

A27 Corridor
Feasibility Study
Scope Document

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1. DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND STATUS

- 1.1 This document sets out the scope of the A27 corridor feasibility study. It has been developed by the Department for Transport in conjunction with the Highways Agency and sets out the scope, timing, and management arrangements of the study.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Following the 2013 Spending Review, the Government announced its plans for the biggest ever upgrade of the strategic national roads network. The HM Treasury document, Investing in Britain's Future (July 2013), set out details of the programmes of infrastructure investment which included the tripling of annual investment on Highways Agency major roads enhancements from today's levels to over £3bn by 2020/21.
- 2.2 As part of that investment programme, the Government announced that it will identify and fund solutions, initially through feasibility studies, to look at problems and identify potential solutions to tackle some of the most notorious and long-standing road hot spots in the country. The locations identified were as follows:
 - The A27 Corridor (including Arundel and Worthing)
 - The A303/A30/A358 corridor
 - The A1 North of Newcastle
 - The A1 Newcastle-Gateshead Western Bypass
 - Trans-Pennine routes
- 2.3 In addition, the Secretary of State announced on 20th August 2013 that the Department would undertake a further feasibility study on the A47 corridor between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth.
- 2.4 These studies are to be progressed alongside the Highways Agency's Route Based Strategy programme which is considering the current and future performance of the entire network, to inform future investment decisions.

3. BACKGROUND AND STUDY NEED

- 3.1 The A27 route is important in linking a number of cities and towns, including Portsmouth, Havant, Chichester, Arundel, Worthing, Brighton, Lewes and Eastbourne along the south coast, and providing access to Bognor Regis and the ports of Portsmouth, Shoreham, and Newhaven. It provides businesses and residents in this corridor with wider access to the strategic road network.
- 3.2 The A27 corridor is well defined between Portsmouth and Brighton as it is constrained to the north by the South Downs National Park and various towns and the sea to the south. It is predominantly of a dual carriageway standard route across this section, with notable exceptions at Arundel and Worthing where it reduces to single carriageway. These sections of the corridor in particular experience considerable peak hour congestion and suffer from having a number of local access points which mean that they attract considerable peak local access movements which reduce the strategic road function. To the east of Brighton the A27 corridor passes through the South Downs and to Pevensy.

Along this section of the route the road is a mixture of single and dual carriageway.

- 3.3 There have been long-standing calls to improve the A27 corridor along the South Coast. Previous infrastructure enhancements were considered as part of the South Coast Multi Modal Study (SoCoMMS) and whilst the study concluded that there was little justification for a long distance strategic south coast route, Government accepted the need for some limited improvements given the potentially difficult delivery of major road schemes in environmentally sensitive locations.
- 3.4 Three road schemes on the A27 were specifically remitted to SoCoMMS for consideration – the proposed Arundel bypass, proposed bypasses of Wilmington and Selmeston, and improvements at Southerham-Beddingham. Southerham - Beddingham crossing improvements have since been delivered by the Highway Agency, but bypasses at Selmeston/ Wilmington and Arundel were not specifically supported by the Secretary of State in his response to the multi-modal study. Further studies of on-line improvements have since been undertaken by the Highways Agency at Arundel, and transport strategy improvements have been developed by the Highways Agency and the affected local planning authorities for Worthing and Chichester.
- 3.5 As part of the outcomes of the 2013 Spending Review, Government committed to investment for major improvements to the A27 Chichester bypass as part of its pipeline of future major road schemes, subject to value for money and deliverability.

4. STUDY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Study Aims

- 4.1 The aim of the study is:
 - To identify the opportunities and understand the case for future investment solutions on the A27 corridor, particularly at Arundel and Worthing, which are deliverable, affordable and offer value for money.

Study Objectives

- 4.2 The specific objectives of the study are to:
 - a) Identify and assess the case, deliverability and timing of specific infrastructure investments that best address existing and future priority problems on the A27 corridor.
 - b) Understand the balance of benefits and impacts from potential individual investment proposals and any additional benefits or impacts from potential packages of investment in the national and local transport networks.
 - c) Evidence, where possible, the wider economic impacts from the transport investment in the corridor.

