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Dear Councillor Clark

Thank you for your email dated 8 February 2021 regarding the A27 Arundel Bypass scheme and in particular regarding the meeting between Walberton Parish Council and Highways England on the 3 February 2021, and your further follow up questions.

Firstly, we recognise and appreciate the continued engagement from Walberton Parish Council (WPC) with Highways England during the preliminary design stage of this project. As we develop our proposals, we will wish to gather and understand your feedback as well as answer any questions you may have ahead of the Statutory Consultation later this year. I also confirm that we recognise and understand the current principle that WPC is working to; that WPC opposes the preferred route of Grey.

To address the questions raised in your letter I have set out our responses split into two tables:

- The first table (Table 1) responds to follow-up questions as a result of my letter on 12 January 2021.
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- The second table (Table 2) details responses to questions raised following our meeting on 3 February.

For ease of reference the questions in each table have been prefixed with “A” within Table 1 and “B” within Table 2.

Table 1

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
A1	<p>Why have you still ignored the Community Play Centre @ Walberton – a purpose built childcare setting catering for children from very young babies to secondary school age. This is not the same as our “community play facilities”.</p>	<p>We recognise that the educational facilities in the area of the Walberton and Binsted C of E school comprise of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Walberton and Binsted CofE School, located at The Street, Walberton, Arundel, BN180PH. • The Community Play Centre at Walberton, located at The St, Walberton, Arundel BN18 0PJ. <p>It is understood that the playing fields immediately adjacent to the east of the Walberton Community Play Centre may also be used for educational purposes and of course, general recreational purposes.</p> <p>These will be considered within the further assessment work we undertake as part of the preliminary design and preparation of the application for development consent.</p>
A4	<p>Is there a backup plan should Grey fail to get consent?</p>	<p>We are focusing on developing the Grey Option during the next stage of design ahead of the public consultation later this year and our subsequent application for development consent in 2022. The process for defining the preferred route does not allow for and nor is there, a ‘back-up plan’.</p>
A5	<p>Avisford Grange - The outline planning permission for 175 homes was granted in February 2018 and the access was never going to be changed. Building commenced in July 2019 and more than 30 houses had been built by Summer 2020 long before the PRA. Fontwell 8 new houses – planning granted Nov 2019. Why were only those Fontwell landowners who were within the 200-m buffer zone written to?</p>	<p>All landowners within 200m of the preferred route that were registered with Her Majesty’s Land Registry at the time of the October 2020 preferred route announcement were written to.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
A8	<p>Budget - The scheme budget has not been published, only the estimated cost range which includes an allocation for mitigation, not costed proposals. What is the current budget for the scheme, what is meant by an appropriate allowance for mitigation and who has decided it is appropriate? Is the allowance linked to the RIS2 allocation or the estimated cost range of Grey, is it ring-fenced against other cost increases, is it capped and what is its current value?</p>	<p>As presented at further public consultation in summer 2019 the estimated scheme cost is currently £320 - £455m. This has been costed in relation to the Highways England Major Project Cost Estimation Manual and Treasury green book that sets out approaches to cost estimates at each stage of the Major Projects lifecycle. The A27 Arundel Scheme is still in early development phase.</p> <p>The commercial estimates produced to inform the current scheme requirements are commercially sensitive. This information will not be released, as this may prejudice any future agreement with supply chain for a fair and reasonable price to the taxpayer.</p> <p>Through the development of the Scheme, refining the design and further planning for construction, we will gain more accurate information to inform future cost estimates.</p> <p>Highways England has identified the necessary funds from within the overall Road Investment Strategy allocation to deliver the Grey route.</p>
A10a	<p>SAR Table 10-12. We note that the most expensive two options retain their indicative BCR rating of Low VfM, but that the least expensive four options have been moved one band lower, from an indicative Medium VfM to Low VfM. With reference to the VfM Framework 2017 where appropriate, please outline the additional risks and uncertainties which the least expensive four suffer relative to the most expensive two.</p>	<p>Section 10.7 of the SAR states, “The final VfM assessment includes more than just the BCR and also takes account of all expected effects, risks and uncertainty. Taking into account all impacts, risk and uncertainty, no option significantly outperforms the other options. All six options are considered to have medium VfM” for the core scenario. Table 10-12 of the SAR relates to the sensitivity test on the Worthing and Lancing Scheme, which shows all options move from Medium VfM to Low VfM.</p>
A10b	<p>Please confirm that the most expensive two options have no significant uncertainties, which would have moved them, too, down a band, into Poor VfM.</p>	<p>When undertaking the VfM assessment all options are considered in the same way, there aren't any risks or uncertainties which are included or removed for specific options.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
A10c	Please explain why Table 10-13 lacks any such VfM entries at all. Is it just an HE error which will be corrected before the statutory consultation?	Of the sensitivity tests which were undertaken, an additional VfM assessment was only undertaken on the Worthing and Lancing test. This was appropriate due to the high level of interest in the scheme.
A12	Referring to the proposed new A27 in the House of Commons on 12 January 2021, Rebecca Pow MP and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity said, "it will now go south of the National Park, avoiding the degradation of natural beauty". Is the Minister's statement accurate?	<p>It is not appropriate for the project to comment on a comment made by an MP in early 2021. Particularly without it being considered in the overall context.</p> <p>I can confirm that the proposed route alignment is outside the South Downs National Park and therefore has avoided a direct land impact and degradation within the National Park. As the design progresses through the next stages of design development we will explore opportunities to minimise both environmental and community impact.</p>
A13	The 2018 preferred route (5A) has been abandoned so is irrelevant. West of Tortington Rife, the vertical elevation of Grey is 7-8 m higher than the version of 5B ruled out of the 2017 non-statutory public consultation on grounds of cost and value for money (see attached elevation chart). It appears that the elevation has been raised primarily to save money (e.g. earthwork balancing) without evaluating or documenting adverse impacts. Therefore, please may we have a Cost Benefit Analysis of the two versions of 5B including environmental impact assessments for both designs as a basis for identifying the superior design in terms of mitigating adverse impacts on Walberton parish.	<p>Sections 6 and 7 of the SAR provide detail on the develop of the Scheme and the options considered. In particular section 7.8 provides information on the revision of option 5B to 5BV1. The vertical and horizontal alignment of Grey were developed sufficiently to assesses the feasibility of the route and for comparison with other route options presented at the 2019 further public consultation.</p> <p>The requested Cost Benefit Analysis is not an assessment that the project has available nor does it provided a fair and direct comparison between the two alignments given the varying stage of development.</p> <p>However, the preferred route will now be further developed during the next stage in the scheme development prior to statutory consultation where we will seek to minimise the impact on the community and environment. As part of this process the local community will have opportunities to comment on the proposed design prior and we will engage with Walberton Parish Council and its constituents as part of this process.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
A14	<p>Unless the alignment of Grey is favourably modified (i.e. moved out of Walberton Parish), Walberton Parish Council is asking Highways England to minimise its adverse impacts on the parish by including in the preliminary design a fully enclosed cutting or tunnel on the approach to existing housing at Yapton Lane and past the new housing at Avisford Grange. We assume that such a structure is made more feasible by Grey approaching Walberton at a lower elevation after passing through Binsted (see 13 above) but, even if not, we would like to see this potential improvement properly evaluated and costed.</p>	<p>The current proposed alignment for the scheme passes through Walberton predominantly in cutting, which will provide to a degree of screening and reduce the adverse impacts on the parish.</p> <p>During the next stage of design development Highways England and our suppliers will further develop mitigation measures to address the adverse impacts of the scheme as far as possible. This will include exploring all cost-effective ways of minimising the impact on local people and communities such as Walberton Parish.</p>
A20	<p>In view of the delays in response times we wish to communicate directly with Andrew Jackson, copying the project in box. How can we establish a more responsive dialog in which questions are not subjected to a minimum 4-week turnaround time?</p>	<p>The key point of contact for this project is Andrew Jackson, the Senior Project Manager with emails to the project in-box: A27ArundelBypass@highwaysengland.co.uk.</p> <p>We will endeavour to respond to questions as quickly as possible, but I would also ask for patience, especially with the current restrictions due to COVID-19 which is reducing our ability to answer more quickly.</p>

As set out above Table 2 below details our responses to the further questions raised in your email dated 8 February 2021 following our previous call.

