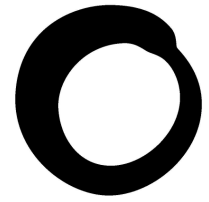


24<sup>th</sup> November 2009

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**Friends of  
the Earth**  
**South East**

**East Sussex County Council (Bexhill to Hastings Link Road) Compulsory Purchase Order 2009**

Friends of the Earth wishes to reiterate its opposition to the building of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. We have previously objected to this scheme at the planning application stage and at earlier stages of consultation.

Our organisation has been a member of the Hastings Alliance for Sustainable Transport since its establishment in the 1990s. We have consistently supported the aims of the Alliance in promoting sustainable alternative transport solutions in the Hastings area. We fully support all the statements and letters of objection put forward by the Alliance and its expert witnesses.

In relation to this Public Inquiry we feel the following points are particularly important:

- The case for the Side Roads Order and Compulsory Purchase Order relies on out of date information and policies which have not been adequately reviewed
- Government policies on sustainable development and climate change have moved on considerably since the Government and East Sussex County Council endorsed this scheme.
- Treasury guidance on the assessment of the road and any alternatives has not been adequately followed - alternatives to the road have not been fully assessed and costed.
- The argument for the road in terms of alleviating transport problems does not stack up in that congestion will be shifted to other parts of Hastings.
- There is doubt that the large cost of this scheme is justified in terms of the transport outcomes when other, less costly methods of alleviating local transport problems have not been modeled.
- The regeneration arguments for the road are questionable, particularly in the current economic climate when inward investment will be hard to attract.

- There is no real evidence that this link road is critical for regeneration to go ahead. A link road running north out of Bexhill would still allow some development to take place at Worsham farm and could avoid the costs and impacts of the current scheme.
- The economic costs of inaction on climate change have been highlighted by Sir Nicholas Stern. This road scheme will increase carbon dioxide emissions at a time when the UK is committed to very large reductions in such emissions. Using taxpayers' money to set a path contrary to legally binding national and international commitments does not make sense.
- The Sussex Wildlife Trust's statement refers to the irreversible damage this scheme will do to the Coombe Haven Valley area. Whilst the road itself skirts the two SSSI's, the indirect impacts of the road, in increased noise, pollution and general disturbance will have a long term impact on the nature of this tranquil valley. We do not feel that the mitigation measures nor the new pedestrian and cycle ways will negate this overall impact.

In summary, the dual reasons: transport and regeneration, that the promoters give for this road scheme appear to be unjustified. It is our view that the high environmental and financial costs outweigh the need for these Orders.



Brenda Pollack,  
Regional Campaign Co-ordinator  
Friends of the Earth