5. GEOGRAPHIC AND MODAL SCOPE

Geographic Scope

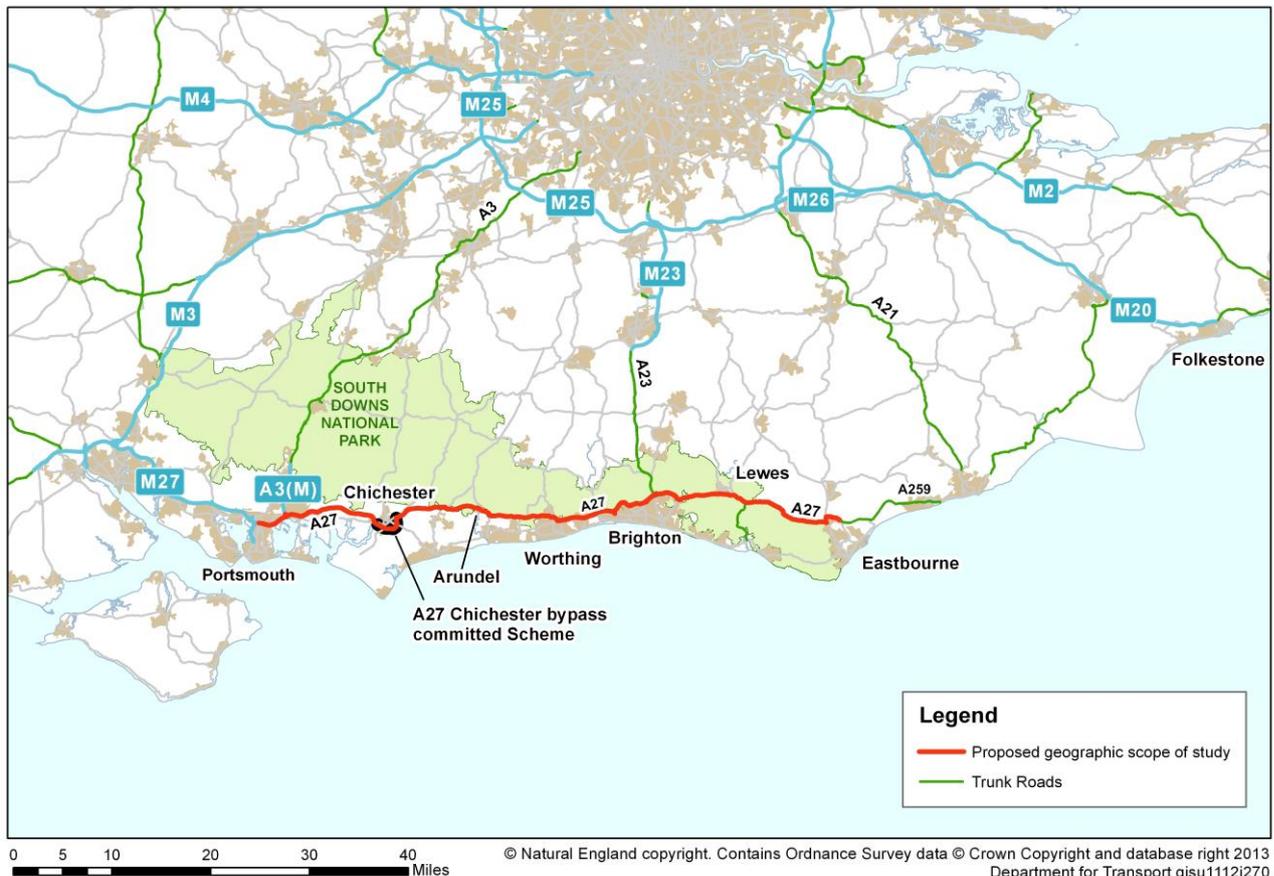
5.1 The geographic scope of the study will consider the A27, from its junction with the M27 in the west (between Cosham and Portsmouth), and its junction with the A259 at Pevensey in the east. A map of the proposed geographical scope of the study is included at Figure 1 below.

Modal Scope

5.2 The modal scope of the study will be predominantly road-based but would need to consider potential local transport improvements, and the interaction between the A27 corridor and the local road network.

5.3 It is not proposed to consider specific issues or proposals in relation to other parts of the motorway or trunk road network in the immediate vicinity. The case for other such investments is being considered as part of the Highways Agency's South Coast Central and M25 to Solent Route Based Strategies.

Figure 1: Proposed geographic scope of A27 corridor feasibility study



6. QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

- 6.1 There are a number of questions that need to be addressed as part of the study work, and these are set out below.
1. Given the assessment of current and future performance of the A27 corridor are there specific priority location/problems that should be addressed?
 2. Are there viable potential solutions to these problems which are deliverable, affordable and offer value for money?
 3. What are the potential timescales for the delivery of identified potential solutions?
 4. Are there additional, complimentary improvements to the local transport network necessary to maximise the benefits or mitigate the impacts from the transport investment?
 5. Have the potential solutions identified fully considered and optimised the environmental opportunities and mitigation that the transport investment could bring?
 6. Is further work/analysis required for Government to be able to make specific investment decisions, and if so what are the timescale of such work?
- 6.2 These questions should be addressed by completing the study objectives.

7. STUDY STAGES

- 7.1 The study will be completed in accordance with WebTAG guidance and in several stages which are set out below.

Stage 1: Review of evidence and identification of problems along the corridor.

The study would review any relevant evidence gathered as part of the Highways Agency's phase 1 M25 to Solent and South Coast Central route based strategies, together with evidence from other relevant study work and analysis and form a view as to the nature and scale of current and future performance of the A27 route.

The study will look to set out details of previous historical work and decisions taken in terms of the approach to investment or management of the A27 corridor with the aim of reaching agreement on the historical position in relation to previous investment proposals.

The study will also need to establish both the availability of transport modelling and the need to undertake specific transport modelling to provide the analysis and evidence to answer to some of the questions to be addressed.

The study would need to identify priority locations to be studied in detail. It will need to take account of the benefits that will be delivered by improvements that are already committed, in particular the A27 Chichester Bypass.

Stage 2: Work to finalise the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the corridor at the priority locations identified.

Once the problems along the route have been identified, the study should review previous work, including proposals for Worthing and Arundel, and work by East

and West Sussex County Councils, local district councils, and other related work to identify infrastructure proposals that could address identified problems.

This stage should culminate in the production of an Option Assessment Report (step 8, as set out in [Stage 1: Option Development of the Transport Appraisal Process](#)).

Stage 3: Work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals

Work should be completed using the Department's transport appraisal guidance to develop or refresh strategic outline business cases for each of the prioritised infrastructure proposals.

Work should also be completed to consider the benefits of taking a corridor approach to the proposals as compared to assessing the benefits of individual proposals.

Due to the time constraints of the study it may not be possible to develop full strategic outline business cases for each of the prioritised infrastructure proposals. This stage should also document any additional work necessary for Government to be able to make an investment decision in one/all of the infrastructure proposals. The length of time needed to complete this additional work should also be documented.

8. POTENTIAL OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

- 8.1 The study will need to consider a range of individual potential investment proposals and potentially combinations of investment propositions. However, the study will look to initially build on work done to date on potential proposals, rather than complete a specific new process of identification of investment proposals.
- 8.2 The study will need to draw upon a range of completed or recent related work in terms of studies and strategies for the A27. The study will therefore take as its starting point details of potential investment proposals that emerge from the first phase of the South Coast Central Route Based Strategy and any other proposals recommended from other, more recent, related study work.
- 8.3 Below are references to a number of related pieces of work which the study may need to consider. The list is not exhaustive and may be added to in light of discussions/engagement with stakeholders.
 - Previous Arundel bypass studies and on-line improvement proposals
 - Previous Worthing transport studies
 - Previous Lewes-to-Polegate proposals
- 8.4 The study would however not rule out consideration of other investment proposals and would need to capture details of potential investment proposals that would emerge from the first phase of the M25 to Solent and South Coast Central Route Based Strategy that are within the study's geographic scope.
- 8.5 In considering potential investment options, the study needs to recognise the advice provided within national planning guidance in relation to development proposed within nationally designated areas. The guidance makes clear that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in nationally designated areas. National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific

statutory purposes which help ensure their continued protection and which the Secretary of State has a statutory duty to have regard to in decisions.¹

- 8.6 Agreement on the finalised or prioritised list of investment proposals would need to be agreed as part of the study process.