Table 2

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B1	<p>When will a correction be issued and made available to us regarding the incorrect statement concerning Avisford Grange? You stated that “an area of land identified for housing development the impacts upon which the applicant was in the process of considering....” The outline planning permission for 175 homes was granted in February 2018 and the access from Yapton Lane was clear. Building commenced in July 2019 and more than 30 houses had been built by Summer 2020 long before the PRA and this meeting with PINS. Why were that not briefed accurately.</p>	<p>The minutes referred to in your letter are minutes produced and published by the Planning Inspectorate, not Highways England and therefore we will not be issuing a correction.</p> <p>It is worthy of note that the statement, “The Applicant drew attention to a local golf course and an area of land identified for housing development, the impacts upon which the Applicant was in the process of considering ahead of finalising its scheme design” is still factually correct as we continue to work with developers of various housing developments in Walberton and the surrounding area to understand the impact the scheme has on them and how it can be mitigated.</p>
B2	<p>Please may we have a copy of the PCF Stage 3 Engagement and Communications Plan?</p>	<p>The Stage 3 Engagement and Communications plan is currently in the course of completion and will be released once it is completed later in the year. We will outline our engagement at the next elected representative’s forum later this month.</p> <p>I would also add that as part of the statutory consultation process we will consult the host local planning authorities on our Draft Statement of Community Consultation and will keep Walberton Parish Council engaged throughout the process.</p>
B3	<p>Will Highways England be continuing with the Advocacy Strategy in PCF Stage 3, will the strategy continue to be restricted to the minority who previously supported Magenta, and will it, therefore, continue to exclude Walberton Parish Council?</p>	<p>As part of the continued development of the scheme Highways England and our new Delivery Partner (Linkconnex) will be reviewing and refreshing our approach to communications on the project. This will include any advocacy work that we will do, with one of our core communication objectives being to understand stakeholders, their issues and their requirements. We will continue to seek engagement of interested parties such as the Parish Council though different forums and methods of communications will be used as appropriate for individual stakeholders.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B4	Highways England published a misleading Scheme Assessment Report. You have been asked to issue an Erratum by one of our parishioners. Why haven't you done so and why haven't you answered his correspondence?	There have been questions on how Arun District Council's (ADC) consultation response was included with the SAR reporting. We have responded to ADC on this topic and are currently responding to one of your parishioners on the same matter.
B5	Will Grey still be affordable and viable irrespective of the cost of full mitigation both within the scheme area and outside (e.g. Fontwell roundabouts)?	The A27 Arundel bypass scheme is developing the preliminary design on the preferred route which includes the development of a package of mitigation measures. These will cover the different aspects of the scheme including environmental and community impacts, including those at Walberton, Binsted and Tortington. We remain confident that the budget has appropriate consideration for mitigations required for the proposed scheme. However, it is important to note that other projects outside the scope of the A27 Bypass will be considered separately and funded separately.
B6	Please confirm the date you announced the abandonment of the Worthing Lancing 2017 single option proposal because of public opposition to it, and also give an estimate the publication date of an alternative which will have an equal or improved traffic forecasting impact on congestion here as was assumed in the core scenario for Arundel.	<p>The Road Investment Strategy 1 (RIS1): 2015-2020, A27 Worthing and Lancing improvements scheme was paused in November 2018. Highways England plans to hold a public consultation on the re-announced Road Investment Strategy 2 (RIS2): 2020-2025 A27 Worthing and Lancing improvements scheme in the spring/summer of 2022.</p> <p>The Worthing and Lancing scheme was included in the core scenario for the traffic modelling in accordance with guidance at the time. We also undertook sensitivity test to show the impacts on the A 27 Arundel Scheme, if Worthing and Lancing we not to proceed.</p> <p>As the scheme develops the assessments will be updated taking into consideration the latest developments at Worthing and Lancing.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B7	<p>Will Highways England publish and consult on its proposals for the Worthing/Lancing improvements before the statutory consultation at Arundel?</p>	<p>Similar to the explanation given above. The current A27 Worthing and Lancing improvements scheme is planning a public consultation in spring/summer 2022. This is planned to be after the A27 Arundel Statutory which is currently planned for later this year.</p>
B8	<p>In the consultation brochure 2019 the average time saving in 2041 from Grey over the Arundel Bypass section was given as 7.5 minutes. ComMA 2019 Table 12-14 indicates that the Shoreham - Chichester time saving from Grey is far less than that. Further, the two sets of data are inconsistent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the wider corridor time all lost at Fontwell or what proportion is? • Either the Do Minimum times or Grey time savings appear incorrectly given. Which, and why? 	<p>The time savings presented in the Consultation Brochure are stated as 6 – 11 minutes for Grey (page 17) for the journey time route shown in the same document on page 18 and 19.</p> <p>ComMA 2019 Table 12-14 presents the journey time savings over the wider A27 corridor, as described in 12.5.21. This table indicates journey time savings of between 2 – 8 minutes.</p> <p>Modelling data indicates that there is an increase in journey time on the A27 through the Fontwell junctions as a result of the scheme of approximately 1 to 2 minutes.</p> <p>The modelling assumes a separate improvement scheme is delivered at the Fontwell junction (ComMA, Table 11-12).</p>
