendments were unanimously agreed by the Committee and therefore became the substantive recommendations which were proposed by Councillor Dixon

and seconded by Councillor Lury. A separate vote was held for each recommendation at the request of Councillor Thurston.

The Committee

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL

the following responses to the supplementary consultation and matters of clarification:

1. The Council's support for the grey route is conditional on satisfactory mitigation to reduce rat running. The Council does not have confidence that the rat-running issue has been satisfactorily resolved and also asks that National Highways review the veracity of their conclusions in light of the traffic survey data commissioned by Walberton Parish Council;
2. The Council supports the provision of a bat crossing at Tye Lane;
3. The Council views the exercise value of a round of golf as an important part of its health and wellbeing package for the district and would like to see golf (option 1 or option 2) retained at this location (not par 3 pitch and putt which had minimal exercise value);
4. The Council supports the proposed changes to the Crossbush Junction;
5. For the avoidance of doubt the Council supports the offline solution to bridging the proposed road at Yapton Lane;
6. The Council's support for the grey route is conditional on the inclusion of a junction with Ford Road and the new A27. That we draw the attention of National Highways to the potential to reduce rat running by taking forward the Ford Road A27 junction as previously proposed.

508. LITTLEHAMPTON ECONOMIC GROWTH AREA (LEGA)

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Director of Growth presented the report which sought the Committee's agreement that the proposed Littlehampton Economic Growth Area (LEGA) Study update should exclude work on the West Bank Strategic Allocation elements of the Study and focus the study brief on the riverside opportunities and the area between Climping beach and the West Bank. The item was deferred from the meeting on 24 November 2022 in order for Officers to provide further clarification on the extent of the area under discussion. A map of the area and a verbal description was provided to Members. The Director of Growth, in response to a Member's question about the impacts to the strategic allocation site (SD4) of its exclusion, explained the ground issues in the area and the impacts of both the sea at Climping and the River Arun at high tides, and that development opportunities south of SD4 might help with the

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delivery of infrastructure that might in turn support development of the West Bank. The recommendation was then proposed by Councillor Chapman and seconded by Councillor Hughes.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the LEGA Study update brief focusses on the riverside opportunities and the area between Climping Beach and the West Bank Strategic Allocation.

(The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm)