

National Highways - A27 Operation of Scheduled Bus and Coach Services

Report on Zoom Meeting held on 1st March 2024

The meeting was called by National Highways to discuss upgrading the bus stops along the A27 between Falmer and the Ashcombe roundabout at Lewes. In addition to Parish representatives, present were representatives from National Highways led by Salman Saad, Adrian Strange (Brighton and Hove Metro Bus), Neil Maguire (ESCC Transport coordinator and Kingston Resident) and a representative from Brighton and Hove Albion FC. The agenda for the meeting and links to the bus stop locations are as follows:

At National Highways, we are currently working on a Designated Funds User & Communities Scheme; Operation of Scheduled Bus and Coach Services on the A27 Corridor. This is currently being developed and is in the Feasibility Stage. Detailed designs will take place during the coming financial year (2024/2025).

Background

This project is on the A27 between Falmer and Lewes. The aim is to improve safety and reliability of bus services using this section of the strategic road network. The project will review the existing bus stop laybys and facilities along the A27.

Location of bus stops relevant to this scheme:

Site No.	Bus Stop Location	Google Maps Link
1	Outside Falmer Station – Westbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/mKPcFLrueA5Wtkz7
2	Opposite Falmer Station – Eastbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/PEys2afkp45QA5946
3	Falmer Village - Eastbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/WoTGjHEnDNly1E3z9
4	Housedean Farm – Westbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/6S8wc3H69RAZt2z37
5	Housedean Farm - Eastbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/ako6s5qVi7YEuwAS7
6	Newmarket Inn – Westbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/LR4e9JTSBtrci3W8A
7	Newmarket Inn – Eastbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/pW7jdRCBXW7ZFju7
8	Kingston Ridge - Westbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/dvtHchKbDoKajzSGA
9	Kingston Ridge – Eastbound	https://maps.app.goo.gl/sz5ropQkda67dS6S9

This project aims to provide improvements at **9** bus stops along the A27 between Falmer and Ashcombe Roundabout. These improvements will seek to upgrade the existing bus laybys and shelters, improving access and making it safer for buses re-joining the carriageway.

Please refer to the attached 'Combined General Arrangements' drawing for the scheme proposals across the 9 bus stop locations.

We have recently held discussions with the Contractor who has raised concern regarding closure of the existing bus stops during the proposed construction period. They have highlighted the need for lane closures and the closure of the bus stops/laybys to undertake construction safely.

This meeting is to discuss the temporary bus stop locations that may be used whilst the 9 bus stops highlighted above are out of use.

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Background and scheme proposals
3. Stakeholder feedback (email communications received)
4. Bus operations/schedules
5. Buildability
6. Temporary bus stop locations/closures
7. AOB

The combined general arrangement pdf proposal drawings have been forwarded to the clerk for record purposes. Site numbers 8 and 9 refer to the Kingston Ridge bus stops. The latter, which are preliminary arrangements will be amended as the designs develop.

The preliminary discussions concentrated on physical upgrades to the stops and it was emphasised that the proposals were very preliminary in nature, with detailed design taking place during the coming financial year (2024-2025). Discussions took place between Nat highways, the Bus Operator and B&H FC, on how operations could be maintained and how traffic could be managed during construction.

The particular concerns of Kingston residents were raised by Neil Maguire and John Bewick . The following message was sent to the design team to emphasise the points raised:

West Bound. Here, as advised, the problem is traffic stopping to use the burger van located in the hammer-head on Ashcombe Hollow, the C-road adjacent to the layby on the A27. The bus stop zone is not clearly demarcated from the layby so that, whether by mistake or laziness on behalf of users of the burger van, vehicles frequently park in the bus stop, frequently filling the space, leaving no room for buses to safely enter or leave the stop.

PLEASE, as part of the upgrade, will you arrange for the bus-stop to be clearly labelled (e.g. red paint cross-hatching? or similar) as a no stopping zone. It would also be useful if a small hump/rumble strip could be installed defining the boundary between the edge of the bus zone and the beginning of the layby. There could be no excuse for vehicles to be unaware of which zone they were parking in - even if enforcement is beyond your control!

East Bound. A major problem for users of this stop is the distance between the bus stop and the light-controlled crossing. Younger and more daring (foolish) villagers risk their lives by crossing both carriageways to access the footpath to the village alongside Ashcombe Hollow. Older villagers brace the approximately 400m walk along both sides of this extremely busy road to get to the footpath. Moving this bus stop eastwards, nearer to the traffic lights, either off the slip road or a short distance along Brighton Road, would improve things greatly.

I trust you will pass our concerns on to the appropriate design team.