

## **Eco-towns Select Committee Summary Statement – Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008**

The Select Committee consider that the Arundel Bypass is perhaps the biggest obstacle for the eco-town to overcome and must be a prerequisite for any such development. There is no commitment to funding by the developers - they claim that Ford would bring forward the Bypass but we have seen no evidence of this, particularly as the Highways Agency has not attended. This is a critical area of concern.

The link to the Arundel Bypass also poses key difficulties - the only solution which has been explored is traffic lights but we do not believe this can be a credible solution to dealing with a single lane bottle neck to a complete new town.

We are concerned that the link through the site from the A27 to the A259 is now an option rather than a commitment. Both bids made much of the advantages that this would bring to the District and this needs to be resolved.

Rail - the Select Committee were hampered by the lack of direct evidence and the absence of Network Rail. We are concerned that the strategic rail authority is notoriously difficult to influence and this must question this area of deliverability.

Buses - we are concerned that there has been no meaningful negotiation with the bus operators for 3 years. The evidence provided was that an internal shuttle service even of the complete scheme would not be viable without subsidy, as would bus travel generally after 8.30 p.m. and at weekends. There also appear to be major difficulties with travel times on longer bus routes.

Internalisation - There are clearly many unknowns. The Select Committee can see that it is possible to design communities to favour non car use but, as above, these may well depend on subsidy and investment as yet unquantified. It is also agreed that successful outcomes rely on behavioural change over a long time frame whereas delivery would be in the next 6 - 10 years.