B9	<p>We understand that traffic connected with strategic development of sites for some 11,000 dwellings and 1.5 million sq. ft. of employment space, as well as all other uncommitted employment, housing schemes and government-imposed local authority housing targets are excluded from the above assessment of Fontwell congestion. What assessment has been made of all these impacts on a junction already well over capacity and will the Grey time savings be more than extinguished at Fontwell?</p>	<p>The land use and infrastructure assumptions, as well as the traffic growth assumptions are described within ComMA Chapter 11. This chapter describes the forecast increase in households and jobs, and the associated traffic growth assumptions. ComMA Appendix C-1 includes the Uncertainty Log, which describes explicitly modelled land use development, using the most up to date information at the time the forecasting was undertaken.</p> <p>There wasn't an operational assessment undertaken at Fontwell as part of the Stage 2 works, though this will be looked at further in Stage 3.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B10	<p>Because of the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns in 2020, Highways England proposes using a 2015 base traffic model, potentially calibrated by 2019 mobile data. Please provide the evidence and government guidance supporting your assumption that travel demand and patterns will return to the same as they were before COVID-19.</p>	<p>The use of the 2015 base year (with validation testing using 2019 data) is standard industry practice and presents a reasonable base year to forecast from. The purpose of the base year is to create a representation of recent travel patterns, from which forecasts can be produced which reflect future changes in costs, travel times, congestion and demand responses.</p> <p>There is a large element of uncertainty associated with forecasting the impacts of Covid on travel demand. New DfT guidance on how to take account of modelling travel demand responses to Covid is expected imminently (referred to at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951075/tag-route-map-2020.pdf), and our assessment will take account of this new guidance when released. We will be developing a Covid scenario as we progress with our assessment and will use available reliable evidence on traffic trends to support that scenario. We will also be developing the typical low growth scenario which could also encompass the demand response that Covid could have. As such, the range of scenarios developed will reflect the uncertainty associated with the potential travel demand impacts of Covid.</p>
B11	<p>Please may we receive Minutes of the Focus Group meetings as these will be discussing design issues that directly impact Walberton, including mitigation.</p>	<p>The focus group is a vital group consisting of statutory bodies that help inform the development of the scheme prior to DCO application. As such the discussions are not public in nature so that they do not prejudice the development of the scheme and any latter formal responses that may be subsequently made by statutory bodies during the statutory consultation or during Examination. Focus Group meetings are not public meetings and as a result we are not making publicly available a record of the meetings. However where any discussions are being had which impact Walberton Parish, we will engage the Parish Council, so they are able to provide adequate input.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
		<p>The Elected Representatives Forum is another method through which Walberton Parish Council will be updated on progress on the scheme and be offered opportunities to provide feedback on design options and mitigation measures.</p>
B12	<p>Elected Representative Forum – please advise when these meetings will recommence, by whom they will be chaired and who will be invited.</p>	<p>The next Elected Representatives meeting is planned for 23 March 2021 and representatives from Walberton Parish Council have been invited. This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the existing Terms of Reference (available on the A27 scheme website).</p>
B13	<p>Highways England, in a letter from Peter Mumford's to Dr Walsh at Arun DC, has pledged to maintain access to Avisford Grange during construction and operation of the scheme. Why hasn't this been properly communicated to the developers who have submitted an entirely unsuitable planning application for alternate access via Tye Lane?</p>	<p>The information detailed in the letter dated 3 December 2020 which you refer to has been communicated to the developers at Avisford Grange. Furthermore, we remain in close liaison with the developer around how we can minimise the impact of the proposed scheme on the development moving forward.</p>
B14	<p>Have you appointed a project manager and can you provide your initial programme plan. If this is not yet available please give headline stages and ball park/ indicative time line.</p>	<p>I am the Senior Project Manager for the scheme, supported by a team from Highways England and Linkconnex (a delivery team made up of BAM Nuttall, Aecom and Mace) as the Delivery Integration Partner.</p> <p>The current timeline for the project is: Statutory consultation Q3, 2021 Submission for the Development Consent Order being made in Q2,2022. Start of construction works: 2023/24.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B15	<p>Is there a deadline for Walberton Parish Council to submit suggestions for mitigation after which they will not be considered?</p>	<p>The design of the scheme, including mitigation measures, will continue to evolve in response to technical work, stakeholder engagement and consultation feedback up until a few months before the DCO is submitted for independent public examination. The main opportunity for the parish council to provide comments on the design will be during the 'statutory consultation' period as by this time the design will be reasonably mature and we will have a good understanding of what mitigation measures will need to be included within the Scheme.</p> <p>We also recognise that there will be a need to have ongoing engagement with parish councils as the design develops and we anticipate engagement with parish councils will continue throughout the pre-application stage, at key intervals.</p>
B16	<p>We have a number of questions relating to the Fontwell A29 / A27 junction as its effective operation are intimately connected with our parish well-being.</p> <p>We have read the Enterprise Bognor Regis Transport Review 2017, the WSCC/ADC Local Plan Transport Mitigation Apportionment Study 2020, the WSCC/052/20 (A29 Realignment Phase 1) and the WSCC/Highways England advice regarding Tye Lane to developers under Arun DC WA/93/20/PL and Arun DC WA/68/20/OUT. We note that Fontwell (West) is already over capacity - "severely congested" - and the subject of mitigation payments by developers. But we note that Grey will nonetheless increase the traffic at Fontwell by approximately 17,000 AADT, or an additional 55%, in addition to the excluded developments above. What is HE going to do about Fontwell, and when?</p>	<p>Similar to the response to question B9. There is planned work to the Fontwell West roundabout with the impacts and potential mitigations from local developments also being assessed.</p> <p>There wasn't an operational assessment undertaken at Fontwell as part of the Stage 2 works although this will be looked at further in Stage 3. Once the impacts are better understood, the potential mitigations and next steps can be reviewed with the required stakeholders.</p>