9. STUDY OUTPUTS AND TIMINGS

- 9.1 The study will need to consider a range of individual potential investment proposals and combinations of investment propositions.

Stage 1: Review of evidence and identification of problems along the corridor

A report which summarises the evidence gathered as part of the Stage 1 M25 to Solent and South Coast Central RBSs and other relevant study work and analysis and sets out the problems/issues along the route.

Stage 2: Work to identify the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the corridor at the priority locations identified

Produce an Option Assessment report (step 8, as set out in [Stage 1: Option Development of the Transport Appraisal Process](#)), which will be presented to the project board, which sets out the range of proposals that could address the problems along the corridor.

Stage 3: Work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals – complete by autumn 2014

Where possible, to document the appraisal of a small number of better performing options to strategic business case level (or as detailed and robust an appraisal as can be achieved within the timescale).

To also produce a strategic outline business case for addressing the identified problems on the corridor and determine whether considering the corridor as a whole produces more benefits than considering each proposal in isolation.

To also document the further work necessary to develop proposals to the stage to which Government would be able to take an investment decisions if strategic outline business case level could not be reached in the time available.

¹ National Planning Guidance is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and the draft National Networks National Policy Statement. The Department's consultation on the National Network National Policy Statement (NNNPS) closed on 26 February 2014 and the Department is currently considering consultation responses and will respond later this year. Should the planning policy adopted in the NNNPS affect the feasibility studies, this will be given due regard within the study work.

10. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

10.1 In order to manage and oversee the work within the study, the following governance and management arrangements have been established.

Study Project Board

10.2 The day to day control of the study will be undertaken by a Project Board, made up of representatives from the Department for Transport and the Highways Agency.

10.3 The Project Board's role is to:

- Ensure agreement to the scope of the study, aims, timings and outputs of the study, and agree any amendments to the study's activities as the study progresses
- Provide day to day control of the study
- Take decisions as necessary throughout the life of the study and decide which decisions should be escalated or made by others
- Monitor progress against plan and review significant risks and issues

10.3 As the study progresses there may be a need to establish specific technical or working groups to take forward defined activities. Decisions on the establishment and membership of such groups would be for the Project Board to consider.

Study Reference Group

10.5 Given the range of stakeholder interest in the study a Study Reference Group has been established. The Group will meet at the end of each stage of the study.

10.6 The main role of the Reference Group is to ensure stakeholders' views are captured and considered during the study process, particularly at key points in the study's work and at times of the development of key outputs.

10.7 The establishment of the Reference Group would allow stakeholder organisations to be aware and feed into the work of the study and allow representation from other organisations.

10.8 The current membership of the Reference Group can be found in Annex A. The membership of this group will be kept under review as the study progresses to ensure that it continues to capture stakeholder views throughout the study process.

11. KEY MILESTONES

11.1 This section provides the key milestones put forward for the study. These milestones will be kept under review as the study progresses, and may be subject to amendment if required.

Milestone	Completion date
Completion of stage 1 of study – evidence gathering and problem prioritisation	End of March 2014
Completion of stage 2 of study - identify the range of infrastructure proposals that could address the problems along the corridor	End July 2014
Completion of stage 3 of study - work to assess the affordability, value for money and deliverability of prioritised infrastructure proposals	Autumn 2014

ANNEX A: MEMBERSHIP OF THE STUDY REFERENCE GROUP

A.1 The initial membership of the A27 Reference Group is as follows:

Local Highway and Planning Authorities:

- Hampshire County Council
- West Sussex County Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Portsmouth City Council
- Brighton & Hove City Council
- Eastbourne Borough Council
- Arun District Council
- Worthing District Council
- Wealden District Council

Local Economic Partnerships:

- Solent LEP
- Coast to Capital LEP
- South East LEP

Statutory Bodies:

- South Downs National Park Authority
- Natural England

Other organisations:

- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Campaign for Better Transport
- South Downs National Park Society
- The Wildlife Trusts

Members of Parliament

- Stephen Lloyd MP
- Nick Herbert MP
- Tim Loughton MP
- Norman Baker MP