

East Sussex County Council
County Hall
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East Sussex
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please reply to:

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2021-10-15

Dear ESCC,

A259 MRN South Coast Corridor Improvement Study - survey

Railfuture is Britain's leading and longest-established national independent voluntary organisation campaigning exclusively for a better railway across a bigger network for passengers, and freight users, to support economic (housing and productivity) growth, environmental improvement and better-connected communities. We seek to influence decision makers at local, regional and national levels to implement pro-rail policies in transport and development planning.

We offer the following responses to the survey's substantive questions (1 and 2 in the body of this letter, so responses are representative of the group of members not one individual).

3 Which modes of transport do you currently use within the A259 corridor between Brighton and Eastbourne?

Car, bicycle, walking, public transport, wheelchair, motorcycle

4 What are the main reasons that you travel within the A259 corridor between Brighton and Eastbourne?

Commute to / from work, education, shopping / leisure / entertainment, business / commercial, visiting friends / family

5 How important are each of these objectives of the A259 South Coast Corridor Study Improvements to you?

- ~ Reducing congestion on the A259 – important, and very important for buses
- ~ Tackling climate change – very important
- ~ Promoting more sustainable transport options – very important
- ~ Encouraging active travel such as walking and cycling – important
- ~ Encouraging use of public transport – very important
- ~ Supporting growth in housing and employment in the area – important
- ~ Improving safety of the transport network – important
- ~ Improving accessibility of the transport network – very important

www.railfuture.org.uk www.railfuturescotland.org.uk www.railfuturewales.org.uk
www.railwatch.org.uk

6 What is **one** improvement you would most like to see achieved through this Study?

A metro-style all-day / every day regular quarter-hourly train service between Seaford and Lewes (eg alternating half-hourly Seaford-Brighton and Seaford-Lewes services), enabled by investment in the required infrastructure enhancements, for significant modal shift to rail.

7 What is **one** key problem you would most like to see fixed within the A259 transport corridor?

Poor perception among road users of rail as a mode of choice for some journeys eg Brighton - Seaford, Brighton - Eastbourne; develop 'Brighton Metro' as a GTR Southern sub-brand.

8 Do you have any other comments or queries about the Study?

One general and then three specific.

General: we welcome this part of the background introduction "*note that we are not just considering the A259 road as part of our Study, but also the wider transport corridor with which it connects. This includes public transport provisions such as the rail and bus network in the area ...*" This part of the Study should therefore be the "A259 / East Coastway Corridor Improvement Study". The scale of additional travel demand generated by growth to 2050 cannot, and should not, be accommodated on the road network no matter what 'improvements' are implemented, only by expanding the capacity of the local bus and rail networks. The Study should set a long-term target cap on road traffic volumes remaining at current levels with the net increase in travel demand, including planned modal shift from existing private vehicle users, being met through staged programmes of bus and rail enhancements.

First specific: the Study must not fall into the all-too-familiar trap of lumping all 'public transport' together into just one category when there are at least two very distinct public transport modes, bus and rail, which are different in so many important respects.

Second, it must not fall into the all-too-familiar trap of lumping 'walking and cycling' together into just one category when they too are distinctly different in so many important respects.

Third, it does not appear that any specific time horizon for the corridor improvements has been set. As welcome mention has been made of alignment between this work and TfSE's work – the Transport Strategy in general and the Outer Orbital Area Study in particular – a 30-year horizon has been assumed. It is however recognised that such a length of planning period must be marked by intermediate milestones, an approach which we expect to see reflected in TfSE's draft Strategic Investment Plan next year.

9 If you would like to receive further information on this Study, please provide your email address.

Yes, as above.

Yours faithfully,

Roger Blake BA, MRTPI (Rtd), MTPS
Railfuture
Vice-Chairman, London & South East regional branch
Director for Infrastructure & Networks, national Board

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