Q No.	Walberton PC Question	Highways England Response
B16a	<p>When will Highways England provide Walberton PC with the total forecast degree of Fontwell overcapacity in 2026 / 2041 and its proposed scheme/mitigation plans, with their timings, and their consequent impact on the Chichester - Shoreham trip? Will this be before the Arundel statutory consultation, and if not, why not?</p>	<p>As per B9 and B16 there wasn't an operational assessment undertaken for junctions in the previous stage. We have provided performance data from the Strategic Transport Model in terms of changes in journey time in response to Q8. The modelling assumes an improvement scheme is delivered at the Fontwell junction (ComMA, Table 11-12).</p> <p>There wasn't an operational assessment undertaken at Fontwell as part of the Stage 2 works, though this will be looked at further in Stage 3. Once the impacts are better understood, the potential mitigations and next steps can be reviewed with the required stakeholders.</p>
B16b	<p>HE outlines no mitigation designs at Fontwell under current plans for Grey. Will mitigation at Fontwell likely require a grade-separated junction?</p>	<p>See response to Question B16b.</p>
B16c	<p>Is full Fontwell mitigation within the "necessary expenditure" for the Arundel Bypass? If not, why not? Why is Highways England just moving congestion around, at great public expense?</p>	<p>The scope of the A27 Arundel Bypass as per the Road Investment Strategy is to replace 'the existing single carriageway road with a dual carriageway bypass, linking together the two existing dual carriageway sections of the road.'</p> <p>This does not extend as far as Fontwell although any mitigation required at this junction or improvements can only be determined once the impacts are better understood and next steps can be reviewed with the required stakeholders.</p>
B16d	<p>Why is Fontwell mitigation not costed into the Arundel Bypass scheme nor referred to in RIS 2?</p>	<p>See response to Question B16c.</p>
B16e	<p>For the Arundel Bypass, did Highways England adjust environmental impact assessments and the calculation of "wider economic benefits" to reflect the major congestion at Fontwell.</p>	<p>The Fontwell junctions were included within the traffic model which was used to inform assessment of the environmental impacts and wider economic benefits.</p>

I would like to take this opportunity to once again assure reassure you that we very much consider Walberton Parish Council and the community it represents as a key stakeholder for the A27 Arundel Bypass.

Yours Sincerely



Andrew Jackson
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A27 Arundel Project Team

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We'd love to get your feedback about our reply to you today, simply click [here](#) to complete our short survey.