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**Highways England’s ‘Hotchpotch Plans’ Show No Respect for The Countryside, says Charity**

**Controversial road plans to build a dual carriageway close to the South Downs National Park would not solve congestion and ‘show no respect for the landscape or the environment,’ according to The Countryside Charity, CPRE Sussex.**

The Charity says the scheme between Polegate and Lewes, is the result of an outdated, ‘hotchpotch’ of negotiations which have been ongoing for many years. Campaigners are concerned that the new plans do not address the issue of car dependency and would actually worsen congestion at pinch points along the A27.

This morning (June 22) protestors objecting to the scheme are holding a socially-distanced protest in a field in the village of Ripe, which is along one of the route options. The protestors will be standing two metres apart in the form of a grid, to demonstrate how much land will be taken by the road.

CPRE Sussex believes Highways England’s business plan is fundamentally flawed because it is based on economic figures that are not relevant to the time or locality and that it undervalues the land.

‘We cannot afford to use our land up needlessly,’ says CPRE Sussex’s Vice Chair, David Johnson. ‘This road would create real problems for our villages and glorious Sussex countryside in the guise of solving imaginary problems. It is a faulty business case which massively underestimates the true value of what these road proposals would destroy for future generations.’

In March the Department of transport published a new plan to ‘decarbonise’ transport entitled, ‘**Decarbonising Transport - Setting the Challenge’.**

The reporthas a Forward from Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps in which he states:

‘Transport has a huge role to play in the economy reaching net zero. The scale of the challenge demands a step change in both the breadth and scale of ambition and we have a duty to act quickly and decisively to reduce emissions.’

CPRE Sussex believes that this important government initiative proves how outdated Highways England’s A27 East of Lewes scheme has become.

‘Sussex deserves a proper business plan which meets the needs of this generation without compromising the needs of future ones,’ says David Johnson. ‘This does not mean spending large amounts of public money to doubtful economic and social advantage.’

‘A proper business case should account for the need to deal with climate change and ensure that carbon dioxide is being sequestered from the atmosphere by the land and by trees and other plants.’

**For more information please contact:**

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